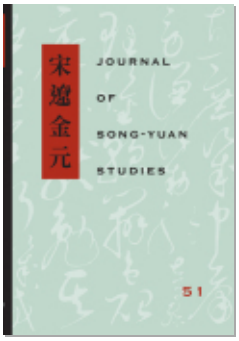
Order, Culture, and Local Administration on the Northern Border: Han Qi in Dingzhou (1048–1053)



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Order, Culture, and Local Administration on the Northern Border:

Han Qi in Dingzhou (1048–1053)

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Border affairs occupied a prominent place in the minds of Northern Song scholar-statesmen. Dozens left records about their missions to the Liao 遼 (907–1125), Xia 夏 (1038–1227), and Jin 金 (1115–1234) states.[1] Many more opined on defense and military strategies even though they had never visited the frontier regions, commanded troops, or held positions that required direct interactions with the Song's neighbors.[2] Only a fraction of the men in these two groups had substantial expertise on military affairs and border management. Han Qi 韓琦 (1008–1075) belonged to this select group. Han traveled to the

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1. Hilde de Weerdt, "What Did Su Che See in the North? Publishing Laws, State Security, and Political Culture in Song China," *T'oung Pao* (Second Series) 92.4/5 (2006): 466–94; Li Qiang 李強, *Bei Song Qingli shifeng yu wenxue yanjiu* 北宋慶曆士風與文學研究 (Shanghai: Shanghai shiji chuban gongsi, 2011), 228–42; and Nicolas Tackett, *The Origins of the Chinese Nation* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2017), 31–45.

2. One example is Wang Yucheng 王禹偁 (954–1001), who composed multiple pieces on the Song's relationships with its neighbors. See Wang in *Quan Song wen* 全宋文 (hereafter *QSW*), ed. Zeng Zaozhuang 曾棗莊 and Liu Lin 劉琳 (Shanghai: Shanghai cishu chubanshe, 2006), 7:149.367–70, 7:371–72, 7:382–83.

Liao as an envoy in 1038, played a key role in the Song-Xia War (1039–1042), and held the position of Commissioner of Military Affairs (*shumishi* 樞密使) on more than one occasion from the 1040s to the 1060s. From 1048 to 1055, he was the chief military and administrative officer in Dingzhou 定州 (Dingzhou, Hebei) and Bingzhou 并州 (Taiyuan, Shanxi), both located on the Song's northern border. Over the next two decades, Han remained one of the most influential policymakers in Song domestic and foreign affairs until his death in 1075.[3]

This study focuses on Han Qi's tenure in Dingzhou from the fourth month of 1048 (1048/4) to the third month of 1053 (1053/3). Han arrived in Dingzhou after serving as the prefect of Yangzhou (1045–1048) (in Jiangsu) for three years following the failed Qingli Reform (1043–1045), of which he was a key figure.[4] This decade-long provincial service provided him with the perfect opportunity to reposition himself for a return to key policy-making posts at the court. The experience was also significant for Han Qi's life and career in other ways. In addition to dealing with critical military and administrative matters, Han Qi initiated multiple construction projects, among them the renovation, building, and naming of four massive structures in and around Dingzhou's prefectural government office compound. Following their completion, Han authored an account (*ji* 記) for each of these projects and a dozen or so poems. Drawing on these texts, this article will show that Han Qi's construction, naming, and writing efforts transformed not only Dingzhou, but also himself: Han had already

3. Han Qi was the subject of three lengthy biographies: his official biography in *Song shi*, a record of conduct (*xingzhuang* 行狀) by Li Qingchen 李清臣 (1032–1102), and an epitaph (*muzhiming* 墓誌銘) by Chen Jian 陳薦 (1016–1084). See Tuo Tuo et al. 脫脫, *Song shi* 宋史 (Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 1977), 23:312.10221–32; Li in *QSW*, 79:1717.38–53; and Chen in *QSW*, 48:1052.334–45.

4. Much has been written about the Qingli Reform, the first major reform movement in the Song. For several important studies, see Ari Levine, *Divided by a Common Language: Factional Conflict in Late Northern Song China* (Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 2008); James T. C. Liu, "An Early Sung Reformer: Fan Chung-yen," in *Chinese Thought and Institutions*, ed. John K. Fairbank (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1957), 105–31; Michael McGrath, "The Reigns of Jen-tsung (1022–1063) and Ying-tsung (1063–1067)," in *The Cambridge History of China, Vol. 5, Part One, Sung China, 960–1279* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2009), 279–346; Paul Smith, "A Crisis in the Literati State: The Sino-Tangut War and the Qingli-era Reforms of Fan Zhongyan, 1040–1045," *JSYS* 45 (2015): 59–137; and Paul Smith, "Anatomies of Reform: The Qingli-Era Reforms of Fan Zhongyan and the New Policies of Wang Anshi Compared," in *State Power in China, 900–1325*, ed. Patricia Ebrey and Paul Jakov Smith (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 2016), 153–91.

established himself as a statesman and military strategist on the "national" level prior to his arrival in Dingzhou, but it was not until the mid-1040s to mid-1050s, when he was away from the political center, that Han Qi began to systematically present himself as a man of *wen* (culture, civil rule) as well as a caring and dedicated administrator.[5] He realized the construction of this new identity through an earnest articulation and promotion in his writing of some of the most fundamental Confucian principles on good government. Han's efforts also had a large impact on Dingzhou. By vigorously projecting himself as a benevolent prefect striving to restore and consolidate civil and cultural order, Han Qi played down Dingzhou's image as a border town, making it less distinguishable from other prefectures across the country.

The First Rushuai *(Civilian Commander-in-chief) in the Northern Frontier : Han Qi's Appointment to Dingzhou*

In the Northern Song, Dingzhou was part of the Hebei West Circuit, often referred to as Heshuo 河朔 (north of the Yellow River). With the Taihang Mountains 太行山 to its west and being located eighteen *cheng* 程 (about 1100 *li*, or 340 miles) north of the capital city Kaifeng 開封, Dingzhou played a vital role in the Northern Song's defense strategy against the Liao,[6] and it was involved in every Song-Liao conflict since the dynasty's founding. These included the Song's campaigns against the Liao in 979 and 986 in its failed bids to recover the Sixteen Prefectures and the Liao's attempt to take back the Guannan 關南 territories in 999 and 1000.[7] Skirmishes and battles between the

5. In chronological order, from the mid-1040s to mid-1050s, Han Qi served in Yangzhou 揚州 (Yangzhou, Jiangsu, 1045/3–1047/5), Yunzhou 鄆州 (Heze, Shandong, 1047/5–1047/12), and Zhending 眞定 (Zhengding, Hebei, 1047/12–1048/4) before arriving at Dingzhou. He was appointed to Bingzhou (Taiyuan, Shanxi, 1053/3–1055/2) after serving in Dingzhou for two terms. From Bingzhou, he was relocated to Xiangzhou (Anyang, Henan, 1055/2–1056/7) for over a year before returning to the central government.

6. The term *cheng* 程 was a unit of measurement, signifying the distance an official traveler was expected to cover in a day. In the Song, one *cheng* was generally understood as sixty *li*, or about twenty miles.

7. The Sixteen Prefectures, located in modern Hebei and Shanxi, were territories that the Latter Jin 後晉 (936–947) emperor Shi Jingtang 石敬瑭 (892–942) ceded to the Liao in 936 in exchange for the Liao's support of his new regime. Guannan (literally, south of the passes) referred to two of the Sixteen Prefectures, Yingzhou 瀛州 and Mozhou 莫州 (both in Hebei), which the Liao state lost to the Latter Zhou (951–960) in 959.

two states continued over the next several years, notably the Liao's attacks on Dingzhou in 1001 and 1003.[8] These clashes did not help the Liao recover any part of Guannan; however, they did result in an increased military presence along the Song-Liao border, which included the building of military posts and fortresses, the planting of millions of trees, and the construction of a defensive line in the form of a network of canals, river channels, and artificial lakes.[9]

The Song's strengthening of its northern border increased tensions between the two states. In 1004, the Liao struck preemptively. The Song military did not stop Liao troops from quickly moving southward. The ensuing stalemate at Chanzhou 澶州 (Puyang, Henan) on the Yellow River resulted in the signing of the Chanyuan Covenant 澶淵之盟, which halted the construction of new fortifications on both sides.[10] However, it was not until the Song-Liao treaty of 1042 and the end of the Song-Xia war that long-term peace on the Song's northern and western frontiers was secured. Dingzhou nonetheless remained heavily militarized. Arriving in Dingzhou in 1048, Han Qi made the following remark: "In Heshuo, ten prefectures rest on the borders. Among them, Dingzhou stations a large army and occupies strategic positions. For this reason, the court's expectations of it are higher than for the other prefectures."[11]

The end of military actions and border crises resulted in a major change in Song personnel policy. As Chen Feng's study has shown, in the Northern Song, most Commissioners of Military Affairs (54 out of 73, or 74%) and Deputy Commissioners of Military Affairs (*shumi fushi* 樞密副使, 108 out of 129, or

8. Wang Xiaobo 王曉波, *Song Liao zhanzheng lunkao* 宋遼戰爭論考 (Chengdu: Sichuan daxue chubanshe, 2011), 1–83.

9. Peter Lorge, "The Great Ditch of China and the Song-Liao Border," in *Battlefronts Real and Imagined: War, Border, and Identity in the Chinese Middle Period*, ed. Don J. Wyatt (London: Palgrave MacMillan, 2008), 59–72; and Wang Xiaobo, *Song Liao zhanzheng lunkao*, 78–83. Yuan Julian Chen, "Frontier, Fortifications, and Forestation: Defensive Woodline on the Song-Liao Border in the Long Eleventh Century," *Journal of Chinese History* 2.2 (2018): 313–34. See also Li Huarui 李華瑞, "Bei Song zhihe yu bianfang" 北宋治河與邊防, in Li, *Song Xia shi yanjiu* 宋夏史研究 (Tianjin: Tianjin guji chubanshe, 2006), 136–53; and Ling Zhang, *The River, the Plain, and the State: An Environmental Drama in Northern Song China, 1048–1128* (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 2016), 53–82.

