The Opium War, Overlapping Empires, and China's Water Borders



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A thesis submitted for the degree of
Doctor of Philosophy
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ABSTRACT

This thesis explains the relationships between the British Expedition to China, the Qing state, and the Chinese maritime and river population during the Opium War (1839–1842). Drawing on scholarship on borderlands and frontiers as well as a variety of textual and visual sources, the thesis argues that the Opium War transformed vast coastal and waterway regions in Guangdong, Fujian, Zhejiang, and Jiangsu provinces into what can be conceptualized as "water borders." These water borders were initially characterized by the existence of the Qing Empire's sea frontier, where the Qing rulers, with the "inner-outer paradigm" in mind, strove to maintain control over those labeled as "outer barbarians," "Han evildoers," "villainous fishers," and the "Dan." The rise of a British wartime frontier in China and its adverse effects on local transportation as well as Chinese regional and international trade, however, destabilized southeast China's socioeconomic order. With the Qing forces weakened, Chinese piracy was unleashed, and given limited British naval power, there was an absence of any militarily hegemonic power in southeast China's waters. The British occupation and naval blockade, moreover, resulted in the emergence of overlaps and interstices of the Qing and British empires. On the one hand, the British Expedition and the Qing state conflicted over managing Chinese merchant craft and their trade. On the other hand, subject to neither Qing nor British control, many Chinese people living along the coast and rivers took advantage of the wartime opportunities and expanded their activities and networks to fissures of Qing control and the newly opened interstitial space.

The thesis engages with Opium War studies by "re-reorienting" the war toward the coast and revealing the war's three "inner" aspects, namely the Qing efforts to "tame" the sea frontier, British rule in wartime China, and the Qing-British conflicts over controlling Chinese littoral people. The thesis, moreover, contributes to scholarship on late imperial and modern Chinese littoral societies. It argues that while the war marked the beginning of an unprecedented-scale interaction of Chinese coastal and riverine people with Westerners in China, the evolution of Chinese littoral societies during the war was in fact a continuation of the preceding centuries. The Opium War, the thesis argues, brought about one of the most dramatic political-social upheavals in late imperial littoral China. Furthermore, the thesis revisits British imperialism in late imperial and modern China by looking at the origins of the British "formal empire," limitations of British power, and wartime aids of the "indigenous" population for the British.

The thesis also reassesses the significance of the Opium War in the history of the Qing Empire. It argues that for the Qing state, its anti-opium campaign and anti-British war in 1839–1842 constituted one of the recurrent threats on the maritime frontier for the empire's first two centuries. It also highlights some aspects of similarities and linkage of the Qing Empire's maritime and inland borders. Furthermore, the thesis reevaluates the Qing's state capacity during the Opium War and in the following years, highlighting its partial ability to control the empire's littorals. Last but not least, the water border framework constructed in the thesis serves to underscore some aspects of continuity in the political and socioeconomic development of late imperial southeast China, and to facilitate comparison between different frontiers in the Qing Empire, Southeast Asia, and beyond. (93,250 words)

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List of Abbreviations

Buyi: *Chouban yiwu shimo buyi* 籌辦夷務始末補遺
Dang'an: *Yapian zhanzheng dang'an shiliao* 鴉片戰爭檔案史料
DCJHLZ: *Daoguang chao Junjichu Hanwen lufu zouzhe* 道光朝軍機處錄副奏摺
DCJHZZ: *Daoguang chao Junjichu Hanwen zhupi zouzhe* 道光朝軍機處硃批奏摺
ZDLD: Zhongguo diyi lishi dang'an guan 中國第一歷史檔案館
ZYJY: Zhongyang yanjiuyuan jindaishi yanjiusuo 中國研究院近代史研究所

Chapter 1:

Introduction

Research Background and Research Question

Since time immemorial, many people in China have lived off the sea, waterways, and lakes. A Western observer estimated in the mid-nineteenth century that one-tenth of the Chinese population "procure their livelihood from the water."[1] Were this estimation credible, the proportion of Chinese people who made a living in China's waters would have been higher, as their occupations—full-time, seasonal, or temporary—included not only catching or collecting fish as well as other aquatic animals and plants, but also shipping cargos (both licitly and illicitly), transporting passengers on water, provisioning in small craft, working as a ship crew, participating in waterborne banditry, and so on. They worked in the sea, lakes, rivers, creeks, canals, swamps, and shallow waters. They stayed afloat, settled on shore, or switched between land and waterborne dwellings.

