

Dynastic Crisis and Censorial Response: Shen Pao-chen in 1854*

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If the Taiping Rebellion had been successful in toppling the Ch'ing dynasty, history would have a different story to tell and the historian would have little difficulty in identifying the years 1853-1855 as the fateful turning point of the dynasty. However, it was the Ch'ing that survived this gigantic struggle and it is often forgotten how close to collapse the Manchu dynasty was during those critical years. In 1853, the rebels had established themselves at Nanking, and, judging from the ways things were going, they were there to stay. Not content with a partial conquest, the Taipings also sent expeditions towards the imperial capital in the north and the rich Yangtze provinces to the west. Meanwhile, the Nien rebellion had broken out (1853) and the Miao (1854) and the Moslems (1855) threatened the distant southwestern provinces. On the government side, the Banner and the Green Standard forces, having reached a state of decrepitude, proved unequal to the task of pacification; the new provincial armies had yet to prove themselves an effective substitute. While caught in the dilemma of whether these new provincial Chinese armies should be allowed to overshadow the traditional dynastic forces, the court was beset with serious financial troubles. For the first time in the history of the dynasty, the government had to resort to large scale currency debasement and inflationary policies. In short, these were difficult times, and the government, to be sure, was more than prepared to look for sound proposals that would help restore its authority.

The present study focuses on one specific category of response to this dynastic crisis -- the censorial response. The study is made on the assumption that the censor, being an official without administrative responsibilities and being a guardian of the Confucian society and its ideals, was likely to be traditional in his response, particularly in regard to domestic problems. If this were so, did the existence of a dynastic crisis make him more innovative and realistic? Did the existence of a crisis circumscribe or enhance censorial freedom? Further, what kind of imperial response was the censor likely to meet with and what effect would this have on the career of an outspoken censor?

In so far as the censorial system was a vital organ in the state apparatus, these are important questions. The present study does not pretend to examine these questions comprehensively or answer them satisfactorily. A thorough study of censorial response in times of dynastic crisis would

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have to wait until we have a better knowledge of the Ch'ing censorial system itself.¹ I therefore restrict my examination to Censor Shen Pao-chen 沈葆楨 (1820-1879) and hope to come up with some general observations and to stimulate further studies.

Before we examine Shen's response to dynastic crisis, a few words need to be said concerning his intellectual background. Born into a gentry family of limited means in Hou-kuan hsien 侯官, Fukien, Shen received his early education from his parents.² According to his own recollection, it was at this time the belief that true courage and will could only come from loyalty and filial piety was strongly inculcated into his thinking.³ After his acquisition of the *ling-sheng* 廩生 degree in his early teens, he came under the influence of Lin Tse-hsü 林則徐 while serving as the latter's secretary when Lin was governor of Kiangsu (1832-1837). Although direct evidence is lacking as to Lin's *ching-shih* 經世 influence on Shen, we can assume that such an influence existed, for it was due to the sharing of common ideals that Lin chose Shen as his son-in-law at this time. Subsequently, Shen passed the *chü-jen* 舉人 examination in 1839 and acquired the coveted *chin-shih* 進士 degree of the second rank in 1847. While preparing his *chin-shih* examination at Peking, Shen shared with Li Hung-chang 李鴻章 the same examiner, an upright scholar from Chekiang, whose scholarship, as Li later recalled, was unadulterated.⁴ It is therefore safe to assume that, up to this point, Shen's personal character and ideological background represented the best within the Confucian tradition and that these qualities were reinforced while he furthered his studies in the Hanlin Academy (1847-1850) and served as a Compiler (*pien-hsiu* 編修) there in 1850 and as a Proof Reader (*tsuan-hsiu* 纂修) at the Printing Office and Bookbindery at Throne Hall (*Wu-ying-tien Hsiu-shu-ch'u* 武英殿修書處) in 1851.

In September 1852, Shen was appointed to a substantive post for the first time as Associate Examiner (*t'ung-k'ao kuan* 同考官) of Chihli. Because of his good performance, he was recommended for the post of censor in 1853, and, in June 1854, he was appointed Censor of the Kiangnan Circuit (*Chiang-nan tao chien-ch'a yü-shih* 江南道監察御史) which covered Kiangsu

- 1 To date, only a few pioneering works on the Ch'ing censorial system exist, all done in the mid-1930's: Li Hsiung-fei, *Les Censeurs sous la Dynastie Mandchoue (1616-1911) en Chine* (Paris, 1936). T'ang Chi-ho 湯吉禾 has written four articles on the subject: "Ch'ing-tai k'o-tao-kuan chih jen-yung" 清代科道官之任用, *She-hui k'o-hsüeh ts'ung-k'an* 社會科學叢刊, Vol. I, No. 2 (Nov. 1934), 153-162; "Ch'ing-tai k'o-tao-kuan chih kung-wu kuan-hsi" 清代科道官之公務關係, *Hsin She-hui k'o-hsüeh chi-k'an* 新社會科學季刊, Vol. I, No. 2 (1934), 207-213; "Ch'ing-tai k'o-tao chih ch'eng-chi" 清代科道之成績, *Chung-shan wen-hua chiao-yü kuan chi-k'an* 中山文化教育館季刊, No. 2 (1935), 517-525; and an article in *She-hui k'o-hsüeh lun-ts'ung* 社會科學論叢, Vol. I, No. 2 (1934) which I have not been able to see. For an excellent study of the Ming censorial system, see Charles O. Hucker, *The Censorial System of Ming China* (Stanford, 1966). Of related interest is Eugene Feifel's *Po Chü-i as a Censor*, (The Hague, 1961), and James T.C. Liu, "Nan-Sung chün-chu ho yen-kuan" 南宋君主和言官, *Tsing Hua hsüeh-pao* 清華學報, New Series, VII: 1 and 2, 340-349 (Aug. 1970).
- 2 Unless otherwise indicated, the information for the following passages is taken from David Pong, "Modernization and Politics in China as seen in the Career of Shen Pao-chen (1820-1879)," thesis presented for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy in the University of London, May 1969. For a brief biography of Shen, see Arthur W. Hummel, *Eminent Chinese of the Ch'ing Period* (Washington, D.C., 1943-1944), Vol. II, 642-644.
- 3 *Fu-chien t'ung-chih* 福建通志 (1922), *Lieh-nü chuan: mu-i* 列女傳: 母儀, 25a. The biography of Shen's mother was compiled by Shen himself.
- 4 Li Hung-chang's letter to Tso Tsung-t'ang, Oct. 28, 1864, *Li Wen-chung Kung ch'üan-chi* 李文忠公全集, compiled by Wu Ju-lun 吳汝綸 (Nanking, 1905). See *p'eng-liao han-kao* 朋僚函稿, 5:73a.

and Anhwei. The fact that these two provinces were among the richest in the empire and that, in 1854, they constituted part of the main theatre of military operation against the Taipings undoubtedly made his appointment an important one. Unfortunately, we have little information regarding Shen's censorial activities beyond the three memorials he submitted in 1854.⁵ Nevertheless, these memorials dealt with the most important and urgent problems of the time and, to a large extent, reflect the role of a censor in a critical period. Since each of these memorials deals with a separate subject, they can best be treated individually.