10. Lau Nap-yin and Huang K'uan-chung, "Founding and Consolidation of the Sung Dynasty under T'ai-tsu (960–976), T'ai-tsung (976–997), and Chen-tsung (997–1022)," in *The Cambridge History of China, Vol. 5, Part One: The Sung Dynasty and Its Precursors, 907–1279*, ed. Denis Twitchett and Paul Jakov Smith (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 2009), 262–70.

11. 河朔并邊之郡以十數, 而定宿大兵, 據戰地, 故朝廷所寄之重, 不與他比. Han Qi, Dingzhou tingbi timing ji" 定州廳壁題名記, *QSW*, 40:854.44.

84%) were civil servants. Military officers who held these positions mainly served during the reigns of Emperors Taizu 太祖 (r. 960–976), Taizong 太宗 (r. 976–997), and Zhenzong 眞宗 (r. 997–1022). This trend gradually shifted during Renzong's 仁宗 reign (r. 1023–1063). After 1056, not one military official occupied either position.[12] This ascendancy of civil servants in military and border affairs can be likewise observed in the appointment of regional and local officials in Shaanxi and Hebei in the 1040s. Both regions were regrouped into four military circuits managed by Pacification Commissioners (*anfushi lu* 安撫使路). In Hebei, each of these circuits was headed by a scholar or civilian commander-in-chief (*rushuai* 儒帥). Han Qi was among the earliest appointees to hold this title, first on the western, and then the northern border. On the rationale for this division in Hebei, Han Qi explained:

> The territory of Heshuo was extensive and its military powerful, but the decision-making authority [of its administration] had not been concentrated [at the top]. The Son of Heaven (i.e. Emperor Renzong) thought that the only way [to correct the situation] was to divide up the region [as a military zone] and select commanders-in-chief who would also be in charge of the local population. The emperor subsequently ordered the four circuits of Wei(zhou) 魏 (Daming, Hebei), Ying(zhou) 瀛 (Hejian, Hebei), Zhen(zhou) 鎮 (Zhengding, Hebei), and Ding(zhou) 定 to have civilian commanders serve concurrently as pacification commissioners.[13]
>
> 天子以河朔地大兵雄，而節制不專，非擇帥分治而并撫其民不可，始詔魏、瀛、鎮、定四路，悉用儒帥兼本道安撫使。

Here, Han notes that the court had reached this conclusion out of major concern for the ineffective administration of a large territory, military, and population. Abundant evidence shows that the above decision was the result of careful deliberations at the court, accounting for the state of Song-Liao relations, the distribution of roads and waterways, and logistical provisions for the troops. The natural and military geography of the region was also a major factor in the decision-making process. Of the four circuits, Zhenzhou, Dingzhou, and Yingzhou would serve as the first line of defense for the capital.

12. Chen Feng 陳鋒, *Bei Song wujiang qunti yu xiangguan wenti yanjiu* 北宋武將群體與相關問題研究 (Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 2004), 114–26; Paul Jakov Smith, "Introduction" to *The Cambridge History of China, Vol. 5, Part One: The Sung Dynasty and Its Precursors, 907–1279*, 23.

13. Han Qi, "Dingzhou Yuegu tang ji" 定州閱古堂記, *QSW*, 40:854.38.

Dingzhou, the smallest of the four zones, stationed twenty-eight percent of the troops.[14] The Pacification Commissioner of Dingzhou would have under his jurisdiction the four prefectures of Dingzhou, Baozhou 保州 (Baoding, Hebei), Shenzhou 深州 (Hengshui, Hebei), and Qizho 祁州 (Anguo, Hebei), as well as the four military prefectures of Guangxin 廣信 (Xushui, Hebei), Ansu 安肅 (Xushui, Hebei), Shun'an 順安 (Gaoyang, Hebei), and Yongning 永寧 (Boye, Hebei).[15]

In the larger context of Northern Song political history, the appointment of *rushuai* to the northern frontiers reflected the gradual triumph of civil over military service and the irrevocable decline of elite military families. Han Qi was the first civil official appointed to this position as a result of the 1048 policy. His full official title was Chief Area Commander and Pacification Commissioner of Dingzhou Circuit and Prefect of Dingzhou's Administrative and Military Affairs (*Dingzhou lu dubushu jian anfushi, jian zhi Dingzhou junzhoushi* 定州路都部署兼安撫使、兼知定州軍州事).[16] Upon the completion of a three-year term, Han was reappointed in 1050 despite multiple requests for relocation on his part, and he remained in Dingzhou until 1053/3. This would be the longest period in a local position that Han ever occupied, and it was an unusually lengthy posting for Northern Song officials in general. The court rewarded Han Qi's service with extraordinary generosity. Although Han held the same military and civil responsibilities throughout his tenure, he was promoted in rank three times: Han was granted the titles of Grand Academician of the Hall for Aid in Governance (*zizhengdian da xueshi* 資政殿大學士) in 1049/7, Vice Minister of the Ministry of Rites (*libu shilang* 禮部侍郎) in 1050, and Academician of the Hall for Observing Culture (*guanwendian xueshi* 觀文殿學士) in 1051/8.[17]

In both his memorials of gratitude and literary works, Han Qi pledged dedication to his official duties and loyalty to the emperor and court.[18] Han's administrative and military achievements in Dingzhou were catalogued in all

14. Cheng Long 程龍, "Bei Song Huabei zhanqu junzheng quyu guihua yu liangshi buji" 北宋華北戰區軍政區域規劃與糧食補給, *Zhongguo lishi dili luncong* 中國歷史地理論叢 27.3 (2012): 113–21.

15. Han Qi, "Dingzhou tingbi timing ji," *QSW*, 40:854.44.

16. Han Qi, "Dingzhou xieshang biao" 定州謝上表, *QSW*, 39:833.35.

17. Chen Jian, "Hangong muzhiming" 韓公墓誌銘 (the actual title is over a hundred characters long), *QSW*, 48:1052.338; and Li Qingchen, "Han Zhongxian gong Qi xingzhuang" 韓忠獻公琦行狀, *QSW*, 79:1717.44.

18. Han Qi, "Dingzhou xieshang biao," *QSW*, 39:833.35.

of his biographies, mentioned above. Two additional documents are especially useful for the study of his major initiatives: Heng Gui's 衡規 (active 1050s–1090s) thirty-entry "Stele Inscription of the Administrative Accomplishments of the Duke of Wei, Mr. Han" (*Han Weigong zhiji beiji* 韓魏公治績碑記) and a ten-chapter *Jiazhuan* 家傳 (family or private biography) that chronicled Han Qi's career in great detail.[19] Of these sources, Heng Gui's work is the most thorough in itemizing Han's activities in Dingzhou. Heng especially highlighted Han's leadership style in comparison to that of his predecessors:

> When former officials from the Two Administrations (i.e., the Secretary-Chancellery 中書門下 and the Bureau of Military Affairs 樞密院) served outside the capital, they usually focused on [military and administrative] matters of great importance and entrusted the insignificant affairs to their associates. Mr. Han did not act the same way in Dingzhou. He would personally handle both the major and minor issues. When people had something to appeal to the authorities, he would carefully investigate. He would decrease the penalties on reasonable violations. For this reason, local affairs could all reach the highest level of administration and there was no injustice in the handling of criminal affairs.[20]
>
> 兩府舊臣出鎮，多務大體，細故委之僚屬，公至定州則不然，事無大小，必躬親臨之。民有赴愬，則委曲訪問。犯者情或可恕，施刑則有降殺焉。故下情皆得上達，而刑獄無冤。

Altogether, Han Qi's Dingzhou programs can be grouped into four categories: (1) training and disciplining the troops in Hebei, who had long shown signs of disobedience; (2) caring for the welfare of the soldiers and their families; (3) tightening control of the border region, especially in terms of managing vagrancy and bandits; and (4) protecting and improving the livelihood of the local population through disaster relief, tax exemptions, and land policies.[21] Han Qi's leadership style and his attentiveness to both the military and administrative affairs distinguished him from his predecessors, who were all military men.

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19. Heng Gui, "Han Weigong zhiji beiji," *QSW* 104:2277.220–24; *Han Weigong Jiazhuan* 韓魏公家傳 is included in the *Anyang ji biannian jianzhu* 安陽集編年箋注, annot. Li Zhiliang 李之亮 and Xu Zhengying 徐正英 (Chengdu: Ba Shu shushe, 2000), 1748–1866. Narratives of Han's Dingzhou years are found in chapter four, 1796–98.

20. Heng Gui, "Han Weigong zhiji beiji," *QSW*, 104:2277.221.

21. Heng Gui, "Han Weigong zhiji beiji," *QSW*, 104:2277.220–24; *Han Weigong jiazhuan*, 1797–800. See also Chen Jian, *QSW*, 48:1052.338; and Li Qingchen, *QSW*, 79:1717.43–44.

Building Culture in Dingzhou: An Overview

Han Qi's tenure marked a turning point for Dingzhou not only because he was the first civil commander-in-chief, but because he also undertook multiple building projects that went on to define Dingzhou's image and historical memory.

Starting from the early decades of the eleventh century, there gradually emerged what I call a "construction boom" in the Northern Song. Across the country in political and cultural centers as well as remote and frontier regions, buildings of various scales and purposes, including government offices, forts and barricades, and venues for social and cultural activities, were designed, built, renovated, and (re)named. The pace of this building and naming boom accelerated from the mid-eleventh century onward, as did the quantity of commemorative writing.[22] In *ji* 記 accounts (dedicatory essays written upon the completion of a building or renovating project) and poetic work, many builders recounted the occasion and purpose for a certain structure. They would subsequently ask friends and colleagues for literary compositions to further expound on the significance of their endeavors. Over two thousand extant *ji* and many thousands of poems testified to this flourishing building and naming culture in the Northern Song, helping numerable structures achieve landmark status instantly or during the lifetime of their sponsors and contributors. Later individuals would visit and gather at these sites, commemorating their predecessors with poetic exchanges and anecdotal writing. In addition, those who never set foot on a particular landmark helped perpetuate its fame and legacy through their literary imagination. In late imperial times, Song-era buildings continued to be maintained, re-discovered, or re-created, and they came to symbolize the rich history and cultural heritage of a county or prefecture.[23]

22. For two recent studies of fort building in the Northern Song, see Cheng Long 程龍, *Bei Song xibei zhanqu liangshi buji dili* 北宋西北戰區糧食補給地理 (Beijing: Shehui kexue wenxian chubanshe, 2006); and Li Huarui, *Song Xia guanxi shi* 宋夏關係史 (Beijing: Zhongguo renmin daxue chubanshe, 2010), 45–48, 171–228. Mark Halperin's work has demonstrated extensive building and renovation activities at Buddhist temples and Daoist abbeys in the Song. See Halperin, *Out of the Cloister: Literati Perspectives on Buddhism in Sung China, 960–1279* (Cambridge: Harvard University Asia Center, 2006) and "Critical Patronage: A Few Southern Song Confucians and Daoism," *Asia Major* (Third Series) 33.2 (2020): 93–134.

