

Late Imperial Education and Control: Rural Villages in the Penghu Islands*

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In Penghu Subprefecture during Qing rule, community schools and the Veined Stone Academy not only transmitted orthodox learning, but the Veined Stone Academy further required that local educated elites mediate and adjudicate local conflict and report threats to state control. Local histories describe how local educated elites joined with elders and harbor watch heads to serve as the major positions involved in local control in rural villages. Although the elders and harbor watch heads were arguably more central in mediation and adjudication, local educated elites played the additional role of preparing legal instruments for families, lineages, and temple organizations. Legal instruments include chits, account books, and community compacts. The legal instruments describe not only an interlinking between each other, but also heavy reliance upon statuses used in the state's bureaucracy and sub-bureaucracy for local physical control. On the one hand, this article suggests that the preparation and use of legal instruments assumed considerable practical knowledge about money as a productive force in a commodity economy. On the other hand, this article additionally suggests that local educated elites had a special centrality in processes of social reproduction in the Penghu Islands because of the combination of the state's intense strategic interest in local control with the commercialization of village economy.

Keywords: Penghu Islands, elites, education, control, legal instruments

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Introduction

This article describes for late imperial times those rural inhabitants of the Penghu Islands who were literate and numerate. I give special attention to these islanders as economic and political agents, the production, reproduction and transformation of their knowledge in formal schooling, as well as the wider implications of their agency and knowledge in community life.¹ I place particular emphasis on a variety of account books (*zangbu* 帳簿) and compacts (*yue* 約) drawn up by these educated community members and consider their related contexts and processes.

The general goal of this approach is to engage a recent shift in the study of local life in late imperial China. That shift moves away from the more narrow economic emphasis on control of land, irrigation, labor, and the state, and considers in addition learning and competence in practical knowledge in the production and reproduction of social formations. The specific goal here is to offer an alternate view of state power in the countryside. In the Penghu Islands, the Qing state made explicit use of educational institutions in combination with local lineages and temple organizations as an alternative to, rather than simply an augmentation of, its normal methods of physical control. The result was a literate stratum between state officials and local farmer-fisherman of the rural villages that participated in controlling those villages through the creation of legal instruments and by assuming a central role in their mediation and adjudication.

Maurice Bloch once wondered about the distance between practical knowledge, elaborate social structure, and social change (1977). Sometimes the very richness of social structure is an anthropological embarrassment, where extent anthropological understanding can only lead to the impossible conclusion that some communities are over-determined in their social lives. Ways of dealing with this vary, running from an effort to find sufficient positive functions in social solidarity to justify that complexity, to the alternative of suggesting that the complexity's negative function aided state control by mis-

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¹ "Late imperial times" conventionally includes both the Ming (1368-1644) and Qing (1644-1911) dynasties. Qing rule over the Penghu Islands began with Shi Lang's conquest of the islands in 1683 and lasted until the Japanese invasion in 1895. Translations of official positions and statuses follow, when available, Hucker (1985).

leading members of the community as to their actual circumstances. Bloch helps redirect anthropologists back to community members as thinking actors with the reminder that, whatever solidarity or confusion there might have been, enough practical knowledge remained in play to get in the rice crop. Practical knowledge provided a means, epistemologically grounded in a direct knowledge of nature, for reflecting upon and possibly changing the givens of the social landscape.

Still, beyond practical agricultural knowledge, what about all the practical cognitive work based in institutionalized learning that go into building and maintaining top-heavy social structures? The material realities of literacy and numeracy in the Penghu Islands during Qing rule are themselves quite straightforward. State officials and educated elites there created an enormous body of written texts, many of which feature a strong moral coloring and ideological bent. At the same time, however, more functional legal instruments such as account books and compacts created outside the purview of the state both assumed and perpetuated top-heaviness in the social landscape. Scrutiny of these written texts and their attendant social processes shows that, for the Penghu Islands in late imperial times, learning to read, write, and count was how certain villagers acquired knowledge vital to producing economic value within the context of, and in response to, a strong state presence and an intensively commodified economy.

Below I will first give a thumbnail sketch of economic life in rural Penghu communities and then briefly lay out how the state educated and physically controlled the local population, as depicted in the local histories (*difang zhi* 地方志). Finally, I describe the place of educated local elites and the written texts they produced through consideration of account books and compacts compiled for local lineages and temple organizations.

Extent local histories cover late Ming rule and the early Qing (Du 1961 [1699]; Zhou and Hu 1961 [1736]); but local history coverage of three later periods in the era of Qing rule is the most thorough and useful. First, Hu Jianwei's *Brief Notes on Penghu* addresses the early period (Hu 1961 [1766]); second, Jiang Yong's *Penghu Sequel* covers the middle period (Jiang 1961 [1832]); and finally, Lin Hao's *Penghu Subprefecture Record* deals with the later period (Lin 1961 [1893]). The other major sources for this article are handwritten manuscripts, described below, from Hongluo Village (see References).

Security and Commerce

Both external and internal security threats confronted the Qing state in the

Penghu Islands. The strategic value of the islands forced the imperial court in Beijing to pay special attention to potential external threats to their security. In late imperial times the islands, which straddle the sea-lane between Taiwan and Fujian, served as an important transshipment point. Historically, every threat to invade Taiwan began with the conquest and occupation of the Penghu Islands. Consequently, the state presence there remained unusually high throughout the Qing.² This high profile included not just a strong military presence (soldiers the islanders “feared like tigers” [Lin 1961 (1893):239], but additionally a similarly high-profile civil bureaucracy.

This civil bureaucracy was no less concerned with security than the military. First, the state saw maritime trade as threatening since it involved a hard-to-control mobile population, and the presence of foreign traders and smugglers only served to heighten such concern. Since the port of Magong (媽宮 in the Qing dynasty, now 媽公) was an important entrepot for trade between Taiwan and Fujian, the civil bureaucracy, with naval backing, devoted considerable resources to monitoring, registering, inspecting, and taxing maritime commerce. Second, the Qing state feared that any security threats from within the islands might easily line up with the external threats. State officials consequently placed equal emphasis on control of the local population.

Low-grade but chronic disputes between families over financial concerns were, directly or indirectly, the major source of conflict in villages across the islands and thus a principal concern in internal control. The family was the minimal unit making and held accountable for financial transactions. The widespread dependence of rural families upon commodity production seems to have generated pressures that made conflict between families chronic.

Families depended for their commodity production upon ownership of dry fields for farming and boats and nets for fishing.³ They had to strike a balance between reliance upon production of crops and fish for commerce and for domestic consumption. In addition, farming and fishing each had its own time-sensitive schedule. In the best of circumstances, the result was a constant juggling within and between these respective schedules. In less ideal circumstances, two other factors further complicated these productive activities. One was weather: annual rainfall was chronically low and droughts frequent. Typhoons threatened all production from early spring to late fall. Moreover, “salt rain” (*xian yu* 鹹雨, seawater blown onto fields by typhoon and winter gales) threatened farming year-round. A second factor was variability in com-

² On the nexus between Magong temples and the state, see the important book by Yu Guanghong (1988).

³ For overviews of the economy, see Chen Zhengxiang, ed. (1955) and Wilkerson (1990).

modity prices. The prices of the commodities shipped from Penghu were set off-island, in the unpredictable markets of South Fujian ports that were in turn firmly integrated into the distant vacillations of regional markets and the world system.

