

Preface

The chapters of this book originated as lectures that I delivered at the Collège de France during January 1994. I am most grateful for the generosity of my French hosts, especially Pierre-Étienne Will, Professor of Modern Chinese History at the Collège, who made our time in Paris thoroughly delightful. He not only gave unstintingly of his hospitality, but also contributed in countless ways to the book itself. Besides translating and editing the lectures, he made numerous improvements in the content. The resulting volume owes much to his efforts. His introduction to the French edition,¹ “Entre Présent et Passé,” though not translated here, was a source of many insights to me and greatly improved the present text.

I am also indebted to my brother David, who kindly prepared the French text for my lectures. Others who read

¹Philip A. Kuhn, *Les Origines de l'État Chinois Moderne*. Traduit et présenté par Pierre-Étienne Will (Paris: Cahiers des Annales, distributed by Armand Colin, 1999). Earlier versions of Chapters 1 and 2 appeared as “Ideas Behind China’s Modern State” in *Harvard Journal of Asiatic Studies* 55.2 (1995), pp. 295–337.

all or parts of the manuscript and offered valuable comments were Peter K. Bol, Ch'en Yung-fa, Prasenjit Duara, Mark C. Elliott, Lin Man-houng, and William T. Rowe. Finally, I have benefited from the help and advice of Ch'en Hsi-yuan, Ju Deyuan, Kong Xiangji, and Wang Xiangyun. Muriel Bell of the Stanford University Press has been a marvellously supportive editor. None of those who contributed so much to this work is in any way responsible for its remaining shortcomings.

P.A.K.

*Cambridge, Massachusetts,
January 2001*