23. For an example of the building, maintenance, and innovation of Han Qi-related buildings in Song and late imperial times, as well as the literary production surrounding these landmarks,

Han Qi's building activities both illustrate this long-term development and should be understood in this context. Han acquired a reputation for "loving to build" during his lifetime, an unusual depiction of a Northern Song scholar-official even though many were indeed involved in multiple construction enterprises. Xu Du 徐度 (active 1120s–1160s) recorded that wherever Han Qi served, he "would renovate or construct [some buildings]. All his ventures were spacious and magnificent, which matched his magnanimity."[24] Xu's goal was to highlight Han as a generous and benevolent person, but his statement nonetheless summarized Han's keen interest in large construction projects.

Altogether, Han Qi sponsored over a dozen buildings in Yunzhou (Heze, Shandong), Zhending, Dingzhou, Bingzhou, Xiangzhou (Anyang, Henan), and Daming 大名 (in Hebei). This placed him among the most accomplished officials in the Northern Song construction boom. More importantly, while many of Han Qi's peers authored more *ji* accounts than he did, Han composed the largest number of *ji*, six in total, for self-sponsored projects. Dingzhou featured prominently in his building and naming undertakings for four additional reasons. First, although Han Qi had attempted some construction projects in his previous posts, it was in Dingzhou that his interest in building fully blossomed.[25] Second, Han personally supervised the construction and renovation of four large projects within three years. This made him the *only* Northern Song scholar-official who had ever done so in one local post.[26] Third, Han Qi composed a *ji* account for each of the four buildings and put in extraordinary effort to promote them through his own writing and that of his friends and colleagues. Last but not least, Han Qi's projects took place in a border prefecture. This was in large contrast to the majority of new construction projects in the Northern Song, which were found either in political and cultural centers or in destinations for exiles in southern China.

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see chapters five, nine, twenty-one, and twenty-two of *Zhili Dingzhou zhi* 直隸定州志 (1849), compiled by Bao Lin 寶琳, in *Zhongguo fangzhi congshu, Huabei diqu, No.* 225 中國方志叢書華北地區第 225 號 (Taipei: Chengwen chubanshe, 1969).

24. 所臨之郡必有改作, 皆宏壯雄深, 稱其度量. Xu Du 徐度, *Quesao bian* 卻掃編, in *Quansong biji* 全宋筆記 *Second Series* 第二編, Vol. 2 第二冊, ed. Zhu Yi'an 朱易安 and Fu Xuancong 傅璇琮 (Zhengzhou: Daxiang chubanshe, 2007), xia.176.

25. Han recorded in two poems that he had initiated at least one building project in both Yunzhou and Zhending. Han Qi, *Anyang ji biannian jianzhu*, 5.207–8.

26. In two poems, Han Qi mentioned two additional buildings in Dingzhou, the Lansheng Pavilion 覽勝亭 and the Yangzhen Pavilion 養眞亭. Han Qi, *Anyang ji biannian jianzhu*, 5.219–20.

Han Qi's first project was the restoration of a temple on one of the Five Marchmounts, the Beiyue 北嶽, or Northern Marchmount (Mount Heng 恆山), located in Quyang County 曲陽縣, about a hundred *li* southeast of Mount Heng. Both in the Song and during previous dynasties, the Five Marchmounts were major sites of state rituals. As a result, the mountain spirits had been recipients of numerous honorary titles given by the government. In his *ji*, titled "Account of the Renovation of the Temple of the Northern Marchmount in Dingzhou" (*Dingzhou chongxiu Beiyue miao ji* 定州重修北嶽廟記), Han Qi recorded that, for the first time in history, Emperor Zhenzong (r. 997–1022) gave the title, *di* 帝 (Supreme Being), to the mountain spirit of the Marchmount, naming it the "Supreme Being of Pacifying Heaven and Primal Sagacity" (*Antian yuansheng di* 安天元聖帝).

After highlighting the importance of ceremonial offerings at the Five Marchmounts, Han Qi continues the *ji* by lamenting both the state's gross negligence in ritual performances and the physical degradation of the temple. To Han, this was an extreme show of disrespect to the mountain spirit. Making use of materials that the local government had seized from the demolition of unauthorized shrines, Han subsequently directed his subordinates to repair the temple. The undertaking took three months. When the renovation was completed in 1049/10, he wrote:

> Traces of corruption and decay were replaced by a brand new appearance. Supplementary buildings were erected in the yard for scholar-officials and ordinary people to offer sacrifices. This was to make sure that their presence would not be a blasphemy to the spirit [which was housed in the main hall; yet by allowing the local subjects to participate in sacrifices,] the spirit received additional reverence.[27]
>
> 於是弊陋朽撓之跡，煥然一新。又於其庭起士民薦獻之宇，俾勿褻於神，而神益以尊。

Han Qi continued, "The prefect should diligently follow the emperor's orders in managing the spirit's abode, make sacrifices to the spirit clean, and cultivate himself in order to show benevolence to the people. [After all,] humans depend on the spirit for [the reception of] both good and bad fortune."[28]

With the completion of the Beiyue Temple, Han Qi turned to his next

27. Han Qi, "Dingzhou chongxiu Beiyue miao ji" 定州重修北嶽廟記, *QSW*, 40:854.34.

28. 守臣當謹天子之命，而治神之居，潔神之祀，修己以愛其民，人唯神之所以禍福而已. Han Qi, "Dingzhou chongxiu Beiyue miao ji" 定州重修北嶽廟記, *QSW*, 40:854.34.

project, the restoration of a shrine for Confucius and the construction of a prefectural school. In the "Account of the Newly-built Prefectural School in Dingzhou" (Dingzhou xinjian zhouxue ji 定州新建州學記), dated 1050/7, Han traced his initiative to a 1044 imperial edict, which ordered all prefectures and counties to establish a governmental school. Dingzhou, however, had been slow to execute this decree.

> Because Dingzhou was located on the northern frontier, the recipients of the order did not understand its true intentions. They thought, "Since Dingzhou is a place for military prowess, it is not our responsibility to promote learning." [For this reason,] Dingzhou stood out for being slow [to respond to the imperial edict].[29]
>
> 而定處北邊，承詔者不知其本，以為用武之地， 學非吾事也，獨慢而寢焉。

Here, Han Qi implies that Dingzhou's location on the border and its long-term administration by military men had distinguished it from other, non-border prefectures in the country. His predecessors' failure to set up an educational institution further confirmed Dingzhou as an "abnormal," marginal, and uncultured region of the country.

What Han Qi neglected to mention was that the 1044 imperial edict was part of the Qingli reform programs, which were annulled only a year later, in 1045.[30] This change in imperial policy did not stop Han from proceeding with the project. He did note that, while Dingzhou did not possess a governmental school, a Confucius Temple had existed there since the ninth century. The temple was last renovated in the early eleventh century but appeared dilapidated at the time of his arrival. Han Qi's school-building project therefore began with an overhaul of the temple. The new school, located right next to the temple, took four additional months to build. Fully equipped with teaching and study halls as well as living quarters for the students and professors, the compound cost twice as much as the Beiyue Temple.[31]

Han Qi's third venture, the Zhongchun Garden (*Zhongchun yuan* 衆春園, Garden of Spring Time for the Multitudes, 1051/1) was not a single building, but a large compound intended for the leisure and pleasure of both local officials and ordinary residents. In tracing the origin of this undertaking, Han wrote, people of all professions worked hard to support the government and

29. Han Qi, "Dingzhou Xinjian zhouxue ji" 定州新建州學記, *QSW*, 40:854.36.
30. Smith, "A Crisis in the Literati State," 104.
31. Han Qi, "Dingzhou Xinjian zhouxue ji," *QSW*, 40:854.36.

provide for their own families. "On good days and during joyful festivals, do they not deserve a day off for relaxation!" To Han, a facility of this nature was especially necessary for the general populace, since the region "had suffered from banditry and barbarian rule" and "people had not experienced the joy of life for over a hundred years."[32] More importantly, Han Qi stressed that since all the prefectures and counties in the realm had gardens, ponds, towers, and pavilions to serve as places of enjoyment, Dingzhou should as well. In fact, a predecessor of his had taken on this task. Unfortunately, the garden, just like the Beiyue and Confucius Temples, was later abandoned. In revamping the garden complex, Han added multiple buildings and a wide variety of trees, a long embankment, and a new gate for the convenience of the visitors. He concluded that "the beautiful scenery at the garden and the pond far exceed those from the past (園池之勝, 益倍疇昔)."[33]

Following the completion of the Beiyue Temple, the prefectural school, and the sprawling garden, Han had a ruined pavilion inside the prefectural office compound enlarged and restructured. He then had sixty episodes of his predecessors' outstanding deeds painted onto its walls and named the building *Yuegu tang* 閱古堂 (Hall of Observing the Past, completed in 1051). Surrounded by the illustrations, Han imagined that he, his subordinates, and their guests could "read and view history" in each other's company. He further hoped that the accomplishments of the virtuous in the past would "inform all that, for those who govern, nothing is of a higher priority than schooling and reforming minds. For those who lead troops, nothing is more important than strategizing. Both are rooted in loyalty and righteousness."[34] Han Qi continued by stating that if his successors fully understood these principles and sincerely practiced them, "Then is what I have done only meant for my own benefit? It will also help others."[35]

Several general observations can be made based on this brief introduction to Han Qi's building endeavors in Dingzhou. First, the locations of the four buildings varied. The Beiyue Temple was the farthest from the prefectural

32. 當良辰佳節, 豈無一日之適以休其心乎! . . . 盜賊戎猾, 兵革殘困, 民不知爲生之樂者百有餘年. Han Qi, "Dingzhou Zhongchun yuan ji" 定州衆春園記, *QSW*, 40:854.37–38.

