

Acknowledgments

This project has developed over many years and has benefited from many people. My interest in historiography began in the early 1980s when I was pursuing my graduate work at East China Normal University in Shanghai, China, where I studied primarily with Professor Guo Shengming. Although Guo was considered an expert on the study of Western historiography in the PRC, in the 1930s he was a student of many of the historians—or the May Fourth scholars—studied in this book. Over the years, I also have had the pleasure to work with Professor Zhang Zhilian of Beijing University, who, along with Professor Guo, has given me both encouragement and advice. From Guo, Zhang, and many other Chinese intellectuals with a similar background I came to develop a personal “feel” of the May Fourth scholars in this book. In the initial stage of my research, I had an opportunity to interview Professor E-tu Zen Sun at Pennsylvania State University. A daughter of Chen Hengzhe (Sophia) and Ren Hongjun (Zen Hung-chün), close friends of Hu Shi, Professor Sun, like Guo and Zhang, graced me with her memory of the May Fourth generation, of which her parents and their friends were prominent figures.

I began my research on this subject in the aftermath of the 1989 Tiananmen Square incident. Although I was already in the United States at the time, I must say that the event has in many ways helped reorient the direction of my research and career. I am indebted to Professor Joseph M. Levine at Syracuse University and Professor Georg G. Iggers at SUNY Buffalo for their encouragement and understanding. In writing and completing my dissertation, which was the basis of this book, I have also benefited from the advice of Professor Norman A. Kutcher, a cultural historian of

late-imperial and modern China at Syracuse. Professor Yu Ying-shih of Princeton University—whom I first consulted in 1989—also offered valuable advice that helped me define the scope of this project. I am grateful to all of them for their expertise in helping build my knowledge base on both Chinese and Western historical cultures and hope that this small volume can reflect some of their education. I would especially like to thank Georg Iggers for his warm friendship and strong support that I have cherished ever since 1984 when we first met. I am also indebted to Professor Arif Dirlik of Duke University who provided much needed critique for helping me reconceptualize the project at an early stage of its development.

In the summer of 1996, I participated in the NEH Summer Seminar on Chinese ethnicity and nationality organized by Prasenjit Duara and Dru Gladney at the East-West Center, Hawai'i. I benefited a good deal from the discussions in the seminar, particularly from my talks with Professor Duara, who had then just published his well-received book on historical narratives in modern China. At various stages when I prepared the manuscript for publication, I have benefited from the advice and help of the following people: Peter Bol, Paul A. Cohen, Ralph Croizier, D. W. Y. Kwok, Thomas H. C. Lee, Vera Schwarcz, Jeffrey Wasserstrom, Daniel Wolf, and Peter Zarrow. In the past several years, I have had several opportunities to present part of my work at the following institutions: Institute of History and Philology, Academia Sinica, Taiwan; Bielefeld University, Free University of Berlin, Germany; and at SUNY Buffalo. I am grateful to Wang Fan-sen, Jörn Rüsen, Mechthild Leutner, Thomas Burkman, and Roger Des Forges for their invitations and comments.

I would also like to thank German Academic Exchange Services (DAAD) for a short-term fellowship that allowed me to check out some necessary information in Germany in 1994. At the final stage of my revision, I was able to spend a semester at the Institute of History and Philology, Academia Sinica on a fellowship from the Center for Chinese Studies, National Library, Taiwan in 1999. I am indebted to Mr. Tu Cheng-sheng, the director of the Institute, for providing me with research facilities and allowing me to use the Fu Sinian (Fu Ssu-nien) Archives, housed in the Institute's library. My friendship with Ku Wei-ying, Wang Fan-sen, Huang Chün-chieh, Huang Chin-hsing, and others also made my stay in Taiwan a pleasant experience. Over the years, I have received funding from Rowan University, my home institution, which facilitated my research in general and my writing and revision of this book in particular. To

my friends Linda Pirolli, Jim Rooney, Ken Hovey, and Minna Duskow, I owe my thanks for proofreading the manuscript and improving its prose. Some portions of chapter 2 were published in my article “History in Late-Imperial China,” *Storia della Storiografia*, 22 (1992), pp. 3–22. I thank the journal editor Edoardo Tortarolo for his permission to reprint them here. I am also grateful to two reviewers of my manuscript for the press for their constructive and valuable comments. My thanks also go to my editors, Nancy Ellegate and Kristin Milavec, for their proficiency in producing this book. Yet it is I who is ultimately responsible for any remaining mistakes.

Last but not least, I would like to take the opportunity to thank my family for their love and support over the years: to my parents for teaching me the importance of education, even during the fierce years of the Cultural Revolution, and to my wife Ni for her patience and optimism. During the past decade, she has always believed in me and in the value of this project, for which I am particularly grateful. I would like to dedicate this book to her.