I. The Hsien-feng Inflation

Without going into the details of this financial crisis which started at the beginning of the Hsien-feng reign, it is sufficient here to point out that it was in part the culmination of a partial breakdown of the traditional Chinese monetary system since the turn of the eighteenth century. Fundamentally, it was a question of insufficient copper supply. The government's failure either to control supply or to reduce the weight of the cash coin led to large scale counterfeiting with the result that substandard coins were in general circulation. With the disturbances caused by the Taiping rebels, this had become a very serious problem indeed. In 1853 the government had to recognize the loss of copper supply from Yunnan, hitherto the main source of copper production. In order to solve the problem of supply, the government resorted to the casting of big cash, i.e., copper coins weighing less proportionately than implied by the denomination. In mid-1853, the metropolitan mints began casting 10-*ch'ien* and 50-*ch'ien* coins (weighing 0.6 and 1.8 *liang* respectively). Although their weights were much reduced, their copper contents were increased so as to make counterfeiting unattractive. The initial success of this new monetary measure induced the government to further debasement by introducing coins of even higher denominations (100-, 500-, and 1,000-*ch'ien* weighing 1.4, 1.6, and 2 *liang* respectively). This meant that, in order to maintain ratios of value between coins, the original 10-*ch'ien* and 50-*ch'ien* coins would have to be further debased.⁶ But this was not done and, as a result, counterfeiting increased to a point where it was uncontrollable while more and more people refused to accept them as legal tender.⁷

Another measure adopted by the Board of Revenue (*Hu-pu* 戶部) was the issue of government notes (*kuan-p'iao* 官票) of which there were two main types: the *ch'ien-p'iao* 錢票,

- 5 These three memorials are hitherto unpublished and constitute the earliest known writings of Shen Pao-chen. They are reproduced in full in the Appendices. I am most indebted to Mr. Shen Tsu-hsing 沈祖馨 for the use of these manuscripts.
- 6 Jerome Ch'en, "The Hsien-feng inflation", *Bulletin of the School of Oriental and African Studies*, Vol. 21 (1958), 578-586; Frank H.H. King, *Money and Monetary Policy in China, 1845-1895* (Cambridge, Mass., 1965), Chapters V and VI; T'an Pi-an 譚彼岸, "Ch'ing chung-yeh chih huo-pi kai-ke yün-tung" 清中葉之貨幣改革運動, *Shuo-wen Yüeh-k'an* 說文月刊, No. 4 (May 1933), reprinted in *Chung-kuo chin-tai shih lun-ts'ung* 中國近代史論叢, ed. by Pao Tsen-peng 包遵彭, Li Ting-i 李定一, and Wu Hsiang-hsiang 吳相湘 (Taipei, 1958), Second Series, Vol. 3, pp.38-48; Yang Tuan-liu 楊端六, *Ch'ing-tai huo-pi chin-yung shih-kao* 清代貨幣金融史稿 (Peking, 1962), Chapter III.
- 7 For example, see Tsai-ch'üan's 戴銓 memorial of Hsien-feng 4/6/22 (Jul. 16, 1854), *Ta-Ch'ing li-ch'ao shih-lu* 大清歷朝實錄, HF 134: 9b-10b. Punitive edicts were promulgated at frequent intervals but people hardly heeded them. In August 1854, one interesting case was reported to the emperor that at T'ung-chou 通州 scoundrels were so fearless that they had set up a furnace for counterfeiting in the middle of a bustling market in broad day-light. The local officials, frightened by their numbers, dared not even make investigations. *Shih-lu*, HF 136: 5b-6a. The casting of iron and lead coins was also doomed to failure. King, *Money and Monetary Policy*, pp.149-150.

denominated in *ch'ien*, and the *yin-p'iao* 銀票, denominated in taels. These notes, initiated in the autumn of 1853, were meant to be used in the capital. Circulation was effected by handing out military and civil service payrolls in fixed proportions of notes, standard cash, and big cash. The original intention was to have redeemable notes. However, this was not to be so. The government, in fact, tried to make redemption as difficult as possible lest the purpose of the notes should be defeated. People were therefore reluctant to accept these notes.⁸

Apparently, the financial measures of the government were a failure and the situation, which probably deteriorated much faster than anybody expected, prompted a long deliberation (about 2,000 characters) from Shen Pao-chen in 1854.⁹ Shen pointed out that the government's new measures were over-hasty, full of drawbacks, and economically unsound: first, because people can easily melt standard cash and recast them into big cash thus making huge profits; second, the big cash produced thereby could then be used to purchase silver (which was a more stable medium of exchange) and in no time, the government's stock of silver would be exhausted; and third, the casting of big cash could not be a long-term solution as the supply of copper was limited, and it was likely that within six months, the government would once again run out of copper.

Shen maintained that the new currencies were definitely harmful to the government and to the people. In the first place, the Banner and the Green Standard troops would suffer as a result of the casting of big cash: "as the value of the [big] cash depreciates, the price of goods rises. [Although the bannerman] receives 4,000 [*ch'ien*], he is in fact getting the value of 2,000 *ch'ien*."¹⁰ Thus, the Banner and the Green Standard troops, whose ancestors had helped our founding emperor in creating the dynasty, would become impoverished and demoralized. Since their well-being was not looked after, how could they be expected to perform their duty? In the second place, the hsien officials would find tax collection a difficult task because counterfeiting had become so profitable that peasants would leave their fields unattended, thereby ruining the state revenue at its source while creating more social chaos. Finally, the merchants would have a hard time because, in rural areas, there was little use for big cash and therefore merchants would find it difficult to obtain rural produce with which to keep the capital in ample supply. Consequently, the coolies would suffer, since, for them, the refusal of big cash would mean the acceptance of a currency of very limited utility. If this situation was obtained, then many good people would become bad elements thus compounding the existing problem.

Shen pointed out further that there was a limit to debasement and, within months, the supply of copper would be exhausted while the basic problems would still remain unsolved. He then closed his memorial with several suggestions. Instead of dealing with these problems from the monetary point of view, apart from insisting that government notes must be made redeemable, he

8 King, *Money and Monetary Policy*, pp.150-151, 153-155; T'an Pi-an, "Huo-pi kai-ke," pp.46-47; Yang Tuan-liu, *Huo-pi chin-yung*, pp.107-111.

9 See Appendix A.

10 As a matter of fact, the bannermen were already badly paid. Franz Michael points out that "the pay of the garrisons was set at the beginning of the dynasty and remained the same. When the banner families increased, there were no additional funds to add a corresponding number of positions to the ranks, and the pay became insufficient. The pay had been fixed in relation to the prices of the middle of the seventeenth century, prices which had gone up four to ten times during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries." Michael's Introduction to Stanley Spector's *Li Hung-chang and the Huai Army* (Seattle, 1964), p.xxxiii.

suggested more flexibility in the country's financial system. In concrete terms, he proposed that (a) in the collection of land tax and grain tribute in the metropolitan provinces, the rate of copper-silver conversion should be fixed at 2,000 standard cash to the tael; the tax payers would then feel the benefits of what amounted to a tax reduction while the government, on the other hand, would be more certain of tax returns; (b) those areas which had been contributing copper to the Board of Revenue should do so in the future in copper cash (rather than raw copper); and (c) a portion of the land tax and grain tribute in the provinces should be collected in kind (unhusked grain and textiles): the portion bound for Peking should be collected in silver, as for the portion retained for provincial use, 80-90% should be levied in copper cash and the remainder in kind. Shen maintained that this last proposal would have two beneficial effects. First, it would be easier for the average citizen to pay tax in kind. Second, the storage of grain and textiles in the provinces would reduce their vulnerability during a Taiping attack.

Shen was not alone in opposing these inflationary measures. Other objections, however, came in a rather mild and negative form. Some provincial governors who disliked the measures adopted a passive attitude while others reported to the throne the negative reactions the big cash and government notes had among the populace. Apart from Shen, I can find only one other outspoken objector, Wang Mao-yin (1798-1865), who was then junior Vice President of the Board of Revenue and was one of the central figures of the Hsien-feng financial reforms.¹¹ Space does not permit a detailed account of Wang's arguments. Suffice it to say here that his objections were on the whole similar to those of Shen while the remedies he suggested were more economically oriented as would be expected of a person with past experience in economic affairs and holding high position in the Board of Revenue. Shen's proposals were more traditional and Confucian in character aiming essentially at administrative benevolence and efficiency rather than basic fiscal reforms.