33. Han Qi, "Dingzhou Zhongchun yuan ji," *QSW*, 40:854.37–38.

34. 俾人人知爲治者莫先於教化, 用兵者莫貴於權謀, 而俱本之於忠義. Han Qi, "Dingzhou Yuegu tang ji" 定州閱古堂記, *QSW*, 40:854.39.

35. 則予也豈徒已之爲益, 是將有益於人. Han Qi, "Dingzhou Yuegu tang ji," *QSW*, 40:854.39.

office compound. The prefectural school and the shrine for Confucius were close to the office complex, but still outside of its physical perimeter. The Zhongchun Garden, the most capacious, was directly accessible from the complex. The Yuegu Hall was the most centrally-positioned for access by Han Qi and his colleagues. As our discussion will show shortly, despite their disparate locations, Han imagined and treated all four sites as integral to his office and crucial to the practice of good government.

Second, each of the four buildings served a different function. There was a grand temple for one of the most important mountain spirits, which received regular sacrifices from the central and local governments. The prefectural school, coupled with the Confucius Temple, was a training ground for Dingzhou's educated elite and a staple presence in government office complexes throughout the country. In contrast, the Zhongchun Garden was meant for the enjoyment of the masses, symbolizing the government's commitment to the wellbeing of its local subjects. Compared to the school and the garden, the Yuegu Hall was located within the prefectural office compound, open exclusively to Dingzhou's officials and their guests. It is not surprising that the hall would go on to become the most famous and widely represented landmark in Dingzhou.

Third, Han Qi planned the four structures sequentially within about two and a half years. His *ji* for the Beiyue Temple stated that the complex took three months to complete and was finished in 1049/10. This means that renovation of the temple began in mid-1049, a full year after Han's arrival.[36] Construction of the prefectural school lasted for four months and ended in 1050/7. Han did not specify the exact times and dates for the two remaining projects, but the expansion of the garden very likely began in the second half of 1050. After all, Han already penned its *ji* in 1051/1. The creation of the Yuegu Hall then followed. This rather straightforward sequence of events suggests that Han Qi considered these projects important to both Dingzhou and himself and that he had intended to complete them before the end of his tenure. Without the foresight of knowing he would serve a second term, Han appeared to have wasted no time in carrying out his plans. When he left in 1053, Dingzhou could boast of having a "complete set" of buildings for various official and semi-official functions.

36. Han Qi might have begun this project earlier if flooding and a major famine had not occurred in the previous year. Han Qi, *Anyang ji biannian jianzhu*, 5.224.

Fourth, Han Qi's writing, in connection to his building effort, was representative of a major development in *ji* writing: the genre allowed the author to elaborate on his political and cultural ideals. Although not the most prolific Song writer in the *ji* form, Han Qi stood out in one respect: he was the most productive Northern Song *ji* writer for self-sponsored buildings. His four *ji* and other related works are the most reliable sources for helping us understand a Northern Song scholar-official's vision for the official landscape at his post and the rationale behind a "nation-wide" construction explosion in government office compounds.

Above all, Han's massive building projects should be considered in the context of his overall career. It is important to remember that Han Qi's appointment to Dingzhou occurred in the same decade during which he played a key role in the Song-Xia War and helped initiate a radical reform that aimed to transform the state and society. Following the failure of the reform, he and his fellow Qingli partisans were all expelled from the capital. From the mid-1040s to the mid-1050s, Han served in several prefectural positions and gained a greater appreciation of local conditions and regional administration. Taken together, these experiences served as solid preparation for resuscitating his career, and they shaped his positions on major policies from 1056 onward, when he was back in the capital. Although Han cannot be classified as a major Confucian thinker, he became and remained a devoted practitioner of Confucian principles on benevolent government and family affairs. A major turning point in his personal transformation took place in Dingzhou.

Eradicating the Traces of Ruin and Neglect: Ushering in a New Age

Han Qi made it clear that a major motivation behind his building efforts was to improve the general state of affairs in Dingzhou following a long period of chaos and instability. In all four *ji*, Han highlighted the damage that Dingzhou, as well as Hebei in general, had suffered from the second half of the Tang (618–907) through the early decades of the Song dynasty. Political fragmentation and widespread violence had caused unprecedented misery in the lives of the general populace as well as inattention to the proper functions of the local government from ritual performance to education and record-keeping. Subsequently, Han Qi considered one of his most important duties to be the restoration of order in the area. Seen from this

respect, his building and renovation projects carried significant utilitarian and symbolic value.

Renovating the Beiyue Temple became Han Qi's top priority due to its critical importance to the stability of the region. Han wrote, "According to ritual prescriptions, no sacrifices are more important than those to Heaven and Earth. Next are offerings to the Five Marchmounts. . . . Rulers worry that the people do not understand [the power of these spirits], so they erect temples to enshrine their images. The intention is to alert the people so that they worship with sincerity. This way, they can avoid calamities and pursue good fortune."[37] After a lengthy discussion of the significance of the sacred mountains and the new title that the Song court had granted to their spirits, Han Qi lamented the sorry state of ritual performance at the Beiyue:

> As time passed, officials in charge of sacrificial rituals became negligent. Natural wear and tear subsequently resulted in the roof leaking and the walls collapsing, yet repair work would be a large and expensive endeavor. For this reason, no one had attempted a renovation. Every year at the Beginning of Winter, the Son of Heaven would send out an imperial order and dispatch the prefect to offer sacrifices. When the officials arrived, they would spread out the various ritual vessels and, along with those in charge of preparing the ceremonies, rise and prostrate in the midst of cracked eaves and broken halls. They would then retreat at ease, without being bothered slightly [by the degradations of the temple]. This is blasphemy to the spirit and a violation of ritual performances to the extreme.[38]
>
> 歷年既長，吏職廢怠，日風月雨，以圮以漏，功大費廣，人焉不葺。每歲立冬，天子之所署祀冊，就遣守臣，以祗祀事。至則羅其籩豆洗酌之具，與執事者升降於頹垣壞廡之間，退而安然，罔以爲恤，慢神瀆禮，莫斯爲甚。

The above passage describes a major sacrificial site long in decline because local officials had disregarded their fundamental ceremonial duties. To Han Qi, this blunt negligence was a sure sign of the failure of the prefectural government.[39] Han wasted no time in correcting the situation. As soon as building

37. 於禮，祀莫大於天地，而五嶽次之 . . . 君人者患民之不知也，於是廟而像之，以警民之耳目，致其嚴奉之心，使違禍而趨福. Han Qi, "Dingzhou chongxiu Beiyuemiao ji," *QSW*, 40:854.33.

38. Han Qi, "Dingzhou chongxiu Beiyuemiao ji," *QSW*, 40:854.34.

39. It should be noted that Han Qi's stance in this case corresponded with his overall view on the importance of proper and diligent ritual performance. Han was among a group of Northern Song scholars who were keen to articulate the proper performance of family rituals. See Patricia

materials were secured, he sprang into action: "As a result [of the renovation], the decrepit and rotten remnants of [the temple] were made anew. . . . Both the colorful paintings and newly decorated roof were extremely elaborate. It is hoped that the spirit will be pleased and willingly reside here forever."[40]

To further erase the traces of ruin and restore normalcy in Dingzhou, Han Qi turned his attention to the Temple for Confucius, whose existence could be traced back to the Tang Dynasty. Converted from a Buddhist monastery in the mid-ninth century, the temple was renovated twice in the tenth century. In the wake of military campaigns and banditry, the chief administrator Li Yunzheng 李允正 (960–1011) "restored the temple from extreme abandonment" (因其極廢而復興焉) during the Xiangfu reign (1008–1017).[41] Since then, Han Qi lamented, those who served in Dingzhou had failed in its upkeep: "The temple deteriorated with each passing day, to the extent that its rooms and walls crumbled and collapsed. From the threshold and beyond, everything was filthy."[42] The room that housed Confucius' statue still stood, but its roof leaked, and there was no space to accommodate the sacrificial vessels.

A similar tone underlined Han Qi's rationale for the construction of the Zhongchun Garden. Han remarked, "Ever since the Tang court lost control of the region in the Tianbao reign (742–756), bandits and barbarians occupied it. The area suffered greatly from recurrent military actions. People had not experienced the joy of life for over a hundred years. It was not until the founding of our dynasty that peace prevailed."[43] Han Qi noted that Li Zhaoliang 李昭亮 (?–1063) was the first to construct a garden in Dingzhou in the Northern Song, but the facility was soon discarded. "After I took office, I was afraid that his intentions might be forgotten, so I restored the garden and made it thrive."[44] The building of the Yuegu Hall followed the same logic. A corrupted pavilion in the prefectural office compound had not seen any maintenance for a long

Ebrey, *Confucianism and Family Rituals in Imperial China: A Social History of Writing about Rites* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1991), 54–55, 75–76.

40. 於是弊陋朽撓之跡, 煥然一新. . . . 彩繪塗墍, 罔不精極, 宜神之喜, 胙饗來宅. Han Qi, "Dingzhou chongxiu Beiyuemiao ji," *QSW*, 40:854.34

41. Han Qi, "Dingzhou Xinjian zhouxue ji," *QSW*, 40:854.36.

42. 故日復隳削, 至是室宇垣墉, 頹壞垂盡, 由閾以內, 鞠爲汙萊. Han Qi, "Dingzhou Xinjian zhouxue ji," *QSW*, 40:854.36.

43. 自唐天寶失御, 盜據戎猾, 兵革殘困, 民不知爲生之樂者百有餘年. Han Qi, "Dingzhou Zhongchun yuan ji," *QSW*, 40:854.37–38.