In late imperial China (1368–1912), a significant part of the above "water population," as contemporary Western sojourners sometimes called them, had frequent contacts with Westerners coming from the sea.[2] Despite repeated interdicts by the Ming (1368–1644) and Qing (1636–1912) states against "interacting with savages" (*tongfan* 通番) or being "Han evildoers" (*hanjian* 漢奸/漢姦),[3] in littoral regions many Chinese people traded with or worked for Westerners ranging from naval forces to clandestine traders-cum-pirates and to missionaries. Military, socioeconomic, and cultural encounters between Westerners and

[1] *Canton Press*, Feb. 13, 1841.
[2] Abeel, *Journal of a Residence*, 83; Allom, *China*, vol. 4, 36.
[3] Chapter 2 will explain why the term *hanjian* is to be translated as "Han evildoers."

Chinese people on China's seaboard and its adjacent islands (and also along China's waterways) began as early as the Portuguese's advent in the first half of the sixteenth century. For the next four centuries athwart the Ming-Qing transition, the close connections between Westerners and many Chinese littoral people in China had remained in one way or another until the communist takeover in 1949.

As far as the Chinese-Westerner intercourse is concerned, the Opium War between the Qing and the British empires in the mid-nineteenth century is certainly a watershed in late imperial and modern Chinese history. Chinese-Westerner contacts reached an unprecedented level during the Opium War, when the British expeditionary force, followed by Western merchantmen and missionaries, spread across and penetrated into vast maritime and river regions in Guangdong, Fujian, Zhejiang, and Jiangsu provinces.[4] The war's aftermath saw the influx into China of foreigners with various backgrounds, who dispersed along the seaboard and waterways and lived alongside Chinese communities in treaty ports, Western (and, since the late nineteenth century, Japanese) possessions and settlements, and inland regions.[5] The Chinese-Westerner intermingling across China continued throughout the late Qing and Republican (1912–1949) periods until the establishment of the People's Republic in 1949, which marks the formal end of Western imperialism in China from the mid-nineteenth to mid-twentieth century.

This thesis revolves around the relationships between the British Expedition to China, the Chinese littoral population, and the Qing state during the Opium War and its aftermath in the 1840s. It asks: how did the Chinese coastal and riverine people lived between the British Expedition, who threatened, attacked, blockaded, and occupied a huge section of China's

[4] On Protestant missionary activities in China by the time of the Opium War, see Austin, *China's Millions*; Lazich, *E. C. Bridgman*; Rubinstein, *The Origins of the Anglo-American Missionary Enterprise*.
[5] Bickers, *Britain in China*.

littorals, and the Qing authorities, who in wartime strove to prevent their subjects from communicating with the British "barbarians" and participating in lawless activities? Through answering this question, the thesis will shed light on the nature and legacy of the Opium War, the evolution of late imperial and modern Chinese maritime and riverine societies, the origins of British imperialism in modern China, and the significance of the Opium War in the history of the Qing Empire.

"Inner" Aspects of the Opium War

Many scholars have already noticed that the Opium War was much more than a diplomatic, military, commercial, and cultural conflict between China/the Qing Empire and Britain/the British Empire.[6] As early as half a century ago, Frederic Wakeman highlighted in his classic on mid-nineteenth-century Guangdong that the Opium War both mirrored and triggered confrontations between the Qing government and its Chinese subjects, and clashes among the Chinese people.[7] In the past quarter century, there has been increasing scholarly attention to the "inner" aspects of the Opium War, which marks a critical departure from such conventional paradigms as dynastic decline and John K. Fairbank's challenge-response theory.[8] Corresponding to the call by Paul A. Cohen for a "China-centered approach" to