The significance of Shen's objection lies in his audacity in expressing disapproval of a government in the midst of a financial crisis. While Wang Mao-yin, one of the initiators of official inflationary measures, was attacking further debasements of copper cash, Shen was attacking wholesale the basic argument for debasement.¹² This might have had serious political consequences for Shen in view of the fact that Wang Mao-yin himself had already been transferred to the Board of War in April 1854, partly for his troublesome memorial.¹³ The unfeasibility of

11 For the role played by Wang Mao-yin in the Hsien-feng currency reforms, see H. Wu, "Wang Mao-yin yü Hsien-feng shi-tai ti hsin pi-chih" 王茂蔭與咸豐時代的新幣制, *Chung-kuo she-hui ching-chi shih chi-k'an* 中國社會經濟史集刊, Vol. 6, No. 1 (Jun. 1939), reprinted in *Chung-kuo chin-tai shih lun-ts'ung*, Second Series, Vol. 3, pp.47-70. See also King, *Money and Monetary Policy*, Chapter VI.

12 King writes, "The question debated in Peking during 1853 and 1854 was not whether the measures they were adopting were potentially disruptive and inflationary – the officials knew they were – but exactly how far they could go, how much they could get away with." *Ibid.*, p.152. Shen must have been the odd man out among the dissenters.

13 *Ibid.*, p.155; Yang Tuan-liu, *Huo-pi chin-yung*, pp.97, 111-112. The transfer of Wang to the Board of War must be taken as the result of something more than disagreements over policy. After all, Wang's view was known before he was made junior Vice President of the Board of Revenue (*ibid.*, p.107). I am inclined to think that Wang was transferred mainly because of awkward personal relations with his senior colleagues at the Board, notably the senior Vice President Ch'i Sui-tsao 祁樹棻. Yang Tuan-liu, *Huo-pi chin-yung*, p. 111; H. Wu, "Wang Mao-yin," p.67. This assumption is further borne out by the fact that Wang was merely transferred, not demoted (as one might have expected), and within seven months, Wang was promoted to senior Vice President of the Board of War. *Shih-lu*, HF 149: 21b.

further official inflationary measures and the objections from various people eventually forced the government to climb down and the big cash denominated at over 100 *ch'ien* were withdrawn.¹⁴ Shen got off without any political action taken against him (his memorial was not even recorded or mentioned in the *Shih-lu* or the *Tung-hua hsü-lu* 東華續錄). It was fortunate that he was only an imperial censor at that time and not holding any substantive office.¹⁵

II. Military Reorganization, 1854

The Taiping Rebellion had upset the economy; it had also upset the effete government armies. The Banner troops, grossly underpaid, had long since degenerated into a useless social parasite rather than a military protector of the empire. With the turn of the eighteenth century, the Green Standard armies had also lost their vigour.¹⁶ Nevertheless, the central government refused to recognize this fact and faithfully placed its fate in the hands of these decrepit armies. After all, there were no real alternatives. The militia (*t'uan-lien* 團練) of south China in the 1840's, though effective in many ways, gave far too much power to the gentry. From the government's point of view, the militia was a double-edged military organization which could easily turn into hostile forces.¹⁷ Therefore, in 1853, the government officially recommended its own model of militia organization which would put the militia under the control of civil officials — the magistrates. Although this model became the most influential one in this period,¹⁸ the government's assumption that the change of command from gentry to civil officials would not reduce militia efficiency was not apparent in 1854, or, for that matter, in the next few years.¹⁹ In order to raise the level of military effectiveness, the court finally resorted to the appointment of trustworthy high-ranking officials who happened to be residing in their native districts to assume leadership in *t'uan-lien*. Out of this arrangement emerged the Hunan Army of Tseng Kuo-fan 曾國藩.²⁰ Despite the fact that this new Army was mobile and, from February 1854 on, was willing to operate outside Hunan, Tseng's army was too centralized to suit local defence needs. Meanwhile, the Taipings were rampaging through the country meeting in most places with little or no resistance. Shen Pao-chen, who had recently been made censor of the lower Yangtze area which was the theatre for the military operations of the Taipings, must have been horrified by such conditions and wrote an inspired memorial on the subject of military organization.²¹

14 King, *Money and Monetary Policy*, p.148; *Shih-lu*, HF 135: 10b-12a; Yang Tuan-jiu, *Huo-pi chin-yung*, p.98.

15 It is, of course, the duty of an imperial censor to impeach and criticise and, theoretically, enjoyed political immunity; but punishment inflicted upon outspoken censors is not unknown in the history of the Ch'ing censorial system. See T'ang Chi-ho, "K'o-tao chih ch'eng-chi," p.521, and "K'o-tao-kuan chih kung-wu kuan-hsi," p.211.

16 Spector, *Li Hung-chang*, pp.xxxii-xxxv.

17 See Frederic Wakeman, *Strangers at the Gate: Social Disorder in South China, 1839-1861* (Berkeley and Los Angeles, 1966), and Philip A. Kuhn, *Rebellion and its Enemies in Late Imperial China: Militarization and Social Structure, 1796-1864* (Cambridge, Mass., 1970), pp.50-57, 142-145.

18 Kuhn, *Rebellion and its Enemies*, pp.57-58.

19 For example, in 1855-1856, eight out of the thirteen prefectural capitals and over fifty *hsien* in Kiangsi fell into the hands of the Taipings in rapid succession. See David Pong, "The Income and Military Expenditure of Kiangsi Province in the Last Years (1860-1864) of the Taiping Rebellion," *Journal of Asian Studies*, XXVI, No. 1 (Nov. 1966), p.51. This article also appears in Chinese in the *Continent Magazine* (大陸雜誌), XXXVI, No. 1 (Jan. 15, 1968), see p.28.

20 Kuhn, *Rebellion and its Enemies*, pp.135-152.

21 See Appendix B.

Shen began by describing, with caution, the existing lack of co-ordination among military leaders. The fault lay in the concentration of military effort at one or two points where the Taipings were most active while leaving the adjacent areas inadequately guarded. This strategy was ineffectual for the recovery of one town often involved the loss of several others. Hence, a handful of rebels was sufficient to keep several military commanders and their troops busy all the time.

It would have been all right, Shen further elaborated, if the prefects and magistrates could have defended their towns for a sufficient length of time for reinforcements to come. But even the most dedicated prefects and magistrates failed to do just this. The main reasons for this, he maintained, were inherent in the existing local military organization. In the first place, the prefects and the magistrates were not normally in charge of military registers and were therefore not in the least concerned with military training. Thus, in the event of an emergency, there was nothing but confusion along the chain of command. In any case, the soldiers, who were neither directed nor trained by these civil officials, would not obey their orders when operating in areas of their jurisdiction. The problem was further compounded by the mutual distrust that existed between the military officers and the civil officials: the army officers suspected that they were looked down upon by the bureaucrats and the latter suspected that the army officers abused their power. Again, in cases of emergency, neither would take orders from the other. Rivalry and suspicion between the military and the civil also extended down the ranks. The regular soldiers (*kuan-ping* 官兵) commanded by the military officers and the irregulars (*yung* 勇) led by the civil officials competed with each other whenever there was profit to be gained. However, when confronted with an enemy, they passed the responsibility to each other. Finally, Shen pointed to the bad soldier-civilian relations: in times of peace, the soldiers protected each other against the interests of the common people and, in times of war, they caused the latter unnecessary molestations.