Deciding the balance between maximization of commodity production against the danger of insufficient production for domestic consumption took place when villagers selected crops and decided on cropping. The two principal crops were sweet potatoes and peanuts. Both were New World crops that had entered Asia only late in the fifteenth century or early in the sixteenth century; both were well adapted to the marginal agricultural conditions on the islands. Sweet potato may be cultivated in sandy soil, with low rainfall, though it is necessary to replace the nutrients lost through its cultivation. It served as the principle staple for domestic consumption. Peanut cultivation, again possible in sandy soil and with low rainfall, had the further advantage of replacing nutrients lost through the cultivation of sweet potatoes. Peanuts were the principle commodity crop on Penghu. After harvest, peanut processing took place in small factories that extracted oil (used in cooking) from the pulp (used as a fertilizer). Sweet potatoes and peanuts complimented one another when inter-cropped or planted in rotation, and local regimes of these practices reached exquisite levels of complexity. Fishing also provided for family consumption and trade. The exploitation of the full spectrum of marine life helped the villagers meet personal consumption needs. The main commodities were fish oil and dried fish. Like farming, fishing is time sensitive, in this case determined by tides and seasonal availability of fish resources.

Although all families were involved in fishing and farming, the poor depended almost solely upon the production of unprocessed commodities. Some families, while also farming and fishing, additionally owned and operated small-scale fish or crop processing factories. Factory owners purchased unprocessed farm or fish products from other village families, processed them, and then sold them through Magong for subsequent export off-island. While the factories took considerable investment to set up, and the owners had to accustom their finances to the time lag between purchase and sale, the cost of labor remained low.

In addition to farm and fish commodities, the third crucial type of commodity was money. Money was possibly the most profitable legal commodity on the islands. For most families, loans were unavoidable and interest rates high. The buying and selling of money allowed the buyer to bridge schedules of investment and income, whether they be in fishing or farming, production, processing, or marketing. Failure to obtain credit or an inability to repay loans meant bankruptcy. Although their domestic consumption needs meant

that all rural families owned a certain amount of farmland, the low profitability of farm production apparently discouraged investment in land as a strategy for increasing wealth. Penghu saw no concentration of farmland that created a division between landlord and tenant families. Making loans seems to have been a better investment than owning land.

The role of commodities in general and money in particular in village life often meant a heavy reliance upon family account books and chits. The illiterate poor had only chits for loans they owed others, while the educated, though not always wealthy, kept elaborate account records. Each type of document provided in its own way a record that quantified exchanges. Thus, on the one hand, they supplied information for planning and executing economic decisions; on the other hand, they were legal instruments crucial to the enforcement of exchanges. Educated local elites played a two-fold role in the social processes associated with the creation and use of family account books and chits in rural communities. First, they wrote them; second, they mediated conflicts and adjudicated illegal behavior where enforcement of these instruments was crucial to the integrity of both state control and the commodity economy.

Civil Bureaucracies and Their Sub-Bureaucracies

Between 1728 and near the end of Qing rule, the Penghu Islands were administratively organized as a sub-prefecture (*ting* 廳) of what was called until 1887 Taiwan Prefecture (*fu* 府); after Taiwan became a province in that year, it was renamed Tainan Prefecture.⁴ To effect administrative control over the islands, the local magistrate (*tongpan* 通判) of the sub-prefecture headed two distinct civil bureaucracies, each with its own sub-bureaucracy. These sub-bureaucracies were composed of members of the local population who carry out government functions on behalf of state interests. In late imperial China generally, effective sub-bureaucracies were pivotal in maintaining state rule.

The first civil bureaucracy in the islands comprised the government office, or *yamen* (衙門), and its sub-bureaucracy, known as the harbor watch (*aojia* 澳甲). The harbor watch handled problems of physical control specific

⁴ Except for quotations where pagination is always supplied, or when otherwise specified, all material in this section comes from the appropriate sections of the local histories named above. Sections on education are called "Cultural Affairs" (*wenshi* 文事) (Hu 1961 [1766]:75-98; Jiang 1961 [1832]:21-24; Lin 1961 [1893]:107-134). For issues of local physical control, the sections by Hu (1961 [1766]:197-222) and Jiang (1961 [1832]:61-68) are termed "Taxes" (*fu shui* 賦稅) and "Household Obligations" (*huyi* 戶役), but "Economics and Governance" (*jingzheng* 經政) for Lin Hao (1961 [1893]:85-106). Additional material is available for both education and local physical control in all three histories under the section entitled "Customs" (*fengsu* 風俗).

to the situation along the coast. Similar to sub-bureaucracies of physical control elsewhere in the empire, the state's explicit intention in the Penghu Islands was for the sub-prefecture *yamen* and its harbor watch sub-bureaucracy to carry out the mission of physical control through taxation and policing the local population. The second bureaucracy took the form of the official Veined Stone Academy (*Wenshi Shuyuan* 文石書院) and its sub-bureaucracy of community schools. Again, like elsewhere in the empire, the expectation was that community schools and the academy would "transform through education" (*jiaohua* 教化), inculcating in the local population orthodox knowledge and behavior.

The Qing ideal of local physical control directed relevant bureaucracies and sub-bureaucracies to be bluntly coercive and separate from local village authorities. The *yamen*'s powers of arrest and punishment backed the state's extraction of wealth (taxes) and its imposition of standards for behavior (policing). The general view of the state was that too close an integration of the *yamen* with such prominent features of the local landscape as lineages, temples, and other elites might compromise this coercive mission. The same directive, keeping local elites at arm's length, did not extend to education bureaucracies and sub-bureaucracies, however. Although local control was the shared goal of both *yamen* and academy, the latter was by design intended to make greater use of lineages, temples, and powerful local figures. This was a peculiarity of the administration of Penghu; elsewhere in the empire in late imperial times, active state participation in local education was often largely or even wholly absent (see Elman and Woodside 1994).

Ideals of local governance notwithstanding, the involvement of lineages and temples in at least the *yamen* sub-bureaucracy was widespread across large areas of the empire. Local elites became increasingly involved in assisting state officials assert control over their communities. In the Penghu Islands, too, lineages and temple organizations, as well as local educated elites involved themselves in performing various sub-bureaucratic roles.

There were, however, important differences in the situation of the Penghu Islands. The major focus of local control fell squarely on settling inter-family conflicts induced by commodification. This also meant that local education and learning, as they related to creating and enforcing legal instruments, took on an important economic dimension.

Compared to elites elsewhere, educated Penghu elites played a more formal role in the mediation and adjudication phases of local control in the rural villages. They enjoyed official status through their affiliation with an academy administratively and financially integrated into the local state government. And although local histories do not mention this, within Penghu's rural

communities, only the educated elites seem to have commanded the degree of learning and the stature necessary to create and maintain all or nearly all of the documents pertaining to local lineages and temple organizations.

In another contrast with other regions of imperial China, written instruments played a more intensive role across Penghu in the enforcement of transactions within lineages and the temple organizations. Local lineages, residentially organized into named neighborhoods, each claimed a founding Penghu ancestor (*kai Peng zu* 開澎祖) as its focal ancestor. Temple organizations were organized at a higher level, subdivided internally into tithings (*jia* 甲) and sometimes private tithings (*sijia* 私甲). The organization of the tithings and private tithings corresponded to that of neighborhoods and meant that multiple layers of relationships came into play whenever conflicts arose, and reliance on written instruments generated by the lineage or temple organization reduced the chances that a personal dispute might escalate into broader conflict.