44. 予之來, 懼陷其心於不公也, 復完而興之. Han Qi, "Dingzhou Zhongchun yuan ji," *QSW*, 40:854.38.

time. Understandably, it was both an eyesore and a sign of poor administration. "I therefore expanded it into a hall (於是廣之爲堂)."[45]

What had worried Han Qi was not only the signs of physical degradation in Dingzhou, but also the loss of intangible traces, i.e. historical memory, yet another outcome of long-term instability and irresponsible administration. Han gave a good example of this in his *ji* titled "Inscription of the Names [of Local Officials] on the Walls of Dingzhou's Prefectural Office" (*Dingzhou tingbi timing ji* 定州廳壁題名記). In the *ji*, Han related that maintaining, in chronological order, a list of local officials having served in a certain prefecture or county had been a Tang tradition. He then asked: "Although without an ancient root, should it be abolished in our time?" To Han, the answer was apparently negative. He then continued,

> I subsequently looked for the names of the prefects since the beginning of the dynasty, planning to inscribe them on a piece of stone for transmission [to future generations]. [I realized, however, that], while focusing on military affairs, officials and government offices had failed to view recordkeeping as an important matter, so much of the information was corrupted, forgotten, or missing. If I only take what is available from recent years and record it, there is no precedent. Therefore, I have decided to begin the records with the change of court policy [to appoint civil commanders to Dingzhou] in an attempt to honor this profound initiative and encourage new ways of governing.[46]
>
> 因訪國朝以來爲州者之次序，將刻石以傳焉。而吏曹狃於武事，不以圖籍爲急，敗壞忘缺，卒不可究。若但取近年可記者書之，則又義無所本。今故以朝廷更制之始爲首，尊睿圖而勸新治也。

This passage shows that, due to their attentiveness to military affairs, local officials in Dingzhou had failed to maintain rudimentary recordkeeping, making it impossible for Han Qi to compile a complete list of its local officials only eight decades after the founding of the dynasty. Han subsequently decided to start anew: the list of inscribed names would begin with the cohort of appointees in 1048. This meant, his name and those of his associates were the first to be recorded on the wall to "encourage new ways of governing." In this sense, the wall inscription, a much smaller-scale undertaking than the newly-built or renovated structures, similarly signified a continuation of a Tang tradition and a straightforward advocacy for starting anew in Dingzhou.

45. Han Qi, "Dingzhou Yuegu tang," *QSW*, 40:854.38.
46. Han Qi, "Dingzhou tingbi timing ji," *QSW*, 40:854.44–45.

Explicating the Meaning of Good Government

In addition to eradicating the physical traces of ruin and neglect that were so prevalent in Dingzhou, Han Qi readily acknowledged how the common people suffered from banditry, border-crossing raiders, heavy tax burdens, recurrent natural disasters, and, above all, the Song-Liao conflicts. These concerns were aptly reflected in his policy measures, which are beyond the scope of this study. This section examines how Han Qi used his building, naming, and writing initiatives as opportunities to highlight the principle and practice of good government, an attempt that resonated with the major political and intellectual developments of the Northern Song, especially the Qingli Reform. In the wake of the Song-Xia war, genuine anxieties over the state of domestic and border affairs moved an ambitious and influential group of scholar-officials, including Han Qi, to redefine the place and meaning of Confucian learning, expound on their vision for a benevolent government, and engage in passionate discussions about a variety of policies and practices.[47] Following his and his fellow Qingli partisans' purge from the political center, Han Qi's decade-long service outside of the capital allowed him to deal with concrete, local issues. The result was a localized articulation of some of the most fundamental Confucian principles in action. To put it differently, what makes Han Qi's activities and writing in Dingzhou especially interesting was his inclusion of local perspectives. His *ji* accounts highlighted his understanding of a variety of local administrative duties as well as his resolve to improve the livelihood of the general populace. Accomplishing this goal would require that he and his colleagues implement the teachings of the sages, act in the interests of the public, and remain devoted to their official duties.

It should be noted at the outset that, even though Han Qi did not specify the exact funds and resources needed for all his construction undertakings, he did refer to cost-related considerations on two occasions, presumably to avoid potential speculation that his projects might increase the burden on the local population. Han stated, for example, that part of the reason that the

47. These major changes have been the focus of much scholarly attention. See Peter Bol, *This Culture of Ours: Intellectual Transitions in T'ang and Sung China* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 1992); Ari Levine, *Divided by a Common Language : Factional Conflict in Late Northern Song China*; McGrath, "The Reigns of Jen-tsung (1022–1063) and Ying-tsung (1063–1067)," 316–28; and Smith, "Anatomies of Reform: The Qingli-Era Reforms of Fan Zhongyan and the New Policies of Wang Anshi Compared," 153–91.

Beiyue Temple had been neglected was due to the unavailability of labor and building materials. A major flood in 1048 further worsened the situation. In the end, what made his project possible was an imperial edict that ordered the demolition of unauthorized temples and shrines country-wide. Moreover, after securing the building materials, Han mobilized his troops, rather than local residents, to work on the construction for fear of disrupting the lives of the common people.[48] The building of the prefectural school followed the same line of thought: it was not until two years after the flooding, when Dingzhou had experienced consecutive good harvests and enjoyed peace on the border that he proceeded with the new construction.[49]

Given the disparity in the buildings' functions and symbolic values, Han Qi's approach in each account was naturally different. As a result, his *ji* singled out the meaning of good government in four main areas: ritual performance, education and moral instruction, the welfare of the common people, and the duties of local officials. In the account for the Beiyue Temple, Han Qi remarked on the ritual role of local government and its officers.

> Officials differ in their good and bad administration; in response, deities deliver good and bad fortune [to the people]. Good administration brings good luck [to them], bad administration causes bad luck. This is the way of the deity. When things do not follow this logic, it is not clear why. The prefect should diligently follow the emperor's orders in managing the spirit's abode, make the sacrifice to the spirit clean, and cultivate himself in order to show benevolence to the people. [After all,] humans depend on the spirit for [the reception of] both good and bad fortune.[50]
>
> 夫吏之爲政也，有善惡焉；神之爲鑑也，有禍福焉。善焉而以福，惡焉而以禍，神理之宜也。或反是焉，則非人之所知矣。守臣當謹天子之命，而治神之居，潔神之祀，修己以愛其民，人唯神之所以禍福而已。

The above passage highlights the ritual role of county and prefectural administrators: they were what connected the divine forces and the general populace. In fact, the spirits would mete out good or bad fortune to the people in response to the local officials' performance. For this reason, they all needed to be diligent in their worship of the mountain spirit to increase the local

48. Han Qi, "Dingzhou Chongxiu Beiyue miao ji," *QSW*, 40:854.34.
49. Han Qi, "Dingzhou Xinjian zhouxue ji," *QSW*, 40:854.36.
50. Han Qi, "Dingzhou Chongxiu Beiyue miao ji," *QSW*, 40:854.34.

residents' wellbeing. Following the renovation, Han Qi offered sacrifices at the Beiyue Temple multiple times and left behind over a dozen poems and eight prayers for rain and snow. One of his poems praises the responsiveness of the mountain spirit in the following way: "Before returning from sacrificing at the auspicious mountain, snow began to fall like jade and pearls in response to my supplications."[51] A prayer, dated to 1050, clearly connects the spirit's efficacy with the people's welfare and the role of the local government. Han wrote, "Ever since winter, there has not been seasonal snow. Is this destiny? If that is the case, then good and bad fortune should alternate. Has this been caused by my poor administration? [If so,] then what offense have the people committed?"[52] At the risk of offending the spirit, here Han Qi questions its judgment, implying that the deity should punish him and his colleagues for their administrative incompetency, not the people.

To Han Qi, another major responsibility of the local government was to ensure social order and harmony. This began with educating and reforming the minds of local subjects. In the account for the new prefectural school, Han stated, "The natures of Heaven and the people are not the same, so the sages desired to lead [the people] and unify [the natures of Heaven and man] in goodness. This goal can only be achieved through learning."[53] Han attributed the success of the Three Dynasties (i.e., Xia, Shang, and Zhou) to their proper instruction of the people. Only after the general populace had understood the way of the key relationships between ruler and subject, father and son, older and younger brothers, and husband and wife, would they know and be content with their place in the family and society. The dynasty would subsequently be able to endure for many generations. Han exclaimed, "Such is the extent that learning contributed to governing."[54]

Han Qi's *ji* made three rather uncontroversial points about good government. First, schools played a crucial role in educating the people and transforming them into good subjects; second, the teachings of the Three Dynasties would help the people conduct themselves properly in all the major relationships, and by extension, promote familial harmony and social stability;

51. 靈嶽祠宮尚未回, 六花隨禱下瓊瑰. Han Qi, *Anyang ji biannian jianzhu*, 6.259.

52. 入冬以來, 雪不時降. 果數之然耶, 則否泰宜有以相返; 政之致耶, 則蚩蚩之民何罪? Han Qi, "Beiyue qixue wen" 北嶽祈雪文, *QSW*, 40:861.150.

53. 天與人性不一, 聖人欲率焉而一之於善, 非學不能也. Han Qi, "Dingzhou Xinjian zhouxue ji," *QSW*, 40:854.35.

54. 學之有功於治也如此. Han Qi, "Dingzhou Xinjian zhouxue ji," *QSW*, 40:854.35.

third, an orderly society was beneficial to the people and key to the longevity of a dynasty. He then concluded that, throughout the realm, schools should be widely established and talented individuals vigorously sought. In Han's calculations, the graduates of government schools would become the backbone of the empire and local society in one of two ways: those who entered officialdom could assist the ruler in ensuring an enjoyable life for the people, while those who remained in local society could lead by personal example as filial sons, virtuous friends, and good neighbors. Both helped realize the emperor's "intentions of making the people virtuous and having them enjoy long lives."[55] Han's reassertion of the importance of local schools can be seen as an implicit criticism of his predecessors, whose administration had neglected a crucial function of a successful government. Both in the cases of the Beiyue Temple and the prefectural school, Han made it clear that responsible and competent local officials were the crucial link connecting the ruler to the people. This required a demonstration of diligence and attentiveness. The degradation at the temple and the lack of a school indicated the exact opposite.