With these undesirable conditions existing in the country, military strategy as then posited would come to nothing. Shen pleaded for a return to the practice of the Han dynasty whereby the prefects and magistrates were responsible for the control and training of local troops. He suggested that military officers from the First Captains (*tu-ssu* 都司) down be placed under the prefects, and those from the Lieutenants (*ch'ien-tsung* 千總) down be subordinated to magistrates. If this reform was adopted, then there would be unison in command, training, and operation. Also, under this new system, the civil officials could justly be held responsible for local defence; the evasion of duty, so universal under the existing system, would disappear accordingly. As the troops would be locally financed, they would share common interests with the local population, creating the conditions conducive to better military-civilian relations. Lastly, because of this localization, the troops would serve as an effective policing force, giving little chance for thieves to throng together to form large gangs of bandits. With local defence thus improved, the provincial armies could deal more effectively with larger bands of rebels. The effect of this must not be overlooked, for it would reduce the necessity to employ out-of-province mercenary forces (which were as troublesome as they were useful).

If policing and defence were controlled by the prefects and magistrates, the protection of strategic points and the despatching of reinforcements were managed by the brigade generals (*tsung-ping* 總兵), and the general strategy planned by the commanders-in-chief (*ta-shuai* 大帥), then there would be clear definition of authority and responsibility. When these reorganizations were supplemented by the training of militia and the revival of the *pao-chia* 保甲 system, no harm could be brought to the empire.

Shen's diagnosis of the military organization as it existed in 1854, though not entirely original, was strikingly perceptive. The very strength of the Ch'ing system of control over its military and civil administration lay in the divisiveness of function and power. The Banner troops, though stationed at various parts of the empire, were centrally controlled. The Green Standard armies were, to some extent, at the disposal of the governors-general and governors — the only civil officials with military authority — but they, owing to regular changes of office, seldom commanded the loyalty of the troops. In any case, they were generalists burdened with a large variety of duties, and could hardly be expected to perform their military function properly. Then there were the prefects and magistrates who were held responsible for local defence but were not given military command. Such a system could hardly provide any effective answer to the Taiping threat. During the late 1840's and the early 1850's, a number of experiments in military organization were made on local and personal initiative. Personal armies (*ch'in-ping* 親兵), such as the one organized by Hu Lin-i 胡林翼, though effective, were not encouraged by the government, for obvious reasons.²² Tseng Kuo-fan's Hunan Army, though official and increasingly effective, was not regarded as universally desirable. By 1854, some metropolitan officials were already advising the emperor to watch the rise of Tseng with caution, as we shall see later. Much of the empire still depended on the Banner and Green Standard forces, the braves (*yung* 勇), and the gentry-led militia, according to local imagination. Shen's plan to bridge the gap between the military chain of command and the civil administration therefore had a lot to recommend.

However, in view of the vested interests which existed in the military and the suspicion the government had of anything that smacked of localism, Shen's recommendation for placing military officers under civil command must have been rather idealistic. Moreover, his assumption that civil officials were capable of training and leading local troops was optimistic. The Confucian model of a civil official, to be sure, was one of an all-round person capable of handling any problem that came to hand. But there would never be a sufficient number of these ideal officials to bring his plan to anything near success. It may be mentioned here in passing that, in 1859, Tseng Kuo-fan complained that civil officials capable of leading troops were hard to find.²³ Finally, in view of the urgency of the Taiping menace, Shen's proposals would take far too long to materialize. It is therefore not surprising that the Board of War, though ordered by the Hsien-feng emperor to examine these proposals took no action on them.²⁴ Nevertheless, when Shen became the prefect of Kuang-hsin 廣信, Kiangsi, in 1856, he promoted militarization of the district magistrates and successfully defended his area against the rebels.²⁵ In conclusion, one must emphasise the fact that Shen's proposals were based on a sound analysis of the situation and the fact that they were supported by a modern historian calls for no great surprise.²⁶

22 Kuhn, *Rebellion and its Enemies*, pp.117-135.

23 Tseng's letter to Hu Lin-i. *Tseng Wen-cheng kung ch'üan-chi* 曾文正公全集 (Taipei, 1952), 10 vols. See Vol. 9, *Letters*, pp.37-38.

24 Li Yüan-tu 李元度, *T'ien-yüeh shan-kuan wen-ch'ao* 天岳山館文鈔 (no date), 14:9.

25 Pong, "Modernization and Politics," pp. 46-53.

26 This was Lei Hai-tung 雷海宗 (1902-1962). According to him, the loss of the ancient identity of soldiers and people, institutionalized in the militia, was the source of China's military decline since the Han. Lei, "Chung-kuo ti ping" 中國的兵, in *She-hui k'o-hsüeh tsa-chih* 社會科學雜誌, Vol. I, No. 1 (1935), 1-47; and "Wu-ping ti wen-hua" 無兵的文化, *ibid.*, Vol. I, No. 4 (1936), 1005-1030. For a discussion of Lei's ideas, see Kuhn, *Rebellion and its Enemies*, pp.10-13.

III. The Strategy of October 1854

So far, dynastic resistance had been forced to take a defensive position in the war against the Taiping rebels. And as it is described by Shen in the above memorial, even defence was not effectively organized. However, the general atmosphere of despair took a sudden change in October, 1854. At last, Tseng Kuo-fan had agreed to operate his Hsiang-chün 湘軍 outside Hunan and preparations were made to that effect in September that year. After three days of general assault on October 12, 13, and 14, the twin city of Wuhan 武漢 (Wu-ch'ang 武昌 and Hankow 漢口) fell to the forces of Tseng Kuo-fan.²⁷ Wuhan, the most impregnable city along the Yangtze, which had been held by the Taipings since June 1854, was of great importance to the rebels. If they could defend it as well as several other key points, namely Hu-k'ou 湖口 and Anking 安慶, not only could they threaten the safety of any of the Yangtze provinces, but they could also maintain a very useful supply line. The capture of Wuhan by the Hsiang Army was therefore the first major victory for the dynasty and marked the beginning of a new phase in Taiping military history.

Immediately after this victory, Yang Pei 楊霽, the Governor-General of Hu Kuang, reported the news to Peking.²⁸ The court at this time suggested that Tseng Kuo-fan and T'a-ch'i-pu 塔齊布, the commander-in-chief of Hunan,²⁹ should select the cream of both the Hsiang Army and the regular troops for an eastern campaign, directed at the Taiping capital of Nanking. The court was so impressed with Tseng's success that he was given the button of the second rank, appointed Acting Governor of Hupei, and granted the right to wear the Single-eyed Peacock Feather. Tseng was ordered to deliberate with Yang Pei and T'a-ch'i-pu on how the forces should be split up for the eastern campaign and for the defence of Hupei.³⁰

On hearing this, Shen at once memorialized saying that the extermination of the Taipings was far more urgent than the rehabilitation of Hupei. The Yangtze river must be quickly cleared of rebels and an end put to all the rebel rampages along that river. Shen therefore proposed that Tseng Kuo-fan should not be appointed to any provincial post which would divert his energy and, even more important, reduce the strength of his army (since part of the troops would have to remain in Hupei). Shen correctly pointed out that this was the first major victory the dynasty had achieved and military morale was at its peak. The government must not let this opportunity slip; Tseng Kuo-fan and T'a-ch'i-pu should conduct an all-out campaign down the Yangtze immediately.³¹

27 Kuo T'ing-i 郭廷以, *Chin-tai Chung-kuo shih-shih jih-chih* 近代中國史事日誌, 2 vols. (Taipei, 1963). See vol. I, p.221. See also, W.J. Hail, *Tseng Kuo-fan and the Taiping Rebellion* (New Haven, 1927), pp.169-172.

28 Tseng's own memorial reporting the good news was not despatched until four days after the event. *Tseng Wen-cheng kung ch'üan-chi*, vol. 2, *Memorials*, pp.75-78.