Since security would remain an ongoing concern for the Qing administration of Penghu, it is not surprising that schools and the learning they produced were seen as likely partners in maintaining state rule. The section below introduces the local system of schools and how it prepared community members for their role in advancing state control of their home villages.

The Organization and Impetus of Education in Penghu

The late imperial Chinese state espoused a strong ideological commitment to spreading literacy at the local level. Nevertheless, the distribution of learning was uneven for different strata within the population in any single locale, and the overall level of learning varied between different locales (again, see Elman and Woodside 1994).

Over the course of Qing rule, local magistrates in the Penghu Islands worked closely and effectively with local elites to set up a two-tier system that made some formal learning available to all males and at modest expense. As a result, orthodox learning reached a broad local male population through the community schools. Additionally, an educated elite was produced as a portion of the local population went on to receive advanced learning at the Veined Stone Academy. Strong motivation for learning among the general population was an important factor facilitating those efforts. For any single community, the effect was to produce a sizable number of its members with basic learning and a smaller but still important group of elites who had acquired advanced learning.

The collaboration between magistrates and local educated elites in organ-

izing educational opportunities for local society was the centerpiece of an even broader pattern of interaction. First, semi-official temples and state sacrifices were established and supported by trusts located largely in the temples and collected from official and commercial contributors in the market town of Magong. Taxes were levied to support the performance of state-mandated rituals throughout the islands. Second, the *Amplified Instructions on the Sacred Edicts* (*Shengyu Guangxun* 聖諭廣訓) was propagated through lectures in Magong at the Matsu Temple Government Office (*Mazu Gongsuo* 媽祖公所); it was also part of the instruction provided in village schools (Hu 1961[1766]: 57-58). Third, local authorities and elites organized an ever-normal granary (*changping cang* 常平倉) to alleviate the effects of periodic natural disasters. Fourth, they set up a foster home for orphans and the children of the indigent. Finally, by late in the Qing era as the central state became ever weaker, local scholars worked with other elites and state officials to establish local militias (*tuanlian* 團練) for defense of their villages.

Basic learning was widely available around the islands in community schools open to young boys studying as beginning students (*tongsheng* 童生; alternately, *shengtong* 生童).⁵ Even at the time of Hu Jianwei's *Brief Notes on Penghu* from the early era of Qing rule:

There are community schools [*shexue* 社學] for children in all thirteen harbor watches in the Penghu Islands. Large harbor watches have three to five, smaller ones no less than two or three. [1961(1766):89]

This means that in the early Qing, although many villages may not have had their own community school, there would usually be a school at least within walking distance for most male youths. In the last years of Qing rule, when Lin Hao wrote his *Penghu Subprefecture Record*, "Each village in the thirteen harbor watches of the Penghu Islands has a community school" (1961 [1893]:109). Thus, by the end of the Qing, almost every male child had a community school in his own village. Furthermore, although earlier local histories do not specify the precise location of the schools, Lin indicates that "Each school [*shushu* 書塾] is located either in a lineage hall or a [village] temple" (ibid.:140).

Lin Hao importantly points out that basic schooling was available to even

⁵ What I call community schools were known by a variety of names, some of which may indicate differences between the levels of training they offered. These include community schools (*shexue* 社學, see e.g., Hu 1961[1766]:89), village schools (*cunshu* 村塾, Lin 1961 [1893]:109), children's schools (*mengtong xiaoguan* 蒙童小館, Hu 1961[1766]:58), or *mengshu* 蒙塾 (Lin 1961[1893]:108, 109, 323), school halls (*shuguan* 塾館, Hu 1961[1766]:90), and book schools (*shushu* 書塾, Lin 1961[1893]:323).

the poor and that these schools were set up through the initiative of the local communities themselves. Lin also implies that for most, the motivation to attend a community school was not so much in anticipation of moving on to advanced learning at the Veined Stone Academy, and even less the expectation of obtaining an official degree. Rather, the motivation was simply the desire for a basic education:

Villagers themselves hire all the community school teachers. Salaries vary, with individual communities following their own custom. . . . Annual salaries are only, at the low end, one or two thousand *wen* [文]. . . . Because of [the low pay], even the poor can send their sons to study at community schools. After two or three years, the students leave to work. This is why village schools [*cunshu* 村塾] are extremely widespread and there is no need to additionally establish charity schools [*yixue* 義學]. [Lin 1961(1893):109]

Hu Jianwei reported on methods of instruction in the village schools and their intended consequences for the early Qing era. His ideas about teaching became in turn a part of the educational culture on the islands; eventually locals worshipped him as a god, and aspiring students studied his writings over succeeding generations. His ideas about community school teaching were very specific:

. . . To learn there must be teachers and the teachers need a method, and thereby will the teaching yield results and the learning be successful. The *Book of Changes* says: "If youths are brought up correctly, this is a sacred accomplishment." Although community schools are small, they are the key to great learning. Mistakes made at this point, some slip of the hand, are hard to redress and regrettable. It must be as Lü Sikou [呂司寇] said: "Community school teachers should be scholars over forty years of age." Kindness begins with not harming people's children. These teachers should be reasonably knowledgeable. It is not necessary to exclude those without formal schooling. If [one is] close to perfect in experience and knowledge, his voice acceptable, [if he is] sufficiently knowledgeable about the organization of literary compositions and proper in literary interpretations, then it is possible to assign him to be a teacher. [Lü Sikou] also said: "Begin school before eight years of age." Start with the *Trimetrical Classic* [*Sanzijing* 三字經] to accustom [students] to information; then, [introduce] the *One Hundred Surnames* [*Baijiaxing* 百家姓] for something suited to everyday use; and [finally move on] to the *Thousand Character Classic* [*Qianziwen* 千字文]. Promote [these texts] in community schools and command that they be studied. Next, [children] need to learn to alternate lines when reciting poetry and how to put sentences together. When their eyes are attentive, their reading of characters is correct; when their minds do not wander, they understand the books. As the sentences become tighter, they comprehend the books; with repetition, they memorize them. Whenever a teacher discusses a book, he should teach the children to consider

their own families: "Is this sentence applicable to you? Are you able to learn from this book?" The teacher can furthermore ask: "Is this permissible or impermissible?" This triggers comprehension. If at another time a student misbehaves, then use the books already taught to make the student take responsibility for his behavior. Competence and virtue benefit the body and soul. Composition and writing, and sung poetry and customary etiquette, all promote the growth of a virtuous character. There are also the five proscriptions [*wujin* 五禁] to guard against frivolousness and the ten prohibitions [*shijie* 十戒] to compel students to behave with restraint. This is how to teach. Chen Zhongtang [陳中堂] of Rongmen [榕門] described Lü Sikou as one who taught according to a student's talent. Once a student knows something, he will then act with sincerity and restraint. I take this as a truth. I accept this method and apply it. In the middle of the second lunar month, I call together all the community teachers [*sheshi* 社師] in the Penghu Islands to meet with me so I can test and compare them. Moreover, while attending to duties in the countryside, I use the method of Master Cheng Chun [程純公], personally visiting the schools [*shuguan* 塾館] to correct the students as they read their books aloud. I replace the bad teachers and reward those who are diligent and systematic. Children able to memorize and explain texts and read the *Sacred Edicts* aloud fluently are given paper and brushes as encouragement. Alternately, I chastise them to encourage them and give them a sense of shame. This is how to make community teaching competent and virtuous.⁶ [1961(1766):89-90]

Even if most community school students stopped attending after a few years, a minority continued their studies.⁷ Those who continued their education beyond the community school did so at the Veined Stone Academy as academy students (*zhusheng* 諸生). A beginning student advanced to an academy student by taking and passing an exam administered by the local magistrate (Hu 1961[1766]:77). Based on those tests, academy students were subdivided into at least three official levels of status, in descending rank order: stipend student (*linsheng* 廩生), added student (*cengsheng* 增生), and supplementary student (*fusheng* 附生). The difference between the three was in the diminishing amount of government stipend they received. Academy students were not qualified to hold office.