Compared to his emphasis on local officials' ritual and educational duties, Han Qi's *ji* for the Zhongchun Garden highlighted a very specific aspect of the life of the ordinary people: their enjoyment of leisure and the local government's duty to provide it. To make this point, Han Qi first denounced the prevalence of selfish and irresponsible administrators. Han wrote in the tone of such "a self-interested official:"

> "What I must manage is only limited to postal stations. I will leave when my term is over. It would suffice if what my predecessor has built is enough to satisfy my lodging, board, and entertainment needs. Why would I go to the trouble of renovating anything to benefit my successors? This would help me in no way other than inviting criticism. Those who have nothing better to do (*haoshizhe* 好事者) will say that I am diligent but have only focused on non-urgent matters. I will not act this way!"[56]

55. 仁壽吾民之本意. Han Qi, "Dingzhou Xinjian zhouxue ji," *QSW*, 40:854.37. Han's descriptions of the role of the educated elite resonated with Fan Zhongyan's vision for their fellow scholar-officials. In the famous "Account of the Pavilion of Yueyang 岳陽樓記," written in 1046, five years before Han Qi's *ji*, Fan characterized the ideal literatus in the following way: "When they occupied a high position at court, they felt concern for the people. When banished to distant rivers and lakes, they felt concern for their sovereign. 居廟堂之高則憂其民. 處江湖之遠則憂其君." The translation is by Richard E. Strassberg. See Strassberg, *Inscribed Landscape, Travel Writing from Imperial China* (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 1994), 159.

56. Han Qi, "Dingzhou Zhongchun yuan ji," *QSW*, 40:854.37.

「吾之所治，傳舍焉耳，滿歲則委之而去。苟前之所爲，尙足以容吾寢食、飲笑於其間可矣，何必勞而葺之，以利後人，而使好事者以爲勤人而務不急，徒取戾焉？吾不爲也！」

Here Han Qi identifies the root of poor government as lazy and negligent administrators. Selfish and narrow-minded, these officials only performed the bare minimum of their official duties and worried too much about what the *haoshizhe* would say about their performance. Essentially, if these officials were so indifferent to their successors, how could they possibly care about the happiness of the local population?

Han continued:

> Officials fulfilling their duties, farmers working in the fields, artisans making tools and vessels, and merchants buying and selling goods all worry about their trade day and night. This is their way of assisting the government and supporting their own families. During joyful times and festivals, do they not deserve a day's pleasure to rest their mind and heart? Confucius said, "The people work hard for a whole year and have one day of relaxation." If even Zigong did not understand [the importance of allowing the people to enjoy the festivity of the year-end *la* sacrifice to all the gods and spirits], how could self-interested officials?[57]

> 夫官之修職，農之服田，工之治器，商之通貨，早暮汲汲以憂其業，皆所以奉助公上而養其室家。當良辰佳節，豈無一日之適以休其心乎！孔子曰「百日之蜡，一日之澤」，子貢且猶不知，況私而自利者哉！

In denouncing the "self-interested," Han Qi encouraged his fellow local officials to draw inspiration from the ancient sages and show concern for the people's happiness and material comfort. After all, following a year's hard work, the people deserved some leisure and relaxation. Citing Confucius' justification of the *la* 蜡 celebration, Han Qi proposed that a crucial criterion to assess a local official's success was whether he had secured a happy and peaceful life for his subjects.

This point was of special significance considering Dingzhou's location and its turbulent history. To Han Qi, one way to restore order and project normalcy was to provide the people with a space for relaxation in the form of gardens, ponds, terraces and pavilions. For this reason, he did not aim to restore an old garden in decline, but had more ambitious goals in mind. In taking on

57. Han Qi, "Dingzhou Zhongchun yuan ji," *QSW*, 40:854.37.

the garden project, "[necessary] buildings and [staple varieties of] trees that were previously lacking were added in the spirit of renovation. Nothing was omitted. Additionally, an embankment was built and a new gate was opened in the southwest corner to make it more accessible to sightseers."[58]

The new garden's grand scale matched Han's vision for it to be a symbol of peace, happiness, and prosperity. Han wrote that, as a result of his building and expansion effort:

> The gorgeous scenery at the garden and the pond doubled that from earlier times. Taking everything together, I named it the Garden of Spring Time for the Multitudes. On pleasant days or during festivals, the prefect can spend a comfortable day together with his officials and the people, touring the garden and realizing the joy of the peaceful times of the ancient sages. This was my intent [in renovating the garden]. [It is hoped that] seeing the garden's decline and [subsequent] rise, people from later times will understand my diligent efforts.[59]
>
> 園池之勝，益倍疇昔，總而名之曰「衆春園」，庶乎良辰麗節，太守得與吏民同一日之適，遊覽其間，以通乎聖時無事之樂，此其意也。後之人視園之廢興，其知爲政者之用心焉。

The above description best illustrates the rationale behind Han's choice for the garden's name, Spring Time for the Multitudes. The garden was intended to be a public place, where the prefect, local officials, and ordinary people could mingle, relax, and recuperate. To Han Qi, having people of all stations and backgrounds (*zhong* 衆) gather and enjoy his garden would create an image of prosperity and good fortune, characterized by hope, growth, and harmony (*chun* 春), hence the garden's name, Zhongchun. The use of *chun* in its name also reinforced Han Qi's intention to usher in a new era in Dingzhou and alter its reputation as a border region and site of chronic violence. Three of Han's poems that celebrated the newly-created garden scenery served as a major contrast to his previous depictions of Dingzhou as a region perpetually enduring winds and dust from barbarian lands. Han especially highlighted the enjoyment that the entire community derived from their sightseeing activities: "At a rare gathering in the suburban garden at the Cold Food Festival, officials and ordinary people leisurely enjoyed the flowers and plants."[60]

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58. 凡棟宇、樹藝前所未備者，一從新意，罔有漏缺. 又治長堤，鑿門西南隅，以便遊者. Han Qi, "Dingzhou Zhongchun yuan ji," *QSW*, 40:854.38.

59. Han Qi, "Dingzhou Zhongchun yuan ji," *QSW*, 40:854.38.

60. 寒食郊園此會稀，吏民隨意賞芳菲. Han Qi, *Anyang ji biannian jianzhu*, 6.267.

In "Zhongchun Garden," Han portrayed a perfect picture of harmony and happiness reminiscent of what had been achieved in the "Three Dynasties."

……

庶乎時節遊，　When visiting the garden during seasonal festivities,
使見太平跡。　Let the sightseers witness signs of great peace.
園中何所有，　What is there in the garden?
風物難具籍。　The [large variety of] sceneries are impossible to list in full.

……

三春爛熳時，　When flowers are in full bloom in the spring,
爲民開宴席。　Prepare a banquet for the people.
觀者如堵牆，　Spectators form thick walls,
士女雜城陌。　Scholars and women mix in the city and on the road.[61]

In more than one way, the Zhongchun Garden embodied Han's ideals regarding proper government and a good life for the local people. That Dingzhou was a border town and a place urgently in need of dedicated and conscientious civil rule made his idea even more powerful and relevant. Although Han Qi had laid the foundation for his vision, its continuation would require extraordinary effort from his colleagues and successors. The Yuegu Hall was constructed for this purpose, to remind his fellow officials of what he and others had achieved and inspire them to continue their efforts. In his *ji* for the hall, Han wrote:

> The past and present are no different. The ancients took up arms to protect the country, accomplish outstanding administrative feats, and make extraordinary contributions, yet people of the present are incapable of doing so. Why is this? It is because they consider themselves sufficiently virtuous. In recompense for their ranks and salaries, they demand personal profit and security. When they take this attitude, how could it not be difficult to realize their hopes of succeeding in administrative affairs and establishing merit! If they say to themselves: "The ancients were able, yet I am not" and then continue to encourage themselves [to model the ancients], how could they not fulfill their aspirations![62]

夫古猶今也，古之人爲屏翰、授鈇鉞，而能成異政、立奇功，而今或不能者，何也？蓋其待己也必賢而足，其報祿也必利而安，持是

61. Han Qi, *Anyang ji biannian jianzhu*, 1.43.
62. Han Qi, "Dingzhou Yuegu tang," *QSW*, 40:854.39.

以望政成而功立，不其難哉！如曰古人能之，予反不能之，日夜以勉焉，又安有不至者耶！

Han Qi explained that he built the Yuegu Hall to commemorate the competent and meritorious administrators from Dingzhou's past. In addition to motivating himself to remain devoted to his duties, he hoped that: "The virtuous in later times who share my sentiment will care for, expand, and renovate the Hall, lest it is demolished or [the images on it become] painted over."[63] Subsequently, the Yuegu Hall ceased to be a mere memorial to past worthies. The landmark would also stand as a physical reminder to all of Dingzhou's officials of their obligation to "accomplish outstanding administrative feats and make extraordinary contributions."

This emphasis on conscientious local officials striving to improve the wellbeing of the populace, along with several other key ideas conveyed in his *ji* accounts, were not simply created by Han Qi during his time in Dingzhou. Rather, it is more accurate to say that these ideas grew out of the grand vision of the Qingli reformers. Han's construction projects and *ji* accounts were nonetheless significant endeavors: several years after the failure of the reform on the national level, Han systematically introduced these Confucian political ideals through a series of physical structures in Dingzhou, a town that had not experienced much in the way of order or competent benevolent administration for over a century.

Unifying Wen *and* Wu, *Elevating* Wen

Another issue, the relationship between *wen* 文 and *wu* 武, was at the center of Han Qi's vision for an ideal government and it featured prominently in his *ji* accounts. Debates about balancing *wen* and *wu* remained a recurring phenomenon since early Chinese history.[64] In the Northern Song, this pair of terms was routinely applied to administrative and military affairs, cultural and martial values, and civil servants and military officers. Owing to the long-term political fragmentation of the preceding centuries and the military background

63. 後來之賢，與吾同志，必愛尚而增葺之，宜免夫毀圮圬墁之患矣. Han Qi, "Dingzhou Yuegu tang," QSW, 40:854.39.

64. For a study about the relationship between *wen* and *wu* in early China, see Christopher C. Rand, *Military Thought in Early China* (Albany, NY: State University of New York Press, 2017).

of the Song founders, the first half of the Northern Song saw a gradual shift in the image of and attitude toward *wen* and *wu*, alternatively labeled *zhongwen qingwu* 重文輕武 or *chongwen yiwu* 崇文抑武. Both can be loosely translated as esteeming culture and civil servants while deemphasizing military affairs and disparaging officers.[65] As several scholars have argued, this process was several decades in the making. The founding emperors never officially enunciated a policy of elevating *wen* and restraining *wu*, nor did the elevation of *wen* lead to an outright devaluation of *wu* or the replacement of one monolithic class by another.[66] Both Emperors Taizu and Taizong, for example, called for all military officers to educate themselves and adjust to civil rule. They similarly encouraged civil servants to familiarize themselves with military and border affairs. In the late tenth and early eleventh centuries, it was not uncommon for civil servants to demonstrate a strong, genuine interest in military affairs.[67] These incidents were welcomed by the court, which hoped to reform the military and restrict the influence of the powerful military families. The same efforts were also intended to recruit talents from diverse backgrounds in the newly established political order.