[6] For representative works that demonstrate the diplomatic, military, commercial, and cultural aspects of the Opium War, see Chang, *Commissioner Lin*; Collis, *Foreign Mud*; Fairbank, *Trade and Diplomacy*; Fay, *The Opium War*; Greenburg, *British Trade*; Kuo, *A Critical Study*; Morse, *The International Relations*; Owen, *British Opium Policy*; Tan, *China*; Wakeman, "The Canton Trade."
[7] Wakeman, *Strangers*.
[8] In Mainland China, while there have been a number of meticulous studies that aim to revisit the Opium War in the past three decades, there has been no breakthrough in this body of scholarship in terms of methodologies and insights. Among them the most influential and frequently quoted one is Mao Haijian's *Tianchao de bengkui: Yapian zhanzheng zai yanjiu* (Collapse of the celestial dynasty: a reexamination of the Opium War). It is being translated into English by Joseph Lawson. While Mao has conducted painstaking research on the Qing fighting of the Opium War and reassessed the roles of the main characters in the Qing camp, the traditional-modern dichotomy dominates his explanation of the Qing defeat and British victory. The modernization framework in Mao's works is explicit in the title of his collection of essays pertaining to the two "Opium Wars," namely *Jindai de chidu: Liangci Yapian zhanzheng de junshi yu waijiao* (Scale of modernity: military affairs and diplomacy in

Chinese history, James M. Polachek has reexamined the origins, course, and legacy of the Opium War by unraveling politics in Beijing and factional struggles for power among Qing officials and Chinese literati during the reigns of Jiaqing (1796–1820) and Daoguang (1820–1850).[9]

Polachek's study has stimulated scholarly interests in other "inner Opium wars." Adopting a "Britain-centered" perspective—an approach that is extreme but parallel to the China-centered one, Glenn Melancon has scrutinized London politics in 1839–1840. He considers the ruling Whig cabinet's decision to go to war with China after the "opium crisis" in spring 1839 as largely an outcome of the challenges from the Radicals and Conservative opposition in Westminster, and the cabinet's need for protecting the "honor" of itself and the country.[10] More recently John M. Carroll, in his paper presented at the Association for Asian Studies annual conference in 2014, looks at "the other 'inner opium war,'" i.e. the debates concerning opium among British merchants in Guangzhou (Canton) before 1839.[11]

Engaging the growing body of scholarship described above, the thesis delves into some inner aspects of the Opium War that have yet to receive due scholarly attention. They include the efforts of the Qing state to control its Chinese subjects on the "sea frontier"

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the two Opium Wars). Modernization is also a main theme in other representative Mainland Chinese Opium War studies in recent years including Ma Lianpo's *Wanqing diguo shiye xia de Yingguo* (Britain from the perspective of the late Qing Empire) and Liu Hongliang's *Zhong Ying huopao yu Yapian zhanzheng* (Chinese and British cannons and the Opium War). Regarding scholarship on the Opium War outside Mainland China, there are in fact more recent English-language monographs on the Opium War than the thesis has introduced, but generally speaking there is want of new approaches and primary sources in these works. They include Gelber, *Opium, Soldiers*; Hanes and Sanello, *The Opium Wars*; Lovell, *The Opium War*.

[9] Polachek, *The Inner Opium War*.

[10] Melancon, *Britain's China Policy*. Another revisionist approach to the Opium War that echoes the Britain-centered one is to contextualize the war in British imperial networks. In his doctoral thesis, Song-Chuan Chen discusses how British merchants and missionaries in China who opposed the Canton System (which regulated China's trade with the West from 1757 to 1842) and supported "opening up China" influenced London's public sphere by manipulating the "maritime public sphere" in Guangzhou, which belonged to "a broader British maritime public sphere" in Asia including India and Southeast Asia. This, Chen argues, laid the foundation for the outbreak of the Opium War. See "The British Maritime Public Sphere." Chen's work helps us rethink the relationship between the British Empire and the Opium War.

[11] Carroll, "The Other 'Inner Opium War.'"