An academy student might eventually succeed to the higher ranking general category of elites (*shenjin* 紳衿). All elites had passed an exam that qualified them, at least nominally, to hold an official post. (I am passing over the

⁶ Lü Sikou was Lü Kun (呂坤), Chen Zhongtang was Chen Hongmou (陳宏謀), and Master Cheng Chun was Cheng Hao (程顥). Lü Kun was the famous Ming Neo-Confucian and Chen Hongmou was a well known Qing Neo-Confucian. Cheng Hao, together with his brother Cheng Yi, founded the Cheng-Zhu school of Neo-Confucianism in the Song dynasty (described in Elman and Woodside 1994).

⁷ Yin Zhangyi has a helpful discussion and diagram of the classifications of students and elites in Taiwan (1989:527-533).

issue of purchased official status.) Again, the determination of rank was reached by exams. Annual exams (*suike* 歲科) were typically held at an academy of Confucian studies (*ru xue* 儒學). For academy students from Penghu subprefecture, exams were held at the Confucian academy in the prefecture seat in Tainan or sometimes, by special dispensation, in Penghu. The types of status awarded through prefectural exams importantly included tribute students (*gongsheng* 貢生) and government students (*shengyuan* 生員). Other much loftier statuses could be attained by passing the triannual provincial exams (*xiangshi* 鄉試) to become a provincial graduate (*zhuren* 舉人), or the exam in Beijing to become a metropolitan graduate (*jinsi* 進士). Penghu elites included graduates at each of the above levels, and Penghu produced Taiwan's first metropolitan graduate.

These Penghu elites were critical to the state's control mechanisms in three ways. First, they were important in the creation, oversight, and operation of the Veined Stone Academy, which systematically increased their numbers over the course of Qing rule. Second, and equally important, they eventually led the local militias set up on the islands in *Tongzhi* 13 (1870, 同治 13 年) (Lin 1961[1893]:156), and Lin Hao even hoped at the very end of the Qing that they might replace the harbor watch heads, who had become increasingly powerful and corrupt (*ibid.*:140). Third, a point to which I return to in depth below when I discuss the distribution of power in rural villages, was that these elites played a central role in the mediation and adjudication of conflict.

The move from beginning student in a community school to academy student implied not simply a significant change in motivation from basic to advanced learning. It in fact represented a move toward sacred imperial space. The magistrate Hu Jianwei, who was pivotal in setting up both the Veined Stone Pavilion and community schools throughout the countryside, provides a proud and affectionate account of the island's scholars and his personal involvement in the creation of the academy in his *Brief Notes on Penghu*:

Over eighty years have passed since the incorporation of the Penghu Islands into the realm. The Way [*dao* 道] has finally penetrated to the marrow. All families know courtesy and modesty and musical instruments, strings, and song. Geographically, the Penghu Islands are so much gravel flung away across the ocean. Yet, the Confucian scholars here are refined and exemplary. They fix their eyes on good examples. This is different from Confucian scholars on the mainland who crowd around the walls of officials, and whom officials must lecture [against such practices] day and night. Confucian scholars of the Penghu Islands look upon someone who is worthy with the same reverence as when admiring a lofty mountain. Their admiration is especially sincere and genuine. [Hu 1961(1766):75]

And,

Only the Penghu Islands, which became one corner of the empire after entering the realm over eighty years ago, had yet to establish an academy. The education officials [*jiaoguan* 教官] were across the ocean over three hundred *li* [里] away. It was impossible to bring an official school to Penghu, and beginning students who wanted to pursue the venerable ways lacked an entrance. Good teachers from whom a beginning student could learn were scarce, and so those students could but look out to sea and sigh. How can you expect tradesmen who live in isolation to make products as they should, with their hands doing what their minds expect of them? It is not that I know scholars, but, though I came to this position without deserving it, I cannot decline to transform the people and create scholars. Beginning when I assumed my post I personally inspected the schools for beginning students. The scholars were refined and exemplary. However, I found by listening and observing that no one was in charge, and that those who were bright and accomplished eventually drifted away. It was a great misfortune to lose them. I thereupon made use of my spare time to prepare instructions on how to become Confucian and moral, a method for study, and a model for composition. The seasonal classes and monthly tests, together with the quality of learning, gradually took shape. No one had entered into the ranks of the select [i.e., passed an official exam] from the Penghu Islands for the past ten years and more. That three [students] from Penghu “captured the wonder” [of passing] this year’s [prefecture] exam is something that is truly unprecedented. People have become motivated and the tribute students Xu Yingyuan and Chang Mianmei, as well as the national university student [*jiansheng* 監生] Cai Lianhui and others solicited contributions to build an academy to help the literati. Shortly thereafter they reported to the education censor [*xuexian* 學憲] of this Circuit [*dao*], the Honorable Zhang, and consulted in writing with the Prefect, the Honorable Qin [about building an academy]. All approved. I contributed one hundred taels of silver to complete the goodness of the masses. A beautiful site in Wena Village was chosen and construction began in the first lunar month in the winter of *Qianlong* 31 [1766, 乾隆 31 年]. It was completed in the first lunar month of summer in *Qianlong* 32 [1767, 乾隆 32 年]. The lecture hall in the middle is three bays long and has a placard that reads “Heirs to the Stag Grotto” [Stag Grotto is a reference to Zhu Xi’s (朱熹) Neo-Confucian center of learning called the White Stag Grotto Academy (*Bailudong Shuyuan* 白鹿洞書院)]. Images of the Five Worthies [*wuxian* 五賢]—Zhu, the two Zhengs, Zhou, and Zhang—are located there, and sacrifices are offered to them at the center of the lecture hall. There are three rooms at the front gate, with the middle structure being multi-storied. [An image of] the God of Literature [*kuei-xing* 魁星] is located and sacrificed to in the upper story. The rear ten rooms are classrooms for the academy students [*zhusheng*]. The main placard reads “The Veined Stone Academy.” [Hu 1961(1766):79–80; see also Lin 1961(1893):61]

The Veined Stone Academy additionally provided a venue for students to directly interact with one another, with state officials, and through this elite

node, with merchants from Magong City and the China mainland. (Although not explored in this article, these networks were important for local elites both economically and politically.) Local magistrates played a direct role in designing the curriculum and even lecturing academy students. Magistrates further provided travel expenses out of their special fund of “silver for fostering honesty” (*yanglian yin* 養廉銀) to local academy students who sat for exams in Taiwan. The local histories all note the shared emphasis Qing officials and Penghu Island natives alike placed on a Confucian education as well as the activist role that each took in promoting Confucian education on the islands. The brief biographies of educated elites in these local histories additionally note with considerable emphasis the impact of advanced learning on the lives of academy students and their place and role in their home communities. This was even the case for those educated elites whose means were quite modest.