The founding emperors' vision of establishing and maintaining civil rule (*wenzhi* 文治) nonetheless resulted in the elevation of *wen* over *wu* in official rhetoric as well as ranking and compensation. That civil service was viewed

65. Chen Feng, *Bei Song wujiang qunti yu xiangguan wenti yanjiu*, especially 251–302, and *Wushi de bei'ai: Bei Song chongwen yiwu xianxiang yanjiu* 武士的悲哀: 北宋崇文抑武現象研究 (Beijing: Renmin chubanshe, 2011).

66. Deng Xiaonan 鄧小南, *Zuzong zhifa: Bei Song qianqi zhengzhi shulüe* 祖宗之法: 北宋前期政治述略 (Beijing: Sanlian shudian, 2014), especially 105–85; Smith, "A Crisis in the Literati State," 59–137; Tian Zhiguang 田志光, "Songchu wujiang zhengzhi diwei zai renshi: chongwen yiwu zhi ling yimian" 宋初武將政治地位再認識: 崇文抑武之另一面, *Wen shi zhe* 文史哲 1 (2021): 62–74; and Zhang Bangwei 張邦煒, "Zhongwen qingwu: Zhao Song wangchao de qian guize" 重文輕武: 趙宋王朝的潛規則, *Sichuan shifan daxue xuebao* 四川師範大學學報 42.1 (2015): 138–46.

67. The famous scholar-official, Liu Kai 柳開 (947–1000), for example, requested to be switched from the civil to military track. See Wu Bochang 伍伯常, "Bei Song chunian de beifang wenshi yu haoxia: yi Liu Kai de shigong ji zuofeng xingxiang wei zhongxin" 北宋初年的北方文士與豪俠: 以柳開的事功及作風形象爲中心, *Tsing Hua Journal of Chinese Studies* 清華學報 36.2 (2006): 295–344; and Yan Jianfei 閻建飛, "Shi shiji Huabei diqu shiren huodong zhucengmian: yi Liu Kai jiazu wei xiansuo" 十世紀華北地區士人活動諸層面: 以柳開家族爲線索, *Wen shi zhe* 文史哲 6 (2020): 93–105. In his epitaph work, Han Qi portrayed several of his fellow scholar-officials as equally accomplished in military as well as civil and cultural matters. Han Qi, *Anyang ji binian jianzhu*, 47.1477, 47.1493, 50.1572.

as superior and more desirable than military service can be seen from several incidents: first, officials who were moved from civil to military ranks, such as Han Qi's contemporaries, Liu Ping 劉平 (980s–1040s) and Chen Yaozi 陳堯咨 (970–1034), did not gladly accept the designation.[68] Second, the experience of Di Qing 狄青 (1008–1057) perhaps best illustrates the dilemma in which military officers increasingly found themselves by the mid-Northern Song. Despite his outstanding service on the northern, northwestern, and southern frontiers, Di, one of the most talented commanders in the Northern Song, was repeatedly ridiculed by his civil counterparts.[69] Third, in 1042, in the midst of the Song-Xia war, when the court bestowed the title of Surveillance Commander (*guancha shi* 觀察使), a military title, on all four commanders in Shaanxi, three of them, led by Fan Zhongyan, rejected this imperial "generosity" vehemently, leading Emperor Renzong to eventually reverse the order. It is important to note that Han Qi was the only one of the four commanders who was willing to accept the title at that time.[70]

This triumph of civil over military service had much to do with the long-term peace on the northern borders and was reflected in major institutional changes. For several years during the Qingli reign (1041–1048), the grand councilors held the position of military commissioner concurrently.[71] Furthermore, Northern Song scholar-officials wrote extensively to justify the various advantages of appointing civilians to manage military affairs. Among the reasons listed, civil servants were seen as more loyal to the dynasty and more adept at combining both *wen* and *wu* qualities.[72] By Emperor Renzong's reign, scholar-officials began to boast about "ruling all under Heaven with the emperor" (*gongzhi tianxia* 共治天下).[73]

Given the shifts in, and centrality of, the *wen-wu* relationship in Northern Song political history, it is fitting that Han Qi opined on the matter at this juncture in his life. As civilian commanders, Han and Fan Zhongyan led

68. Chen Feng, *Wushi de bei'ai*, 193–201, 208–9.

69. Tuo Tuo, *Song shi*, 23:290.9718–21.

70. Chen Feng, *Bei Song wujiang qunti yu xiangguan wenti yanjiu*, 294–95.

71. Tian Zhiguang 田志光, *Bei Song zaifu: zhengwu juece yu yunzuo yanjiu* 北宋宰輔: 政務決策與運作研究 (Beijing: Renmin chubanshe, 2013), 88–103.

72. Wu Tingchih (Tingzhi) 吳挺誌, "Bei Song shiren dui 'Wenchen tongbing' de helihua lunshu" 北宋士人對「文臣統兵」的合理化論述. *Tsing Hua Journal of Chinese Studies* 清華學報 44.4 (2014): 589–628.

73. Deng Xiaonan, *Zuzong zhifa*, 414–27; and Chen Feng, *Bei Song wujiang qunti yu xiangguan wenti yanjiu*, especially 251–302.

military sub-commanders to defend against the Tanguts in the early 1040s. Han had since gained more extensive experience in managing both military and administrative affairs. Seen from a different perspective, it was not until his Dingzhou years that Han Qi found himself in the position of balancing *wen* and *wu* duties on a daily basis. Moreover, Han's tenure in Dingzhou coincided with the court's changing perception of the nature of the Song-Liao relationship following the signing of the Song-Liao and Song-Xia treaties in 1042 and 1044, respectively. As peace prevailed, Dingzhou's role and image evolved. Han Qi did not simply live through this transition, but actively sought to transform Dingzhou from a symbol of *wu* and border defense to a place of *wen* and stability.

Han Qi's Dingzhou writings chronicled this process. There is little doubt that, when he first arrived, he viewed Dingzhou as a border region and a place mainly for men of *wu*. In his memorial of gratitude, Han remarked that

> Zhongshan (an ancient kingdom that centered in the Dingzhou area; an alternative name for Dingzhou) commands [a strategic position on] the borders and is known for its importance. Its terrain is flat and easy [to travel] and lacks any slopes or waters to serve as barriers. Previously when the caitiffs' cavalry invaded, they always took this route. For this reason, the court has routinely stationed large forces here and selected famous generals to control its key positions.[74]
>
> 中山控邊，素號雄重。地形坦易，無坂澤之阻，先時虜騎入寇，必趨是途，故國家常聚重兵、擇名將以制其衝。

In several poems, Han portrayed himself as a soldier or commander being dispatched by the emperor to the border area. Leaving the political and cultural centers behind, Han was immediately impressed with Dingzhou's "frontier feel" and physical conditions. His poems detailed the topographical features of the region, situating Dingzhou along the dividing line between the center/*huaxia* 華夏 and the periphery/*beihu* 北胡.[75] One of the longest poems, entitled "Beiyue" 北嶽, highlights Mount Heng's imposing landscapes as well as Dingzhou's strategic location. In Han's representation, the Beiyue, as well as "strong northern towns" (*shuozhen xiong* 朔鎮雄) in general, connected and divided Central China (*zhongxia* 中夏) and the Northern barbarians (*beihu*

74. Han Qi, "Dingzhou xieshang biao," *QSW*, 39:833.35.
75. Han Qi, *Anyang ji biannian jianzhu*, 5.205; 6.219–20.

北胡), superb scenery (*sheng* 勝) and desolate surroundings (*qiong* 窮), and the Central Plain (*zhongyuan* 中原) and Great Desert (*damo* 大漠).[76]

Han's depiction of Dingzhou's physical conditions corresponded with his account of the hardships of frontier service. Employing familiar literary tropes such as "wind and sand" (*fengsha* 風沙), "barbarian frost" (*hushuang* 胡霜), and "northern borders" (*shuosai*, 朔塞, *saishang* 塞上, *bianzhangdi* 邊障地), Han portrayed himself as being "stuck in the frontier dust" (*kun bianchen* 困邊塵). It was in Dingzhou that he mentioned, for the first time, growing white hair and aging quickly.[77]

Han's highlighting of Dingzhou's *wu* qualities made its lack of *wen* features especially disheartening. Above all, he was frustrated with the absence of social companionship that was central to the literati identity and lifestyle. In response to a friend's letter, he lamented,

經時無一信，　Not one letter for a long time,
度夕是三秋。　The night feels as long as three autumns (i.e. three years).
友會此難約，　So hard to meet friends here,
君恩尚未酬。　I have yet to repay the ruler's kindness.[78]

In this poem, Han Qi depicts himself as being separated from friends and the familiar scenes of banqueting and entertaining. He subsequently identifies the lack of a social and cultural life as one of the largest hardships that he had to overcome. Given this context, we may be able to better appreciate his interest in balancing *wen* and *wu* in Dingzhou as well as his desire to add more *wen* elements, such as building a prefectural school. In the *ji* for the new facility, Han wrote,

> The teachings of Confucius [simply] concern Heaven and Earth. Among humans, who does not have Heaven above and Earth beneath him? If there were no Heaven and Earth, where would humans live? Therefore, *wen* and *wu* are one Dao. How could there be two? In the past, Confucius also studied military arts and recognized its importance. Therefore he said, "If I go to fight, I will

76. Han Qi, *Anyang ji biannian jianzhu*, 6.211.

77. Han Qi, *Anyang ji biannian jianzhu*, 6.218–19; 6.223; 6.234; 6.236; 6.271.

78. Han Qi, *Anyang ji biannian jianzhu*, 6.270. One source did mention that Han treated "*shi*/scholars" from all directions with generosity. Many came to visit him and seek patronage. See Heng Gui, *QSW*, "Han Weigong zhiji beiji," 104:2277.222.