(*haijiang* 海疆) of the Qing Empire, British rule in coastal and waterway regions subject to naval blockade and occupation, and the activities of Chinese littoral people who lived between the competing Qing and British powers. How do these inner aspects of the Opium War illuminate the war's nature and legacy and its importance in the evolution of late imperial and modern Chinese littoral societies? How do they help us revisit British imperialism in modern China and reassess the significance of the Opium War in Qing history?

The Opium War and Late Imperial and Modern Littoral China

In the Opium War scholarship, focus on war-affected Chinese regions has followed the fighting between the British Expedition and Qing forces. Consequently, the focus has been limited to the Forbidden City, local Qing and British offices and camps, the scattered battlefields, and particular spots of cities and islands troubled by the war.[12] There have only been brief discussions, for example, on what happened in Jiangsu before the British campaign extended to the province in mid-1842. No scholar has ever zoomed out and looked at the entire coastal and river regions affected by the war, directly or indirectly, in 1839–1842. This, moreover, leads to another limitation in the existing Opium War scholarship: from the literature one knows next to nothing about the wartime activities of Chinese littoral people who depended on the sea and waterways for their livelihoods, for example boatmen and boatwomen ferrying passengers and merchant-shippers, who were among those mostly affected by the war. Wakeman's attention in *Strangers at the Gate: Social Disorder in South China, 1839–1861* rests on the activities of Chinese sedentary people and their relations with the local Qing authorities within one province (i.e. Guangdong) only. Wakeman's work, and

[12] For example of such narrative, see Fay, *The Opium War*; Lovell, *The Opium War*; Mao, *Tianchao*.

the Opium War scholarship at large, has told us very little the war's impact on Chinese people who lived by the coast and waterways in regions under British threat *across* the four southeastern provinces and beyond.

The overemphasis on the particular spots stricken by the Opium War and the diplomatic and military aspects of the war's proceedings, thus, have resulted in a virtual absence of the Chinese littoral population in Opium War studies. Consequently, one pivotal question regarding the war's nature and legacy remains unanswered: what is the impact of the Qing-British fighting in 1839–1842 upon Chinese maritime and river societies as a whole *during* the war and in its aftermath? The diverse scholarly discussions on the long-term impact of the post-war peace settlement on China's littoral societies, for example the significance of the treaty port system established under the 1842 Treaty of Nanjing in the evolution of modern Chinese society, contrasts sharply to the scant scholarly attention to the impact—which was profound as the thesis argues—of the Qing-British fighting on Chinese littoral regions and people *during* the war.[13]

Nonetheless, from the revisionist studies pertaining to the Opium War over the past three decades, one can trace the gradual shifting of scholarly focus from the China coast and Guangzhou toward Beijing, London, and the Qing Empire's inland borderlands (see David Bello's and Matthew Mosca's studies below), and then back to maritime China (see Carroll's recent works and Chen Song-Chuan's writing on the "British maritime public sphere" in Guangzhou).[14] This "spatial re-reorientation" of the war, which is still in its early development, can be considered as part of the academic trend of refocusing on late imperial China's

[13] On the emergence of the treaty port system in the Opium War's aftermath and its impact on Chinese society, see Fairbank, *Trade and Diplomacy*; Hao, *The Comprador*.
[14] Bello, *Opium*; Carroll, "The Other 'Inner Opium War'"; Chen, "The British Maritime Public Sphere"; Melancon, *Britain's China Policy*; Mosca, *From Frontier Policy*; Polachek, *The Inner Opium War*.

maritime frontier, and as a necessary revision of or supplement to the scholarly emphasis on China's interior since Paul Cohen's call for a "China-centered history of China."[15] Refocusing on the China coast during the Opium War helps us reevaluate the importance of the maritime regions in shaping modern China and the roles of Western imperialism and colonialism in modern China, which have respectively been highlighted by Zheng Yangwen and Robert Bickers, Bryna Goodman, and David S. G. Goodman.[16]