Official Agencies and Mechanisms of Local Control

Similar to its commitment to promoting orthodox Confucian thought and behavior through a system of schools, the late imperial Chinese state additionally used bureaucracies and sub-bureaucracies to help fill its coffers through taxation and to insure the continuation of its regional control through policing.⁸ The results of these activities varied, with some locales notoriously difficult to bring into line, while governance of other locales was comparatively easy. Compare, for instance, the well-known difficulties the Qing experienced trying to assert control over Taiwan with the Penghu Islands, where local governance was comparatively unchallenged. Local magistrates in Penghu readily attributed what difficulties they encountered to the disadvantages of the local environment and the frequency of natural disasters.

Four specific features emerge as especially salient for the relative ease of governing in Penghu. First, the state heavily garrisoned the islands, making any major outbreak of conflict among the local population subject to certain armed suppression. Second, taxes on the islands were extraordinarily low (Lin 1961[1893]:56). Third, the *yamen* and harbor watch organizations were effective at registering the local population and their properties for both policing and tax purposes. Fourth, although the functionaries of the *yamen* and harbor watch were as feared and loathed as elsewhere in the empire, opportunities to create havoc through abuse of their positions were circumscribed by elders

⁸ For discussions of Qing era harbor watches in particular and local governance in general, see Huang Yuxing (1982); Lin Huicheng (1996); James Wilkerson (1990).

and the educated elites who played their own important role in maintaining order in local communities.

Like other such sub-bureaucracies, the effectiveness of the harbor watch's policing and taxing functions depended upon *yamen* functionaries and harbor watch heads who created, updated, and enforced, under local magistrate supervision, written legal instruments in the form of registers, deeds, door placards, and tax receipts. The issuance and tracking of these instruments on the islands seems to have been especially well managed.

Critically, the harbor watch sub-bureaucracy organized persons and properties within a hierarchy of ever narrower and numerous subdivisions. These subdivisions were also used to organize records and the allocation of personnel who retained and implemented them. These subdivisions started immediately below the sub-prefecture and included first the harbors (*ao* 澳), then the villages (*she* 社 and, later, alternately *hsiang* 鄉), and finally the tithings (*jia* 甲). The term harbor watch (*aojia* 澳甲) was used in two distinct senses: first, as the name of the *yamen*'s enforcement sub-bureaucracy; and second, as the post of tithing head, a functionary chosen from within the local population to serve at the *yamen*.

The harbor watch head was responsible for handling instruments of both the policing and tax functions (Hu 1961[1766]:56, 59; Lin 1961[1893]:86, 176, 177, 323). These were prepared in conjunction with *yamen* functionaries and under the supervision of the magistrate. The terminal units targeted in the writing and execution of the instruments were the tithing and the individual households. Both *yamen* functionaries and harbor watch heads commanded basic literacy, though not the advanced formal schooling of educated elites. The magistrate probably had little or no interaction with either of these functionaries outside their official bureaucratic and sub-bureaucratic duties.

Comparison of the information on the harbor watch in local Penghu histories with information for the local lineages and temple organizations indicates that statuses used by the harbor watch were additionally present in lineage and the temple organizations. This fact is crucial because of the centrality of status in legal instruments used in the enforcement of local physical control.

Although there are no known surviving harbor watch instruments, local histories preserve census and tax receipt results; these give definitions of legal persons for the different particulars of police and tax functions. The local histories also describe many of the activities involved in the preparation and use of harbor watch instruments. These descriptions make clear that the instruments employed for policing and taxing formed a single coherent whole.

All legal instruments pertaining to these functions involved relations between persons and properties within a single tithing. The pivot to this sys-

tem was the door placard (*menpai* 門牌).⁹ One door placard was assigned for each household (*hu* 戶), a household referring to a family living together in a single residence located within a single tithing. The door placards were prepared as part of the “registration and enumeration of the security watch” (*biancha baojia* 編查保甲). Information on the door placards included the name and occupation of the household head and each living household member, each person’s marital status, and the relationship of each person to the household head.

The major statuses assigned by the harbor watch included: living household members (*dingkou* 丁口), age-based adult males (*zhuangding* 壯丁), and marriage-based adult males (*ding* 丁). The first was important to the policing function in general, which depended on knowledge of all living household members. The second involved the recruitment of household members for the local militia, which made use of a specific segment of adult males (Lin 1961 [1893]:108, 389-392). The third was more narrowly involved in taxation.

Additionally, the household information displayed on door placards had two distinct uses in the reckoning of taxes. First, land taxes assessed the actual amount of crop land cultivated by individual owners, who would be either the household head or one of the married sons. (It is difficult to determine the precise status used for assessing this tax; the basis of calculation seems to have been ownership, and the transmission of crop lands to sons probably took place at marriage.) Second, the taxable value of fishing equipment was reckoned in terms of the quota of boats and nets. Each household paid a fraction of the total quota for the village, based on the number of its living members.

The status of local Penghu lineages and temple organizations clearly derived from their locality’s harbor watch definitions (see Wilkerson 1990 for a detailed discussion). To begin with, a lineage’s status was consistent with the status it held within the harbor watch’s militia organization. Registers of adult males (again, *ding* or even *zhuangding*) were age based (usually including men from sixteen to sixty years of age). Adult male status was “advanced into” (*jinding* 進丁) and “retired from” (*tuiding* 退丁) by individual lineage members. Males automatically assumed the status of lineage elder (*zuzhang* 族長) when they “retired from” adult male status. In addition, two types of status within temple organizations were consistent with the two categories employed in the harbor watch’s tax function. Village temple organization members included married adult males (*ding*), village elders (*xianglao* 鄉老), and the

⁹ On door placards in Taiwan in the Qing era, see *Rinji Taiwan Kyūkan Chōsa Kai* (1983 [1910]).

general population (*renkou* 人口). The first status category included both adult males (married men with no married sons) and village elders (men with at least one married son) and corresponded with the category set for reckoning land taxes. The other type was based on the total number of living household members and corresponded to that used for general policing and for taxing fishing equipment.

Finally, within a village, tithing boundaries were coordinate with the boundaries of local lineages. To begin with, a brief but important reference to the relationship between local lineages and harbor watch heads is available for the last years of Qing rule (Lin 1961 [1893]:86). Nanliao Village in the Kuibi harbor watch had four lineages, with one harbor watch head per lineage (*ibid.*). There were probably, in addition, four tithings (as there still are for that village's temple organization), implying further, one harbor watch head for each tithing. However, in nearby Hongluo Village, again in the Kuibi harbor watch (whose community compacts are discussed below), no information survives on the correspondence of harbor watch heads with local lineages. Nonetheless, the principle of overlapping boundaries between lineages and tithings is the same, though the particulars are more complex.

Written Legal Instruments and Educated Elites in Enforcement

It is possible to track legal instruments at different points along their lifespan, including their role in conflicts and illegal behavior as well as their place in the mediation and adjudication process.¹⁰ With the clarification of these features, it is possible to consider the consequences of reliance on such instruments in a commodified local economy with a strong state presence.