> win."[79] Jin was one [among the many] states [in the Spring and Autumn Period], yet it employed generals who were well-versed in the *Odes*, *Documents*, *Rites*, and *Music*, and eventually dominated the other states. From this it is clear that, if a scholar does not know the military arts or a general is not learned, once he is put in an important position, he will be ignorant in the way of victory. Defeat and humiliation will follow. Those who say, learning is not my responsibility [because] I am posted at a place where [only] *wu*-related talents are needed, have truly failed to understand the fundamental [relationship between *wen* and *wu*].[80]
>
> 夫子之教，天地也，凡爲人者孰不戴履之，捨天地將安之乎？故文武一道也，惡有二焉？昔夫子亦嘗學焉，而後識其大者，故曰「我戰則克」。晉，列國也，猶用詩書禮樂之帥，卒伯諸侯。是知爲儒而不知兵，爲將而不知書，一旦用之，則茫然不知其所以克之之道，而敗辱隨之。其所謂用武之地、學非吾事者，是眞不知其本者也。

In the above discussion, Han Qi stresses the importance of balancing *wen* and *wu* by using two historical examples. He first references Confucius as a symbol of the co-existence and complementarity of *wen* and *wu*. Confucius, the paragon of civil virtues, was also a master in the military arts and had the confidence to fight and win battles. Han Qi's second example concerns one of the hegemonies in the Spring and Autumn Period (770–476 BCE), the state of Jin. Han argued that the Jin gained hegemonic status not only because of its strong troops, but also because its military experts were well-read in the *wen*-classical traditions of the *Odes*, *Documents*, *Rites*, and *Music*.

Here Han Qi implied that the key for a state's power and longevity was the ability to employ those equally talented in managing *wen* and *wu* affairs. In Dingzhou's case, this required the elevation of *wen* in an area that had long been dominated by border troubles and prioritized *wu*. In other words, Han saw it as a a necessity to make Dingzhou and its government less *wu* in nature and more akin to other non-border, non-military prefectures. Moreover, Han Qi's use of the above two examples represented both a concealed denunciation of his predecessors, who had completely neglected *wen* building in a *wu*-dominated region, and an endorsement of the new government policy that designated a civil servant as the highest-ranked official in Dingzhou.

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79. This quote is from *Classic of Rituals* (*Liji* 禮記). See *Liji zhengyi* 禮記正義, annotated by Zhengxuan 鄭玄註, commentary by Kong Yingda 孔穎達疏, 23.737. Beijing daxue chubanshe, 1999.

80. Han Qi, "Dingzhou xinjian zhouxue ji," *QSW*, 40:854.36.

Of his four construction projects, Han Qi seemed to feel the most personal connection to the Yuegu Hall. The structure was located inside the prefectural office compound, where Han worked, rested, and entertained. More importantly, it was intended to be a memorial to all the *wen* and *wu* talents in Dingzhou's history. Han did not give a list of the actual deeds they accomplished or the Song and pre-Song figures featured on the hall's walls. Considering that he attacked his Song predecessors for their inattention to *wen*-related matters, it is reasonable to conclude that Han's illustrations drew from Dingzhou's long history and that most of the Song-related episodes were perhaps *wu*-themed, further sharpening the need for *wen* rule in Dingzhou.

Decorated with paintings of illustrious officials from Dingzhou's past, the landmark was intended as a reminder of the importance of the unity of *wen* and *wu* in establishing good government. Han wrote that the wall images included both civil and military officers known for their "extraordinary administrative accomplishments" (*yizheng* 異政) and "outstanding military merit" (*qigong* 奇功). Good government, especially in the case of Dingzhou, required the collaboration of civil and military officers to take charge of both *wen* and *wu* affairs.

In a long poem commemorating the completion of the Yuegu Hall, Han Qi once again brought up Confucius' embodiment of both *wen* and *wu*, encouraging his peers to model themselves after the sage.

仲尼大聖人，	The great sage Zhongni (i.e. Confucius),
文武亦云學。	Said he studied *wen* and *wu*.
況其下者乎，	How could those inferior to him,
而不事鼙琢。	Not dedicate themselves to practicing the same?[81]

Using Confucius as his role model, Han Qi described himself as having the good fortune of serving in a strategic post and he pledged to devote himself to his duties. In this sense, the Yuegu Hall was both a reminder and an inspiration to him, his guests, and his successors to cultivate their abilities in both areas. Han exhorted: "In leisure time, view often [the illustrious deeds of the past worthies.] [Their accomplishments] will help one refrain from unprincipled behavior."[82]

81. Han Qi, *Anyang ji biannian jianzhu*, 1.37.
82. 公餘時縱觀, 大可儆齷齪. Han Qi, *Anyang ji biannian jianzhu*, 1.37.

Conclusion

In more than one way, the 1040s marked Han Qi's maturity into an established scholar-official. Following the failure of the Qingli reforms and serious career setbacks, Han's provincial service, especially his reassignment to the northern border, gave him a second chance to prove himself. This career trajectory was by no means a personal choice, and not all of his initiatives were planned out in advance. His decade of prefectural service and cultural undertakings nonetheless paved the way for his return to the court as well as his emergence as an influential cultural and scholarly figure. Arriving in 1048 as a *rushuai* and ready to endure hardships, Han Qi gained a new appreciation for Dingzhou and embarked on a "mission" to transform the border town. His building, naming, and writing endeavors were aimed at, and succeeded in, altering Dingzhou's image as a place for military men, and making it more similar to other ordinary, civil prefectures in the realm. These same engagements also allowed Han Qi to explicate his ideas on governing and advance his cultural and intellectual pursuits. On a broader level, Han's *wen*-related projects reflected the continual ascendancy of the literati and their increasingly well-defined political and social ideals.

Did Han Qi's undertakings mark a turning point in Northern Song thinking on border management? How do we assess the dynamic between the court's rhetoric and policies and the local officials' on-the-ground implementation and innovation? In what ways did Han's initiatives impact local society in Dingzhou? Answering these questions would require a more in-depth study of Dingzhou's history as well as comparative work on Dingzhou and other border prefectures. I therefore conclude this case study with three observations.

First, Dingzhou's transformation from a border region to a place of cultural significance would not have been possible without Han Qi's political influence and determination for change. His keen interest in using public buildings as symbols of *wen* and benevolent government continued at his posts in Bingzhou and Xiangzhou (1055–1056). Seeing similar problems in the two prefectures—both were broadly considered to be part of the Song's northern defense line—Han repeated his actions in Dingzhou through construction, naming, and writing activities. Taken together, his *ji* accounts and other literary writings from 1048 to 1056 heralded the beginning of a new era in these border regions.

Second, Han Qi's new approach to border management, seen most clearly in the juxtaposition of *wen* and *wu* and the promotion of *wen*, was widely sup-

ported and propagated by his fellow scholar-officials. Many composed works in prose and verse to celebrate his buildings and the ideals they signified. Han's closest friends, the leading political and cultural figures, such as Fan Zhongyan, Fu Bi 富弼 (1004–1083), Wen Yanbo 文彥博 (1006–1097), and Ouyang Xiu 歐陽修 (1007–1072), all endorsed his view on the relationship between *wen* and *wu*.[83] The same message quickly spread beyond Han's circle of friends and colleagues. The famous poet Wang Ling 王令 (1032–1059), who never held office or met Han Qi, heard about the Yuegu Hall and its related literature only a few years after its completion. Living far away in Yangzhou, Wang wished he could "grow a pair of wings" so he could fly to Dingzhou. In Wang's imagination, the dominant image at the Yuegu Hall was one that combined *wen* and *wu* themes: "On the left are portraits of the civil officials and parents of local residents, on the right are pictures of generals as strong as bears."[84]

Third, Dingzhou's image as a border town continued to fade in the decades following Han Qi's departure. Among Han's successors were such famous scholars as Song Qi 宋祁 (998–1061), Wang Su 王素 (1007–1073), Han Jiang 韓絳 (1012–1088), Su Shi 蘇軾 (1037–1101), and Han Qi's eldest son, Han Zhongyan 韓忠彥 (1038–1109). All were men of *wen*. Each used the Yuegu Hall almost exclusively as a venue for entertainment.[85] Han Qi's legacy similarly grew in importance. By 1080, a commemorative shrine was created by the then prefect Han Jiang to honor Han Qi's service in Dingzhou.[86] The shrine quickly achieved iconic status. Writing in 1087, Wang Yansou 王嚴叟 mentioned local officials offering seasonal sacrifices first to Confucius, then to Han Qi.[87] Su Shi, who served in Dingzhou from 1093 to early 1094, performed these rituals. In a eulogy, Su emotionally recollected his personal interactions with Han Qi and his good fortune in being appointed to Dingzhou. In this context, Su asked, "How dare I not follow your example in administering the

83. For some of the writings that these men composed in celebration of Han Qi's Dingzhou buildings, see Fan Zhongyan, *QSW*, 18:383.353–56; Fu Bi, *QSW*, 20:608.30–32 and Fu Bi, *Quan Song shi* 全宋詩, ed. Beijing daxue guwenxian yanjiusuo 北京大學古文獻研究所 (Beijing: Beijing daxue chubanshe, 1986–1998), 5:265.3365–67; Ouyang Xiu, *QSW*, 33:704.191; Wen Yanbo, *QSW*, 40:852.14.

84. 左圖守相父母吏, 右狀將帥熊羆姿. Wang Ling, *Quan Song shi*, 12:692.8078.

85. Han Qi, *Anyang ji biannian jiaozhu*, 9.363; Song Qi, *Quan Song shi*, 4:214.2471.

86. Guo Shiliang 郭時亮, "Weiguo Han Zhongxian gong citang ji" 魏國韓忠獻公祠堂記, *QSW*, 102:2238.325–27.

87. Wang Yansou, "Dingzhou Han Weigong citang ji" 定州韓魏公祠堂記, *QSW*, 102:2227.103–104.

people and the troops?"[88] Su Shi's reference to managing the military aside, he and his fellow scholar-officials no longer saw or portrayed Dingzhou as a border region. Dingzhou continued to be part of the Song's northern border, but the "frontier dust" and "barbarian wind and sand" that Han Qi described completely disappeared from later images and representations of the place. This evolution was due in no small part to Han's efforts.

88. 敢不師公, 治民與軍? Su Shi, "Ji Han Zhongxian gong wen" 祭韓忠獻公文, *QSW*, 92:1998.112.