29 T'a-ch'i-pu, a Manchu bannerman of considerable military leadership, was highly regarded by Tseng Kuo-fan and was Tseng's main assistant in the recovery of Wuhan. He died in the field in 1855 at the age of thirty-eight. *Ch'ing-shih* 清史, compiled by the Ch'ing-shih pien-tsuan wei-yüan-hui 清史編纂委員會, 8 vols. (Taipei: Kuo-fang yen-chiu yüan 國防研究院, 1961), pp.4740-4741.

30 *Tseng Wen-cheng kung ch'üan-chi*, Vol. 1, *Nien-p'u* 年譜, p.31.

31 See Appendix C.

Shen wrote the memorial without knowing that Tseng Kuo-fan himself had already declined, for different reasons, the appointment of Acting Governor of Hupei.³² In a further memorial, Tseng reminded the court that he was still in the middle of the mourning period after his mother's death and it was a contravention of Confucian protocol to formally assume any resident office away from home. Tseng therefore proposed to return his official seal and lead his troops down the Yangtze.³³

Before Tseng's second memorial reached Peking, the court had already changed its mind about the appointment. Instead, Tseng was awarded the title of the Vice President of the Board of War and the acting governorship was rescinded.³⁴

It is difficult to tell how much this change of policy was due to Shen Pao-chen's memorial. There is every likelihood that Shen's memorial (not dated) reached Peking before Tseng's second memorial. Internal evidence suggests this. At the same time, however, another force was working towards the same direction as that envisaged by Shen's memorial. As Franz Michael points out, there was a general fear that with the appointment to regular provincial posts, the new military leaders would become more and more powerful since they could control the revenue of that province.³⁵ However true this observation may be, direct evidence is wanting on this particular occasion. However, there is one incidental reference which suggests that there was somebody else who felt, for reasons best known to himself, that Tseng should not be made acting provincial governor. In commenting on Shen's memorial, the Hsien-feng emperor wrote, "The Court has already foreseen this," rather than the usual "Noted" (*chih-tao-liao* 知道了).³⁶ Who, then, was the "court" that was powerful enough to engineer such a revocation of an imperial edict in this particular case? The answer may never be forthcoming. No matter who this was (and he might very well be the emperor himself) he helped produce the desired result and the dynasty benefited by his action.

* * * * *

Before drawing any conclusions, we must remind ourselves that the three memorials constituted only a small portion of what Shen must have written during his incumbency from June 1854 to July 1855. Of the voluminous output of censors, particularly in times of crisis, we have some indication for the T'ang and the Ming periods.³⁷ However, the Ch'ing records are notoriously poor in this respect: only 687 memorials from 3,087 censors have been recorded — one for every 4.35 censors!³⁸ While we may congratulate ourselves for having three of Shen's memorials, we must be mindful of the fact that our conclusions are drawn from very limited sources.

32 *Shih-lu*, HF 144: 10b-11a.

33 *Tseng Wen-cheng kung ch'üan-chi*, vol. 2, *Memorials*, HF 4/9/13 (Nov. 3, 1854), pp.84-85.

34 *Ibid.*, vol. 1, *Nien-p'u*, p.32.

35 Spector, *Li Hung-chang*, p.xl.

36 Li Yüan-tu, *T'ien-yüeh shan-kuan wen-ch'ao*, 14: 9a.

37 In the T'ang dynasty, Po Chü-i, for example, was allotted 200 sheets of paper per month for memorials. See Feifel, *Po Chü-i*, p.32. In examining censorial response in a chaotic era (1620-1627), Hucker observes that the censors were "furiously active". Hucker, *Censorial System*, p.232.

38 T'ang Chi-ho, "Ch'ing-tai k'o-tao chih ch'eng-chi," p.518. See also Hucker, *Censorial System*, p.323 n8.

On the other hand, Shen's memorials are valuable because they are not concerned with routine matters of impeachment; they deal with major issues of the time. They therefore shed light on the role and the value of censors at a time when their creative performance would be most valuable to the state.

It has often been assumed that a censorial appointment was a brief and routine interlude in a bureaucrat's career and was, in many cases, no more than a training period for higher things.³⁹ The three memorials under examination do not support such an assumption. They demonstrate a certain amount of initiative on Shen's part. Admittedly, the memorials on the Hsien-feng inflation and on military strategy represent a *post facto* criticism of government policies. On the other hand, all three memorials are unmistakably policy-shapers containing concrete proposals. Whether the initiative and vigour is due to certain traits in Shen's character or to the critical nature of the period is purely a matter of conjecture.⁴⁰

In scrutinizing the memorials, certain idealistic traits reveal themselves. This is particularly so in the first two memorials in which Shen appealed for a benevolent government which would take into account the welfare of the common people when trying to keep the government's account balanced; he also appealed for a return to a more Confucian state in which the all-round Confucian-oriented officials were in charge of all aspects of local government. Confucian tenets pervade these two documents. It seems clear that even in times of crisis, constructive criticism from censors could be heavily circumscribed by tradition, of which they were the officially-appointed watchdogs.

In his insistence on the revival of Confucian values, however, Shen was in effect exposing the discrepancy between the reality and the ideal in the Confucian state — a serious indictment of imperial policies. In doing so, Shen seems to have been running the risk of punishment if some of our beliefs concerning the Ch'ing censorial system are correct. Firstly, according to Chang Chin-chien 張金鑑, the Ch'ing system emphasized the impeaching aspect of censorial activities at the expense of the remonstrative.⁴¹ Censorial freedom was also circumscribed by a number of contradictory regulations. On the one hand, a censor was given the right to criticize on the basis of hearsay (in order to protect his source of information); on the other hand, he could easily be penalized for criticism based on doubtful or false information. While he was encouraged to memorialize without restraint, he could also be accused of excessiveness and prejudice. The ultimate judgment depended very much on the personal disposition of the emperor.⁴² The Hsien-feng period (1851-1861) gives full testimony to this dilemma faced by the censors: on the one hand, the throne was eager to seek opinion from censors as well as other officials particularly during the early years of the reign,⁴³ on the other hand, censorial casualty throughout the entire

39 T'ang Chi-ho, "Ch'ing-tai k'o-tao-kuan chih kung-wu kuan-hsi," p.211.

40 Hucker observes that in the chaotic era of 1620-1627, the Ming censors spoke out more often and as individuals rather than as institutional representatives of the Censorate, and behaved predominantly as shapers of policy. See Hucker, *Censorial System*, p.177. On Shen's character, see David Pong, "Modernization and Politics," *passim*.

41 Chang Chin-chien, *Chung-kuo wen-kuan chih-tu shih* 中國文官制度史 (Taipei, 1955), pp.236-237.

42 T'ang Chi-ho, "Ch'ing-tai k'o-tao-kuan chih kung-wu kuan-hsi," p.211.

43 Li Huan 李桓, *Pao-wei chai lei-kao* 寶章齋類稿 (1891), 82:6.

period was relatively high.⁴⁴ Whether this high rate of casualty can be attributed partly or wholly to the critical nature of the period cannot be determined until other periods are studied.

In spite of all the circumscriptions, high censorial casualty rate, and governmental sensitivity of the period, Shen's memorial on the inflation — the most critical of all three and one clearly directed at an imperial policy — went unpunished. His memorial on military reorganization, though critical, was directed at a general situation. It was perceptive and to the point, and consequently received imperial notice. However, it was Shen's memorial on military strategy, a non-ideological issue and not critical of Ch'ing institutions, that brought him a promotion. Before the end of the fourth year of the Hsien-feng reign, his name was recommended for the post of prefect, and, in July 1855, he was made chief censor of the Kweichow Circuit.⁴⁵ This hardly calls for any surprise, because, in general, good censors were hard to find,⁴⁶ and, despite his lack of compliance, Shen must be classified as a good censor.