While being marginalized in Opium War scholarship, Chinese people living by the coast, rivers, and lakes—or the "water margins" as He Xi and David Faure call the localities—have been one important subject in many historical, anthropological, and historical anthropological studies on local Chinese society from late imperial times up to the present.[17] According to the scholarship, there were different "worlds," societies, or communities in the maritime, river, and lake regions, whose Chinese members were subject to—or fell beyond—specific state policies, engaged in particular socioeconomic activities and networks, and shared a distinct culture.[18] The maritime and riverine worlds, communities, and societies, however, as the scholarship has demonstrated, were not closed and secluded from the adjacent land regions. While Fairbank has differentiated "Maritime China" from "Continental China," recent scholars have noticed that they were not necessarily dichotomous.[19] In late imperial and modern times, many Chinese people acted across land and water. Settling on land, sojourning on shore, or dwelling afloat, many Chinese people in the littoral regions temporarily or

[15] For recent studies on late imperial China's maritime frontiers, see Andrade, *How Taiwan Became Chinese*; Andrade, *The Untold Story*; Chen, "The British Maritime Public Sphere"; Cheng, *War, Trade*; Hang, "Between Trade and Legitimacy"; Ho, "Sealords"; Teng, *Taiwan's Imagined Geography*.
[16] Bickers, *Britain in China*; Goodman and Goodman, "Introduction"; Zheng, *China on the Sea*.
[17] He and Faure, "Introduction."
[18] He and Faure, *The Fisher Folk*; Antony, "Aspects of the Socio-Political Culture"; Antony, *Like Froth*; Alger, "The Floating Community"; Chabrowski, *Singing on the River*; Kelley, "Sect and Society"; Murray, *Pirates*; Lin, "The Life and Religious Culture"; Ouyang, *Haishang renjia*; Wang, *White Lotus Rebels*, 81–109; Yang, "Pinhai."
[19] Fairbank, "Maritime and Continental in China's History."

periodically switched landborne and waterborne residences and livelihoods according to the changing political and socioeconomic circumstances. In short, the existing scholarship has presented a general picture—though far from comprehensive given China's vastness—of the rhythms of the socioeconomic lives and the diversification of the socioeconomic activities of Chinese people who lived by the coast, waterways, and lakes in late imperial and modern China.

Scholars of late imperial China's littoral societies have paid much attention to the dynamics of relations between the Ming/Qing state and the Chinese maritime and river population. They have studied how, as He and Faure put it, "Periodic shifts in the political order provided opportunities for massive redefining of the social identity."[20] In the early Ming, for example, the new state stabilized Chinese maritime society by establishing the registration system of *lijia* 里甲 and categorizing people into different households (*hu* 戶), such as "fishing-households" (*yuhu* 漁戶). Fishing-householders were even recruited into the state's naval forces. During the Ming-Qing transition, the identity and socioeconomic status of many Chinese maritime people became fluid and malleable. They acted across land regions and waters and shifted landborne and waterborne occupations, which included, but were not limited to, farming, fishing, waterborne trade, and piracy. In the meantime, the early Qing state imposed various regulations on the Chinese coastal population as well as merchant and fishing craft to restrict their seafaring activities. After rescinding the maritime prohibition (*jinhai* 禁海 or *haijin* 海禁) following the fall of the Zheng regime in 1683, the Qing authorities established the mutual responsibility and self-surveillance systems of *baojia* 保甲 and *aojia* 澳甲 in littoral regions, relying on local community leaders, who were land dwellers,

[20] He and Faure, *The Fisher Folk*, 3

to regulate littoral people and their craft.[21] The previous scholarship on state-society interactions in late imperial littoral China is an indispensable basis for studying the relations between the Qing authorities and Chinese littoral people during the Opium War.

Scholars in anthropology and historical anthropology, moreover, have employed the concept of ethnicity to illustrate the dynamic relationships between different groups of people with diverse socioeconomic and cultural orientations in late imperial and modern Chinese maritime and riverine societies. They have found that in South China and beyond, Chinese land dwellers, such as members of prominent lineages, dominated or excluded from themselves recent settlers without a clear lineage or any settlement rights. Chinese land dwellers also discriminated against those living on the "water margins," possessing no permanent residence, and/or having seaside, riverside, or waterborne occupations. To do so, the Chinese land villagers imposed upon the "others" discriminative ethnic and status markers such as "Dan" (*dan* 疍/蛋/蜑), "waterborne people" (*shuishangren* 水上人), and "fishing households of the nine surnames (*jiuxing yuhu* 九姓漁戶), with "boat-and-shed living" signifying a "pariah status."[22] In late imperial China, the Ming and Qing states, together with