Of the three positions of authority in rural villages, educated elites and harbor watch heads belonged to a state bureaucracy and were literate, but elders were neither. The relative weight and scope of authority exercised by these three positions changed over time, and yet the former remained consistently anchored in their respective sets of legal instruments.

The remainder of this section details changes in the relative authority of elders, local educated elites, and harbor watch heads in conflict resolution as described in the local histories. The discussion that follows, concerning the content of account books and compacts, together with their inter-textual inte-

¹⁰ See Mark A. Allee's *Law and Local Society in Late Imperial China: Northern Taiwan in the Nineteenth Century* (1994) for the judicial process for the bureaucracy and sub-bureaucracy of local physical control.

gration, points to the subtle but important role educated elites played in underwriting the credibility of transactions in local communities.

Conflict, Mediation, and Adjudication

The precise sources of conflict in the islands are unspecified for the first decades of Qing rule. Local histories provide important, if incomplete, indications about conflict for the rest of the Qing, however. Over the latter period, financial distress and resultant conflict progressively increased, necessitating a similar increase in mediation and adjudication activities. It is important to note that this trend included an upsurge in court cases and significant changes in how the *yamen* functioned, but I will not pursue that subject here for reasons of space. The conflicts themselves involved mainly cases of dunning, illegal behavior, and the transmission of property. Dunning revolved around conflicts over debts. Illegal behavior took the form of theft, gambling, and licentiousness. Information on the transmission of property is only available for *yamen* trials, and so official mediation of conflicts over such transactions cannot be discussed in depth here.

Parties liable to benefit from mediation elicited that intervention by making disputes public. Local educated elites, lineage or temple organization elders, and, though involvement of the harbor watch head was widely avoided, even harbor watch heads, could step forward and mediate a solution. Resolution of conflicts through mediation was supposed to be consensual rather than imposed by bullying and other threats, and public opinion for mediated resolutions was strong. The adjudication of minor illegal behaviors occurred within the village temple, major crimes were tried at the *yamen*. And although the practice was discouraged, decisions reached within the village could be appealed at the *yamen*.

A few details about the process of conflict resolution point to tensions present in local communities and the means used to mediate and adjudicate disputes. First, Hu Jianwei quotes Zhou Yuren and Hu Ge's slender early local history entitled *A Brief Record of Penghu* (1961[1736]) to the effect that "Penghu settlements select elders for leaders." Second, he adds:

Whenever there is an incident, big or small, within a harbor watch, everyone still listens to the judgment of the village elders. As ever, word of arguments and fistcuffs [literally "mice teeth and sparrow fights" *shuya que jiao* 鼠牙雀角] soon enough reaches the village elders. The greatest of attention is also given to the literati. This includes the special courtesy shown elites and cultivated talents [*xiucai* 秀才], [as well as] primary-level community teachers. The literati likewise know how to restrain themselves and obey the regulations of the Stele for Reclining [臥碑]. They do not judge community wrongs arbitrarily, nor do they frequent

the *yamen*. [Hu 1961(1766):149]

For the middle period of Qing rule, Jiang Yong's local history additionally refers to the role of the elite class of scholars in mediation:

... An elite [*shenjin*] may settle a minor matter turned over to him, remarking on its rights and wrongs. Alternately, the dispute might continue and reach a stalemate. Bystanders then give guidance and direct the person in the wrong to make a present of betel nut to make amends. No difficulty is irresolvable. [Lin 1961(1893):140]

An extreme example of dunning from Lin Hao's history of the late period of Qing rule, however, is notable for the absence of intervention by elders, local elites, and even harbor watch heads:

Sometimes there is drought and scarcity, and the people cannot provide for themselves. [At other times people] get involved in a legal dispute and are cleaned out by minor government functionaries. [At yet at other times people] accumulate debts over a long period, where the principle [*mu qian* 母錢] was small, but the interest has become overwhelming [*panli* 盤利]. Creditors [then] coerce soldiers to go and ransack [the creditor's] home. Faced with a precarious situation, no one [in the family] knows what to do. Fellow residents become intimidated and submissive. The only remaining way to make amends is for [the family] to sell their children. This situation truly deserves our commiseration. [Lin 1961(1893):326]

For the early era of Qing rule, local histories consistently cite the position of elder as the dominant authority in Penghu communities. Scattered references in the histories, confirmed in the account books and community compacts, distinguish between lineage elders and temple organization elders. In reality, the same persons acted as elders in both capacities, which differed only insofar as the principles of selection differed slightly, and because lineage and temple organizations elders were charged with distinct spheres of local physical control. Elders in general mediated inter-family conflicts and adjudicated minor illegal behavior. But the local histories make clear that their authority changed over time. Literacy may have become more important in conflict mediation and adjudication, and the elders' seeming loss of importance may have been due to a contraction of the scope of their mediation, shifting inter-family conflicts to the local educated elites or, if worse came to worse, to harbor watch heads and *yamen* functionaries.

The local histories similarly cite the presence of educated elites in mediation and adjudication from early Qing times. As noted earlier, an important feature particular to the educated elite group in Penghu was the systematic expansion of its numbers. This provided important alternatives for the alloca-

tion of authority in rural villages, including leadership roles in the local militia and even Lin Hao's hope that such elites might replace harbor watch heads. Local educated elites held dual status, as members of their lineage and temple organizations and as holders of official status in the education sub-bureaucracy. In this they were similar to the harbor watch heads, who, as members of the local community, also held official status in a state sub-bureaucracy. Local magistrates, like elders and harbor watch heads, called on educated elite assistance to tackle local problems without imposing solutions and also asked elites to additionally monitor and report any behavior among fellow villagers that might be dangerous to state interests. This was entirely in line with the elites' commitment to the state as graduates of the local academy.

Division of official responsibilities in security enforcement among state agencies meant the harbor watch heads always remained at least formally responsible for detection and seizures, while the *yamen* retained final authority for adjudication of otherwise irresolvable or truly serious offenses. By the late Qing, the clout of harbor watch heads had expanded so much that the position explicitly held supreme authority within the local communities. At the same time, however, harbor watch heads had become increasingly notorious, along with *yamen* functionaries, for taking bribes, extracting fees, and engaging in favoritism (one example is recorded for about 1879; see Cai Lingxiang, in office 1879-1881, quoted in Lin 1961[1893]:404-405).

Legal Instruments in Local Governance

Villagers call their lineage account books "ancestral account books" (*zu bu* 祖簿), and those of temple organizations "temple account books" (*miao zhang bu* 廟帳簿). Lineage books usually declare "such-and-such lineage" on their covers. Village residents already active early in the 1920s claimed that in the early first decade of the century lineage and temple organization account books were kept by local educated elites who had received their schooling late in the era of Qing dynasty rule.

The earliest extant ancestral account books from the village of Hongluo are lineage records that date to the first years of Japanese colonial rule (i.e., after 1895).¹¹ For local lineages, the updating of accounts took place on the

¹¹ Unfortunately, account books for temple organizations from a similarly early period have not survived. I thus discuss only lineage account books. The calligraphy of Japanese-era entries and the sophistication of the accounting techniques used deteriorated rapidly over the course of Japanese colonial rule (1895-1945) as the remaining Qing-educated elites died off. Teachers have performed this function for their lineages and temple organizations over the Republican era (1945 to present).

Winter Solstice at the lineage hall or a home serving that year (through a system of rotation) as the site for the lineage's ancestor worship and banquet. Temple organizations are said to have organized their accounting around the Three Meetings (*Sanhui* 三會, an important division of dates in Chinese Daoism).