44 The following table showing the annual average of censors penalized during the various reign periods in the Ch'ing dynasty is computed from data provided by T'ang Chi-ho and Li Hsiung-fei. The reader is again reminded of the incompleteness of the data. The figures here serve an impressionistic purpose only.

Shun-chih	(1644 – 1661)	1.00 per year
K'ang-hsi	(1662 – 1722)	0.33
Yung-cheng	(1723 – 1735)	0.16
Ch'ien-lung	(1736 – 1795)	0.66
Chia-ch'ing	(1796 – 1820)	2.75
Tao-kuang	(1820 – 1850)	2.79
Hsien-feng	(1851 – 1861)	2.00
T'ung-chih	(1862 – 1874)	2.75
Kuang-hsü	(1875 – 1908)	1.36

Annual average for the entire dynasty : 1.21

Sources: T'ang Chi-ho, "Ch'ing-tai k'o-tao chih ch'eng-chi," p.521; Li Hsiung-fei, *Les Censeurs sous la Dynastie Mandchoue*, p.129.

45 *Ch'ing-shih lieh-chuan* 清史列傳, compiled by Ch'ing-shih kuan 清史館 (Shanghai, 1928), 53: 35a.

46 T'ang Chi-ho, "Ch'ing-tai k'o-tao-kuan chih jen-yung," pp.155-158; Hucker, *Censorial System*, pp.57-58.

APPENDIX A

Shen Pao-chen's Critique of the Hsien-feng Inflationary Measures

奏請變通錢法摺 臺諫

奏爲請變通錢法，使權歸於上，利溥於下，以培國本，而靖人心，仰祈聖鑒事。竊維軍興以來，需餉孔亟，部臣以乏銀之故，請鑄大錢，雖一時權宜，無非裕國便民之意。然而理財有道，責效愈急，則叢弊愈多，取息愈奢，則致虧愈甚。自私鑄繁興，利藪悉成奸藪。若不急爲通變，害將有不可勝言者：

一則國家受其害也。戶工二局，積年鼓鑄制錢，所費帑金，不知凡幾。奸民銷制錢，以鑄大錢，轉徙之間，倍蓰無算，不數月而制錢竭矣。以私鑄大錢，加價易銀，銀之所藏有限，大錢之所出無窮，不數月而銀又竭矣。易曰何以聚人，曰財。向令無賴之徒，皆得竊利權以招羽翼，其包藏禍心，何所不至耶？近聞京外一帶，千百成羣，私設軍械，緩之則肆行，急之則生變，是可憂者不獨在錢法也。

一則旗營受其害也。京師者天下之根本，八旗者又京師之根本也。旗兵別無生計，所以仰事俯育者月餉耳。錢日賤而物日貴，領餉四千，僅抵二千餘之用耳。數口之家，蔬菜油鹽爲數至瑣，大錢不能零折，便成廢物。况整用而亦不行乎？夫士飽馬騰，方成勁旅，飢寒之不恤，能令其專心技藝乎？今之荷載宿衛者，其祖宗當日皆列聖所與共創大業同休戚於萬世者也，而衣食不給，能勿惘然！

一則郡縣受其害也。征收糧稅，全賴年穀順成。然穀之取利也甚微，而農之爲功也甚苦。私鑄蠱起，釋耒而趨，到處田荒，稅從何出？爭端既起，獄訟繁興，此以阻撓爲詞，彼以售私互訐鬥狠釀命。聚徒拒捕，皆勢所必至。雖賢能之吏，竭蹶不遑，况其下焉者乎？

一則商賈受其害也。京城百貨仰給外省，即雜糧蔬果牲畜亦來自各鄉。大錢既不通行，貨物無由運致，市肆歇業不少，而糧店尤多。蓋以村僻之中，大錢必無所用故也。

至於肩挑肩負之徒，情尤可憫，不受則貨滯，而無以爲生，受之則錢入而不能復出，化良爲莠，誠足慮也。

夫趨利之情重，則畏死之念輕，大錢一日不停，私鑄一日不絕。今之所以不敢議停者，原以兵餉所出，舍大錢別無可行之端。然臣竊以爲恃大錢，亦終有必窮之勢。何者？每局需銅，月數萬觔。地之所生，人之所藏，只有此數。處處設局，則處處需銅，即令接括無遺，半年之後，其源必竭。臣謹即管見所及，可以變通盡利者，爲我皇上敬陳之：

一曰酌輕重以斂制錢。漢唐未嘗用銀，恆數十年一鑄，而錢給，今則加卯鼓鑄，而錢不給，何也？錢有散而無斂也。有散而無斂則錢輕，錢輕則物重，而民生困；銀重，而逋賦多。今請京城及順天直隸各屬錢糧稅課等項，每兩悉徵制錢二千文；應行解部者，按其地之遠近，每千酌加解費數十文。則商民有減賦之樂，國家無逋賦之憂。並令戶部所捐銅觔銅本，悉收現錢。夫收未鑄之銅以備鑄，何如取可用之錢以備用乎？購未出之銅而毋使藏，何如重已成之錢而毋使毀乎？兼此數項，尙有不敷，然後鑄制錢以足之，則局費省，而銅給錢[足？]。自下而上，則濫惡無所容，而私鑄之小錢自絕。重者散之使輕，輕者斂之使重，輕重之權，操於上矣。

二曰審虛實以行鈔法。部臣因寶鈔不行，招商設立官號。夫官票行，而寶鈔不行，豈民之信戶部，不如商賈哉？官票實而寶鈔虛耳。然所招之商，非能爲戶部盡數墊支軍餉也，亦戶部隨時接濟之耳。乃戶部發銀之時，銀價必驟落；戶部放錢之時，銀價必驟長。授人以柄，使其窺我盈虛，網羅厚利。夫戶部將所有銀錢輸之官號，何如將所有銀錢輸之鈔局乎？今請舊鈔仍照舊章，只准搭成報捐納稅，其新鈔悉准支取制錢。夫鈔之真僞有底可稽，非若大錢官私莫辨也。方其始也，必持鈔以取錢，取信既久，自必暢行無碍。至於外省各有官票足資流轉，即與鈔法一律，無庸更發寶鈔。蓋遠則號數合同無可核對，易啓猜疑，不如本省官票之足以取信也。但官局必須官爲經理，毋得委之商人，致有把持之弊。現在福建停止大錢，暢行官票，兵民稱便，其明驗也。

然是二者特補救目前耳，其行之久遠而無弊者，必也舍末而求本乎？夫國家之富，銀錢其末也，穀帛其本也。今使一城一邑之中，遭逢寇警，有穀帛而乏銀錢，無害也。若穀帛告匱，雖銀錢山積，有不委而去之者乎？且穀帛出於農桑，錢糧征收穀帛，則耕蠶者供其所有，無糶賤買貴之虞，而農桑得其利。農桑得其利，則天下之人皆棄末返

本，野無曠土，邑無游民，而國家之蓄積足恃。

或曰，民將溼穀薄絹以充賦也。夫穀之有燥濕，猶米之有燥濕也，今不征收漕米乎？絹帛之有薄厚，猶銀色之有低昂也，今不征收糧銀乎？或曰，布帛剪斷難用也。夫按其地之所出，約其價值，貴賤之中，每兩之銀，折布折帛若干丈尺，何俟尺剪寸斷乎？其奇零悉令納穀，穀則可以升合計也。

然而法難驟更，事貴有漸。今請各省錢糧，除解京者，照舊征銀，其存留之款，悉令征錢，搭收一二成穀帛；兵餉給錢；廉俸則錢與穀帛各半。如既行之後，上下稱便，可推廣征收，以充兵餉。其有餘者，布帛可起運以實京師，穀則貯郡縣各倉，俟青黃不接之時，照時價出糶〔糶？〕，易銀解京。斯小民免稱貸之苦，郡縣有荒歉之備，國家得贏餘之息，上下交受其利矣。