[21] Faure, *Emperor*, 151–250; He and Faure, "Introduction," 3; Siu and Liu, "Lineage, Market, Pirate"; Yang, "Government Registration"; Yang, "Pinhai"; Bao, "Qianjie"; Chen, "Cong 'woluan'"; Chen, "Ming-Qing zhiji"; Chen, "Shuilu jian"; Liu and Chen, "Mingmo Chaozhou."

[22] Blake, *Ethnic Groups*; Faure, *Emperor*; Fu, "*Wang Yangming ji*"; Hansson, *Chinese Outcasts*; He and Faure, "Introduction"; Huang, "Lishi jiyi"; Liu, "Negotiating Social Status"; Sato, "The Recent History"; Siu and Liu, "Lineage, Market, Pirate"; Szonyi, *Practicing Kinship*; Ye, "Notes"; Zhang, "Zhidu yu guannian." Other strategies of domination and exclusion adopted by Chinese settlers on land include writing genealogical records and barring the "others" from certain religious practices and rituals, such as worshipping deities in temples.

The first scholar who wrote extensively, in both English and Chinese, on the Dan or the so-called "boat people" is Su-ching Chen (Chen Xujing). See *Danmin de yanjiu*; Chen, "The Origin of the Tanka." Huang Xiangchun has conducted a substantial review of studies on the Dan people. See "Cong Danmin yanjiu." His literature review, however, is far from comprehensive, as it overlooks some significant studies written in English and not yet translated into Chinese. They include Anderson, *The Floating World*; Hansson, *Chinese Outcasts*; Kani, *A General Survey*; Liu, "Negotiating Social Status."

The most recent book on late imperial and modern China's boat people, and also shed-living people on the "water margins," is He Xi and David Faure's *Fisher Folk of Late Imperial and Modern China: An Historical Anthropology of Boat-and-Shed Living*. It is based on a conference held in October 2012 at the Chinese

Chinese literati, constructed and reinforced the ethnicity of the classified people in littoral regions through categorizing them into specific households and producing ethnographical accounts of the discriminated.[23]

Literature on Chinese littoral societies from the late imperial period up to the present does not only pay attention to the dominating parties, i.e. state authorities and Chinese land dwellers. As the scholarship has demonstrated, the marginalized or labeled people, who possessed their own "conscious models," adopted economic, social, and cultural strategies to "negotiate their social status," to construct their own identity or develop their own culture, and to resist the hegemony, prejudice, oppression, and ideological domination of governments, elites, and "landsmen" (*lushangren* 陸上人). These strategies include performing state-authorized rituals, imitating the cultural and religious practices of lineages on land, collaborating with other groups of people, and differentiating oneself from other socioeconomically inferior groups.[24] Chinese littoral people, moreover, grasped opportunities provided by recurrent political-social upheavals to enhance their socioeconomic status and reform their identity in the late imperial and modern periods.

In the scholarship on late imperial and modern Chinese littoral societies reviewed above, however, there is a noticeable temporal gap of the mid-nineteenth century. The period under the purview of studies on local Chinese society in the so-called "Ming-Qing era" (*Ming-Qing shiqi* 明清時期) often stops at the eve of the Opium War, whereas scholars of Chinese society in the "late Qing" (*wan Qing* 晚清) often focus on the aftermath of the Arrow War

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University of Hong Kong entitled "From floating life to settlement: comparative studies on the history of the settlement of the waterborne people" (*Cong fusheng dao dingju: shuishangren shang'an shi de bijiao yanjiu*).

[23] Faure, *Emperor*; He, "Foujia fanzhai."

[24] Anderson, *Floating World Lost*, 18; Blake, *Ethnic Groups*, 149; He, "Fujia fanzhai," 7, 141; He, *Yi shen yi zu*; Li, "Shuishang fusheng"; Liu, "Negotiating Social Status," 1. On the "conscious models," see Ward, *Through Other Eyes*, 23–101.