There is considerable variation between ancestral account books, and even variation within the same account book over time, though the principles followed are consistent.¹² These books are internally organized into a single section for each annual Winter Solstice worship and feast, with the day and year (reckoned according to the sixty-year celestial stem calendar) given in large characters as section headings. The names of the hosts (*zuodong* 作東) for that year appear in smaller characters in the upper margin immediately above the section heading. The position of host rotated among holders of adult male status in a lineage according to age, going from older to younger.

Individual entries begin immediately after the section heading. The categories of entries were interspersed, but generally included: (1) "reporting" of major life events, (2) "sashes" conferred, (3) (total) worship fees or contributions received, (4) personal loans extended, and (5) total expenditures. Entries for accounts received appear in columns in the upper half of the page, and entries for accounts paid out are given in columns in the lower half of the page.

Two general categories of events included life-cycle events and annual cycle events. At least two kinds of life-cycle events were "reported" (*bao* 報): "reporting a grandson" (*bao nansun* 報男孫), and "reporting a new marriage" (*bao xinhun* 報新婚). I was also told that sometimes "report" was made when boys reached maturity or adult male status (*bao ding* 報丁). The ancestral account books recorded these events under the name of the father or (paternal) grandfather in whose name the fee was paid. I am unfamiliar with the meaning of the sashes, though they presumably conferred some honorific role.

The remainder of the items listed all represent annual cycle events. The listing of annual fees was in aggregate, probably representing the collection of such fees from each adult male or contributions rolled over from interest income on loans. Both lineage members and nonmembers took out loans. As with the life-cycle events, a separate entry was made for each loan. Each entry listed the borrower, the amount, the dates of the loan and repayment (often in installments), and sometimes the name of the person or the presence of a chit

¹² The description that follows covers early entries from the "Daily Account Book for Hongluo [Village], Tingliao Settlement, Hong Surname" (covering 1898-1919).

guaranteeing repayment. Occasionally a chop imprint certified a transaction. The tendency seems to have been to allow loans to lineage members on an unsecured basis. Secured loans were, in turn, mainly extended to non-lineage members or to anyone with questionable credit. The principle (*mujin* 母金) and interest (*lijin* 利金) came due each Winter Solstice. It was possible to roll over debts and even interest for a maximum of three years. Until undermined by inflation and forced contributions to the government shortly after World War Two, the principle of lineage endowments expanded through the (usually between ten and twenty percent) interest collected on annual loans. I have no evidence of debtors defaulting and elderly villagers told me firmly that, except in turbulent times, default was simply not an option.

Two versions of a different sort of instrument, the community compact for Hongluo Village, survive under the single title of "Community Ordinances" (*Xiangzhong jinyue tiaokuan* 鄉中禁約條款) in the Couplet Chapbook (*Lianbu* 聯簿), a handwritten copybook kept by an educated elite of the village active in the last decades of the Qing.¹³

The first version includes fourteen ordinances, while the second includes six. Both versions specify the general relation of local lineages and temple organizations to the harbor watch's policing function. Interestingly, they describe policing but are silent about taxation. Although undated, the contents of two compacts indicate that the roles assigned to harbor watch heads correspond with the period before and after this post was given ultimate power in communities across the islands.¹⁴

These versions of the community compact furthermore make explicit the ways in which local lineages and temple organizations each predominated in their respective spheres. On the one hand, lineages and their elders were called upon to monitor moral behavior and seize anyone engaged in illegal activities, including theft, destruction of property, gambling, and the mixing of men and women that came with gambling dens. On the other hand, temple organizations and their elders were called upon to regulate behavior that might instigate conflict between lineages, as well as overseeing the relationship between village members and the harbor watch and *yamen*. Moreover, it is important to note that, other than the preparation of the community compact itself, none

¹³ These two versions of the Hongluo compact are published as appendices in Wilkerson (1994).

¹⁴ Their wording closely follows that of the local histories. Community compacts in Taiwan had to be authorized by the state (Dai 1979), and their parallels with the local histories, together with what is known about educated elite involvement with the local magistrate through the Veined Stone Academy, suggests a similar procedure for the Penghu Islands. Huang Yuxing (1982) also provides samples of compacts from other Penghu villages in the last years of Qing rule.

of the problem behaviors covered in the compact called for written or literate interventions. In sum, temple organizations involved themselves primarily in mediation rather than seizure whether the conflict at hand was between different lineages or between village members and the *yamen*. In particularly serious or thorny cases, they could still decide to turn to local officials.

Hu Jianwei's "Ten Tenets to the Academy Compact" was yet another instrument, one that stipulated rules of participation in the Veined Stone Academy (Hu 1961[1766]:81-88). The first seven tenets cover a broad range of orthodox moral injunctions. Lin Hao added "Eight Additional Tenets to the Academy Compact" (Lin 1961[1893]:120-122), all of which cover either additional moral injunctions or methods for orthodox instruction and learning. Further, Lin's late Qing local history gives a detailed description of the organization, administration, and transformations in the Veined Stone Academy.

The tenth and final statute of Hu Jianwei's "Ten Tenets," titled "Prohibiting Litigiousness" (*jie haosong* 戒好訟), is of special importance for understanding what was expected of academy students as educated local elites. After going into why litigiousness is morally repugnant, Hu Jianwei says:

You students have book learning and your hearts beat strong. Even if not inured by nature to danger, where impropriety occurs, remain calm and tolerant. There is a solution for every problem [i.e., conflict or illegal behavior] once it is broken down. Nonetheless, should worse come to worse, you must report [an unresolved] matter to the proper official, stating the facts directly in writing. This way loyalty and character are not lost. If by fortune careful, there will not be endless litigation. Be careful to not depend upon the government to make oneself important and influential in the courtrooms. Do not depend on your familiarity with the *yamen* to influence corrupt officials. Defend the teachings of the reclining stone and pay wholehearted attention to [your] poems and books. Be upright in character and exemplary in conduct. Rare is the student who enjoys encountering litigious persons of this sort once he has himself become an official. [Hu 1961(1766):88]

The specifics in these account books and compacts and consideration of how their functions in local society interlocked supports the descriptions of the roles of the elders, local educated elites, and harbor watch heads given in the local histories and clarifies their inter-relations. To begin with, the account books specify how lineage members became indebted to one another, not simply through loans but also the various fees owed. Next, the account books include a record of the rotation of offices between members, which at least suggests the principles of that rotation. Finally, community compacts linked the offices of the local lineages and the temple organizations to specific spheres of enforcement relative to the harbor watch heads and, implicitly, to local educated elites.

Scrutiny of overlaps between the various types of status and the boundaries of the local lineages, temple organizations, and the harbor watches suggests two levels of subordination and superordination in rural villages. The first level existed between the harbor watch itself and the lineages and temple organizations. The latter two were subordinate to the harbor watch in terms of the criteria they used to define the status of their various members. However, these organizations were, in a limited way, superordinate to the harbor watch insofar as their own enforcement of their written instruments supplanted, in part, harbor watch intervention in local control. The second level of subordination and superordination existed between the local lineages and the temple organizations. At this second level, local lineages were subordinate to the temple organizations in terms of the criteria used in the mediation and adjudication between lineages and in their relationship to the state, but lineages were superordinate to the temple organizations by their internal enforcement of legal instruments drawn up for member families within any particular lineage.

