



Coping with Calamity: Environmental Change and Peasant Response in Central China, 1736-1949 **(Contemporary Chinese Studies)**

Jiayan Zhang

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The Jiangnan plain in central China is shaped by its relationship with water. Once a prolific rice-growing region that drew immigrants to its fertile paddy fields, since the eighteenth century it has become prone to devastating flooding and waterlogging. Over time, population pressures and dike building left more and more people in the region vulnerable to its frequent water calamities. The first environmental and socioeconomic history of the region, *Coping with Calamity* considers the Jiangnan plain's volatile environment, the constant challenges it presented to peasants, and the peasants' often ingenious and sophisticated responses, in the Qing and Republican periods

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