抑臣更有請者，大錢既停，則鉛錢鐵錢私鑄亦得厚利；且鉛子偷漏例禁甚嚴，鉛錢出城，即可鎔為鉛子，應請一律停止，以絕弊端。臣愚昧之見，是否有當？伏乞皇上訓示。謹奏。

APPENDIX B

Shen Pao-chen's Proposal to Put Military Officers under Civilian Command

奏請弁兵分隸郡縣摺 臺諫

奏爲請弁兵分隸郡縣，以資守禦，而專責成，仰祈聖鑒事。伏維軍興以來，迄今四載。皇上宵衣旰食，軫念生靈。大帥具有天良，豈不欲迅奏膚功，渥膺懋賞？乃城邑屢報收復，渠魁屢報斬擒，而顧此失彼，迄無成效。竭數月之力，方克一城，而鄰境郡縣旋復失陷矣。聚數營之兵，垂殲一股，而餘匪擄脅旋復蔓延矣。大帥有急則趨，無暇通籌全局。分扼隘口，則兵力薄，而不足以搗其堅。專力攻城，則布置疏，而不足以防其竄。是以千餘逆匪，足以使數員大帥，數萬精卒，疲於奔命而有餘。

向令各郡縣皆能相持數月，以待外援，彼烏合之衆，不戰自屈，何至蹂躪若是？夫不肖守令聞警先逃者無論已。其鬪門殉節，罵賊被害者，身家既非所愛，豈不願力捍危城，以答君父？而力不從心，其故有五：一則守令不知兵也。尺籍伍符，本非其職，平日營務漫不經心，倉卒登陴，號令不知所出。一則兵不用命也。非其素所統轄，則賞不足勸，威不足懲；非其素所訓練，則令之不行，諭之不信。一則文武不相下也。武弁平日疑文員之輕己，文員臨事疑武弁之居奇；彼此互猜，各有意見，呼吸之頃，號令靡所適從。一則兵勇不相能也。文員帶勇，武員帶兵，上各護其下，下各恃其上；見利則交爭，見敵則互誣。一則兵民不相安也。平日兵民交涉事件，武弁每多徇庇，臨事尤以藉端滋擾。寬之則民怨，嚴之則兵怨。此五者，皆素不相統攝所由來也。

今之議者曰，堅壁清野耳。無論所費不貲也，無論奉行不力也，城郭不保，違問於壁？倉庫不完，違計於野？臣竊以爲爭勝敵國，責在將帥；將帥得其職，則武功成。誅鋤奸民，責在郡縣；郡縣得其職，則邪源絕。夫郡縣有守禦之責，必予以守禦之資；有守禦之資，而後可責以守禦之效。謹以前代之得失與我朝之往事，爲我皇上敬陳之。三代兵農不分，自卿佐以逮什伍，如身使臂，如臂使指，故其時有莠民而無叛民。漢世

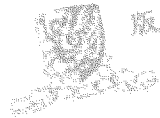
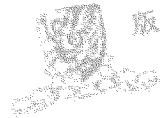
兵農雖分，文武未判，郡縣之兵，守令統之，訓練有素，聞警輒發；間有寇盜，不致蔓延。雖哀平之間，漢祚中微，而城邑晏然，無烽燧之警，此郡縣得其職之效也。自有唐中葉，奪郡縣之權，歸之節度，武夫悍卒流毒殆數百年。宋懲唐失，裁抑藩鎮，乃矯枉過正，並削郡縣之權。守令自催科詞訴外，舉非其職，處邊陲者，既無以禦敵；居腹地者，亦無以威民。所以仁宗之世，令主在上，羣賢滿朝，而靈夏一隅，殫天下全力以防之，迄莫能定。及其叔世，至宋江以三十六人轉掠十郡，積弱之弊，一至於此。明沿宋弊，困於流寇。此郡縣失其職之驗也。

我朝旗營之制，遠軼隆古，開創伊始，師武臣力，所不待言。世宗高宗虔劉大敵，拓地萬里，建唐虞以來未有之奇功。雖神武所加，算無遺策，亦太祖太宗八旗之制，盡美盡善，啓佑後人也。顧嘉慶年間，川楚之役，小民盜弄潢池耳，而勞師且七年，糜餉逾萬萬。夫聖聖相承，廟算宸謨後先一揆也；當時名將若德楞泰額勒登保楊遇春羅思舉等，不讓前賢也；習教之徒，伏莽之夫，非若西北部衆，儼然敵國也，而難易相反若是。十八年天里[理]教之變，京師則崇朝底定，河南則幾至半年，得非外省兵制尚因前代，有當斟酌盡善者歟？

今請千總以下隸於知縣，都司以下隸於知府，平時責以校閱；其有兵額不足，軍政不修，唯該府縣是問。若此者有十便焉：訓練是其專責，一切營務，關係考成，戰守機宜，先時研究，不致臨事周章，一也。等威既辨，奉命唯謹，一旦有急，善良者識親上之義，桀驁者生畏法之心，不致臨時潰散，二也。城之存亡，責無旁貸，無敢各出意見，以亂軍心，兵民審所聽從，三也。統兵之吏，即臨民之吏，以民養兵，以兵衛民，兵民一體，嫌隙不生，四也。兵力不足，藉資鄉勇，畛域不分，賞罰一律，無兵勇互鬥之害，五也。招勇抽丁，非不教之民，即無賴之輩。今兵隸郡縣，則未經行陣者，有素所訓練之兵以倡率之；桀點難侍者，有素所撫循之兵以羈縻之，民勇可期得力，六也。大小相維，聲勢聯絡，賊分則各城有以自守，賊合則大兵專向一隅；屢出不足以疲我，多方不足以誤我，本省兵力足以制其死命，無庸多調客兵，七也。盜賊之始不過百十爲羣，伺間劫掠，郡縣力不能制，必須會營，稟請文移，動淹時日，致賊遠颺，漸成巨黨。今兵隸郡縣，則隨時徵調，輒發電掣，絕其萌芽，事半功倍，八也。郡縣會營，需索供費，不滿其欲則不行，守令只顧目前，遂以譁盜爲得計。今兵隸郡縣，賞罰得行，兵弁無從需索，守令不致養奸，九也。守禦既固，莠民不敢生心，良民無從被擄；編戶



知為善之樂，遠人消叵測之情，新賊不增，則舊賊可盡，十也。以緝捕守禦責郡縣，以扼要應援責鎮將，以通籌全局責大帥；輔之以練鄉保甲，隨之以信賞必罰；將士無奔走之勞，土地無潰決之患；養我全力，以覆賊巢，庶幾一鼓蕩平，天下胥受其福矣。臣愚昧之見，是否有當？伏乞皇上訓示。謹奏。