Educated elites and the legal instruments they prepared were integral to both local control and an economy that relied on the use of money as a commodity. Together with the lineages, temple corporations, and their elders, the local educated elites helped sustain both the local economy and state rule. By preparing documents that formalized transactions, they advanced the collective goals of their lineages and temple organizations. In effect, their stature in their home villages and official status as literati performed a guarantor function that underwrote the reliability of the instruments they prepared. Their literacy and moral training—the specific emphasis of the state’s educational mission in this peripheral region—was brought into full play as they adjudicated financial transactions and mediated disputes between families.

Conclusion

This article has broadly considered the role of learning in the Penghu Islands. I have left several important related subjects unconsidered: First, I have left aside literacy in its religious context, a most important subject in Penghu. Second, I have not specifically considered numeracy except as a special form of literacy. Thus, I have left out the procedures behind the records in the registries and account books. Third, I have not explored details of the orthodox learning transmitted through the community schools and the Veined Stone Academy.

What this article has done instead is to explore the role of educated elites in the control of local Penghu communities across much of the era of Qing rule

there. Much of the motivation for learning seems to have turned on issues relating to the political economy. That economy was highly commodified and its legal instruments were important in buying time for the production, processing, and sale of commodities. In addition, conflict on the islands often arose around these commodities and the competition for limited funds that were, in turn, a means for producing more commodities and sometimes for survival itself.

Originally, a local gerontocracy mediated these conflicts. Though the functionaries of the sub-bureaucracy whom the state charged with executing police and tax functions were always present, their intervention could be successfully avoided in the early days. But over the course of early Qing rule over Penghu, the gerontocracy began to come under stress. The exact details are unknown, but intensification of commodification, including an intensifying competition for money, may have been key. Whatever the case, the establishment of the Veined Stone Academy was a novel response to buttress control over the villages. To at least balance and potentially avoid the interference of the *yamen* and harbor watch in local affairs, the magistrates attempted to run limited but important aspects of the relationship between the state and local communities through the ranks of educated local elites. Magistrates worked with these elites to set up and monitor schools, and continued to collaborate in this and other ways right to the end of Qing rule in the islands. Throughout this entire process, learning was an important means to ends that were thoroughly, though not only, political and economic. Learning may have been a ripe arena for ideological work, but like farming and fishing, it could also include brutally accurate practical knowledge of the world as it is.

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帝國晚期澎湖群島村社的教育與控制

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明清時期的中國，各地方政府對興學的態度各異其趣。有時國家官僚體主導鄉學的設置與運作，但是這種興學方式往往無法持久。於是，國家鼓勵地方興學，其結果卻不乏地方強勢主導，形成地方長期透過宗族甚至寺廟經營鄉學的傳統。明清時期的澎湖，國家與地方仕紳密切合作，興辦了多所「社學」，以及一所「文石書院」。就國家政策與稅賦的角度而言，這些鄉學不啻為衙門與澳甲制度以外，自成一格的官僚與次官僚機構。在清代的澎湖廳，文石書院與這些社學不僅是傳道的場所，文石書院更明文訂定了一份「書約」，內容規定地方仕紳負有調解與仲裁鄉里紛爭、舉報不法情事的責任。本文即由地方仕紳所介入之具有法律屬性的文書（legal instruments，以下簡稱律法文書）探討，指出這些菁英在澎湖村落經濟商業化過程中所扮演的核心角色。

根據清領時期地方史料的記載，澎湖的耆老、澳甲以及地方仕紳，是鄉里中維持社會秩序的三个要角。在早期，耆老在排解鄉里糾紛的事務層面，扮演比較重要的地位；晚清時期，澳甲的權力則明顯提高。澳甲顯然擁有相當的實權，但他如果濫權，鄉人有需要調解仲裁時，就會對他敬而遠之。整體而言，國家與鄉人都賦予衙門與澳甲懲治不法的權力；但是，二者也都同樣樂見違法犯紀之事在鄉里中透過調解仲裁解決，而不必走進衙門或求諸澳甲。耆老與澳甲固然在調解仲裁中有重要地位，但地方仕紳始終在鄉里秩序的維持上扮演舉足輕重的角色。這些菁英所扮演的關鍵角色之一，就是為家族、宗族與寺廟組織執筆許多可以做為調解仲裁依據的律法文書。晚清時，他們的角色更擴及統領團練。編纂地方史誌的林豪甚至倡議由地方仕紳取代澳甲的地位。

本文所討論的律法文書是一組特殊的文類，包括借貸單據、帳簿、祖簿與鄉約。一方面，它們提供有關經濟操作過程豐富的實務知識，例如帳簿就透露出當時各種交易商品的市場價格；另一方面，它們也具有法律行為的效力。也就是說，律法文書一旦生效，就改變了相關當事人彼此的地位。例如，在「祖簿」中做「報孫」的記載，不僅僅是傳遞一個訊息，這筆記載實際地改變了這個小孩、祖父以及整個宗族成員彼此間的關係。身分由此改變，未來的權利義務由此產生。地方史料與律法文書也顯示：地方層次的人身控制（physical control），高度依賴國家官僚與次官僚機制中設定的各種身分（statuses），方得實現。雖然細節尚有未明之處，但是。顯然地，澎湖的宗族與寺廟組織，對於界定其成員身分的方式，以及使用這些身份的概念，與澳甲制度中的身分界定與概念是完全一致的。也就是說，顯示在這些律

法文書中，宗族與寺廟組織的社會人（social persons）身分，雖然名義上不屬於國家體制的一環，但實際上還是依照國家對於身分界定的方式加以組織的。這個現象事關重大，因為它顯示出，從某個角度而言，地方宗族與寺廟組織，是從屬於澳甲制度之下的。

然而另一方面，澎湖紅羅村兩個不同時期的「鄉中禁約條款」版本都顯示出：至少在村的層次，也可以將澳甲制度視為從屬於地方宗族與寺廟組織之下。這兩個鄉約版本中的文字，記載並描述了村中擁有不同身分與職位的人士，在監視、緝捕及懲處不法的事務上，各自掌有不同的權責。整體而言，地方宗族在偵查、逮捕及扣押的層面扮演比較重要的角色，寺廟組織則在裁定不法，並在宗族與國家之間扮演居中協調的角色。因此，就寺廟肩負裁定以及協調村落與國家的角色而言，地方宗族可說從屬於寺廟組織之下；但另一方面，就偵查與捕扣不法的職權而言，寺廟組織也可以說是從屬於地方宗族之下。

本文描述並分析國家與地方村落間如何分權以促進地方控制，國家與地方仕紳如何協力創設官僚與次官僚並存的一套體制，這套體制形式上負有教化的任務，同時也實質地具有人身控制的作用。重要的是，在貨幣作為關鍵商品的經濟環境中，鄉人依賴借貸來促成農業與水產養殖業之間的生產與銷售，這些律法文書則顯示了國家對於地方人身控制的實踐。本文強調的重點是，(1)律法文書的書寫與使用，顯示鄉人在商品經濟體系，對於貨幣作為生產要素所具備的實務知識。(2)由於村落經濟的商業化以及國家對於地方控制高度策略性的重視，使得地方仕紳在澎湖諸島社會再生產過程中居於核心的地位。

關鍵詞：澎湖群島，菁英，教育，地方控制，律法文書
