

LAURA HOSTETLER

Qing Colonial  
Enterprise

*Ethnography and Cartography in  
Early Modern China*

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## NOTE ON ROMANIZATION



The *pinyin* system of romanization is used throughout the text. Titles of publications and proper names normally written in other forms of romanization have not, however, been altered to conform to the *pinyin* system. Other exceptions are made in regard to Peking (rather than Beijing), Taipei, and the Yangzi River. For the sake of consistency other forms of romanization within quoted passages have been altered to *pinyin*, but appear within brackets to indicate the change.



In *Qing Colonial Enterprise*, Laura Hostetler shows how Qing China (1636–1911) used cartography and ethnography to pursue its imperial ambitions. She argues that far from being on the periphery of developments in the early modern period, Qing China both participated in and helped shape the new emphasis on empirical scientific knowledge that was simultaneously transforming Europe—and its colonial empires—at the time.

Although mapping in China is almost as old as Chinese civilization itself, the Qing insistence on accurate, to-scale maps of their territory was a new response to the difficulties of administering a vast and growing empire. Likewise, direct observation became increasingly important to Qing ethnographic writings, such as the illustrated manuscripts known as “Miao albums” (from which twenty color paintings are reproduced in this book). These were intended to educate Qing officials about various non-Han peoples so they could govern these groups more effectively. Hostetler’s groundbreaking study provides a wealth of insights to anyone interested in the significance of cartography, growth of empire, or this exciting period of Chinese history.

“Successfully argues that early modern cartography developed in a global context, rather than exclusively in Europe. . . . This book’s comparative approach and exciting insights should prove influential both inside and outside Qing history; serious students of cartography, ethnography, and empire cannot afford to overlook developments in Qing China or this book.”

C. PAT GIERSCH, *Journal of Asian Studies*

“This book makes a significant contribution to existing scholarship by drawing attention to the importance of visual representation in relation to the process of empire-building. This is a carefully researched, highly readable, and visually appealing work.”

L. J. NEWBY, *Journal of the Royal Anthropological Institute*

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