APPENDIX C

Shen Pao-chen on Military Strategy, October 1854

奏請飭統兵大臣乘勝東下摺 臺諫

奏爲楚省大局既清，請飭統兵大臣仍督水陸精兵乘勝東下，速清江面，以收全功，仰祈聖鑒事。本月初六日，塔齊布會曾國藩奏報同日克復武漢。皇上立沛殊恩，在事諸臣無不榮膺懋賞，並命曾國藩署理湖北巡撫，與楊需妥辦善後事宜，肅清楚境。仰見皇上軫念窮黎，除惡務盡之至意。願臣竊計東南情形，基於楚北；會剿事勢，急於善後。夫逆賊據金陵爲巢穴，所以敢於分股奔突，沿江肆擾者，實以千餘里江面，曾無大隊水師扼要截擊。前者向榮雖以艇師獲勝，收復太平，而兵船無多，不能遠離金陵，汜流西上，故賊仍得上下自如，橫行無忌。今塔齊布會曾國藩由岳州乘勝而下，摧堅折銳，一日之間，收復省會兩城，殲賊衆以萬計，燬賊船以千計，賊自犯順以來，未有如此之大受懲創者。誠令乘此聲威，水陸並進，竊意下游諸賊必將聞風奔潰，所謂勢如破竹，數節之後，迎刃而解者也。若以曾國藩署理巡撫，微特瘡夷之衆，安撫需時，且既有職守，難於越境進兵。臣聞戰勝之威，士氣百倍，我軍仗席卷并吞之勢，倘令中道頓留，氣衰力懈，殊爲可惜。况塔齊布與曾國藩戮力同心，謀勇兼資，已有成效。若以曾國藩署理巡撫，其所帶水師，及一二得力員弁，必有留於湖北，爲搜捕餘匪防堵要隘之用；縱使塔齊布統師進剿，而勝兵已分其半，恐亦不能如此之所向克捷也。語云，兵貴神速；又曰先聲奪人。此機此時，萬不可失。合無仰懇天恩，仍令塔齊布會曾國藩等，督帶水陸官兵，乘賊喘息未定倉皇無措之時，順流而下？臣料我軍至九江，則安慶廬州之賊，必且驚心喪胆，不擊自潰。然後乘勝長驅，合皖省之兵，直擣金陵，與向榮托明阿等上下夾攻，賊雖剽狡，正如釜魚檻獸，何難一鼓蕩平哉？至湖北巡撫，可否請旨即令楊需兼署，辦理善後，搜捕餘匪，責成一手經理，自必裕如。臣爲統籌全局，速竣軍務起見，冒昧具陳，是否有當？伏乞皇上訓示。謹奏。

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從一八五四年之 沈葆楨看御史對於國家危機之反應

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龐百騰

一八五三至一八五五年滿清政府遭逢其有史以來之一大危機，不僅太平軍在一八五三年建都於南京，國內之捻、苗、回民亦紛紛起義。其時清政府之旗兵與綠營已腐敗不堪，而曾國藩所組新軍之效能亦尚無顯著之表現。同時，清政府財政又入不敷出，因此朝廷在咸豐初年始放寬對於言路之抑制。筆者以御史對此危機之反應為出發點討論下列幾個問題：

- (一) 假設御史有維護儒家社會傳統之責，他們是否會接受比較新而現實之政策來挽救危機？
- (二) 危機之存在與諫官言論之自由是否有直接關係？
- (三) 朝廷對直言直諫之御史又如何處置？

此類問題牽涉極廣，而過去有關清代御史制度之研究又寥寥無幾，故無法作全面答覆。筆者根據沈葆楨所遺之三篇臺諫為中心，略作討論，拋磚引玉，希望引起對清代御史的更充分的研究。

沈葆楨（一八二〇——一八七九）出身福建侯官低層紳士家族，年少時曾入林則徐幕，後為林壻。一八四七年沈氏獲中進士後，曾在翰林院任編修，其後又在武英殿修書處作纂修。沈氏之思想背景可算是正統儒家與經世之學之合流，他在江南道監察御史任內所寫的奏文充份表現他的經世觀念。

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清代之通貨膨脹淵源於十八世紀末期，其主要原因是赤銅來源不足。自太平軍起義之後，銅源更爲缺乏，清廷因而大量鑄造大錢，印製官票（錢票與銀票），招致沈葆楨之反對。沈氏的論點可見附文（A）。令人注意的是沈氏對此胆敢公開地發表異議，因據筆者所知，除戶部右侍郎王茂蔭及沈氏之外，別無他人如此進言。且王茂蔭並不反對通貨膨脹的根本政策，而只是批評膨脹的過份，而王氏在上奏後不久，就被調任到兵部。由此可見，沈葆楨的激烈非議很有觸怒朝廷的可能，幸虧沈氏僅爲一名諫官，因此沒有受到朝廷的懲罰。清廷保持沉默，對沈氏的奏疏置之不理。

自一八五一年至一八五四年，太平軍四出攻掠，而清廷始終無法對付。曾國藩的湘軍在一八五四年初雖已勢力漸增，但湘軍聽命於統領，不適於地方性之攻守；各地又因文武不和，兵與勇之間常發生衝突，以至防守無策。沈葆楨力倡文武合一，弁兵分受地方官統帶，以增加統率與行動之配合。沈氏之見解雖非新穎，亦不失爲深遠，因清朝傳統的政策爲一方面防止軍權集中，另一方面避免地方兵力過度強大。所以，以一八五四年之情形而言，沈氏的意見雖值得重視，但因他的提議過於理想（地方官有統兵之才者亦寥寥無幾），而且又有鼓勵地方觀念發展之可能，所以滿清政府未曾加以採納。雖然如此，沈氏意見之正確，有他在一八五六年防守廣西廣信府屬之成績可證。

以清方軍事而言，一八五四年十月爲一大轉機。該月曾國藩的湘軍收復武漢，戰事大有起色。朝廷立刻獎賞曾國藩二品頂戴，賞戴花翎，並令署理湖北巡撫，與湖廣總督楊需、湖南提督塔齊布妥籌分兵留守及進攻長江下游之策。沈葆楨反對如此分散兵力，據他的看法，曾國藩不應負擔地方職任，而應乘勝長驅下游，直攻金陵。曾亦因母喪未除，請求清廷收回署湖北巡撫成命。在曾奏未到之前，清廷已改變主意，改賞曾氏兵部侍郎銜，撤消暑巡撫之命。究竟清廷此次收回成命是否受沈奏影響，不得而知。但因沈奏與朝廷意見吻合，應會有助於促成此舉。

清代保存之御史奏摺無幾，今日得見者，平均每4.35名御史約只有奏摺一本。所以筆者得發現沈氏之三篇奏摺，十分幸運。但就沈氏在御史任內所寫之全部奏摺而言，此仍不過一鱗半爪，故所下結論，不免爲姑且之推測，不敢謂有決然無疑的價值。

從另一方面言之，此三篇奏摺亦具有相當之歷史價值，爲對於當時若干重大問題之建言，而非平常之彈章，字裏行間顯示御史在危機時期之作用和成績。

從沈氏之奏摺，我們首先可見御史之任期並非一定爲官僚經歷中之「訓練時期」。

沈氏之奏摺富有創見性與主動性。究竟此係由於沈氏本人之性格，抑係因當時情形危急之影響所致，著者無從判斷。

其次，御史之主要任務為維護儒家社會之傳統，沈氏之奏章不但富有儒家思想色彩，且有過份理想之嫌。沈氏之議論不但表露儒家理想與當時現況之距離，亦且有觸怒朝廷，惹禍於身之可能。因清廷在咸豐初年雖稍為放寬言路，但言官因言事受懲之成數仍頗高。這一矛盾現象可能與當時之危急情形有密切關係。惟御史之言論自由雖受多方面之限制，懲罰成數亦高，然清廷於危機期間對各方之反應亦相當敏感。沈氏對於通貨膨脹之非議即是攻擊清廷政策最力之一篇奏摺，而並未招來沈氏個人之不幸。關於軍務之奏章，雖是對當時情形之批評，然不失為一篇富有高深眼光之議論，固仍未被接納，但頗受朝廷之注意。此三篇奏摺中，結果最受到朝廷欣賞者為第三篇奏摺。此篇奏摺既未表示政治意見，亦未對清廷當政者或政策過份批評，而其意見又與朝廷意思相吻合，所以不久之後，沈氏即被推薦升任。沈氏雖在危急時期對清廷政策有所批評，但不失為一直言善諫及忠良之言官。此等言官在清代御史史上誠難能可貴也。