(1856–1860). In other words, historical and historical anthropological works on China's maritime and river societies from the Ming to the present, many belonging to the school of "South China Studies" (*Hua'nan yanjiu* 華南研究), have largely overlooked the Opium War period and the following years in the mid-nineteenth century. This can be partly explained by the fact that their research interest lies primarily on the relations of local Chinese society with the Ming/Qing state and interactions between different groups of Chinese people at a local level.[25] Their focus is not on the Western presence in littoral China, which began on an unprecedented scale at the time of the Opium War.

The gap of mid-nineteenth-century Chinese littoral societies in the scholarship is much more than merely a temporal gap. Because of this gap, a critical link between late imperial (or "pre-modern" as some scholars prefer) and modern Chinese littoral societies is missing. While historians generally agree that Chinese society after the Opium War is in many ways different from the one before, the missing link results in an inadequate understanding of the process of the transition of Chinese littoral societies from the ones before the Opium War and the ones in the century that followed.

Studying the impact of the Opium War on Chinese littoral regions and people will thus help us better understand the evolution of late imperial and modern littoral China. Complementing the existing scholarship on the Opium War and China's littoral societies, the thesis re-reorients the Opium War toward the coast and contextualizes littoral China during the Opium War in the late imperial and modern periods. It asks: does the time of the Opium War mark a critical departure from the past development of Chinese littoral societies, or did

[25] On South China Studies, see Ke [Faure], "Gaobie Hua'nan"; Cheng and Cai, "Hua'nan yanjiu."

the Opium War period witness a continuation of the evolution of Chinese littoral societies in the preceding decades or centuries?

In fact, the answer is yes for both the questions. From the mid-nineteenth to mid-twentieth century, the arrival of Westerners in China and their unprecedentedly frequent encounters with Chinese people in coastal and waterway regions, as many historians have shown, contributed to reshaping the fabric of Chinese society.[26] The Opium War saw the beginning of this historical phenomenon. During the war, the advance of the British expeditionary force disturbed the patterns of socioeconomic lives in littoral China, which, as this thesis will show, is exemplified by its adverse effects on local transportation and regional, national, and international trade in Chinese craft across the four southeastern provinces and beyond. The effects were both deep and wide, both short-term and long-term. The British Expedition, moreover, indirectly contributed to the rampancy of Chinese piracy in wartime and in the war's aftermath. Significantly, establishing themselves as new rulers in the regions under naval blockade and occupation, the British forces brought new sets of rule over China's vast territories along the coast and rivers. The time of the Opium War, for example, marks the beginning of Western control over Chinese merchant craft and their trade in China for more than one century, until the formal disintegration of the Chinese Maritime Customs Service in the Mainland in 1949.[27] How did the British wartime activities and Chinese littoral people's activities interact? In what ways did the interaction shape the evolution of Chinese littoral societies in the mid-nineteenth century, and in the century that followed the war at large?

[26] On this topic, see Carroll, *Edge of Empires*; D'Arcy-Brown, *Chusan*; Atwell, *British Mandarins*; Hao, *The Comprador*; Munn, *Anglo-China*.
[27] On Western control over Chinese merchantmen and waterborne trade, see Morse, *The International Relations*; Fairbank, *Trade and Diplomacy*. On the Chinese Maritime Customs Service, see van de Ven, *Breaking with the Past*.

On the other hand, the thesis emphasizes the linkage and resemblance between the Opium War period and the preceding late imperial times concerning the evolution of Chinese maritime and river societies. Similar to other late imperial times, during the Opium War the state (Qing) authorities relied in a large part on local social leaders and merchants, who were land dwellers, to regulate those whose livelihoods were closely associated with the sea and rivers. For example, under the *aojia* system, heads of *ao* 澳 and those who acted as securities for fishers and sailors as well as merchant and fishing craft were local community heads or urban businessmen. Another example concerns the recruitment of water militiamen (*shuiyong* 水勇) from the pool of Chinese littoral people, in which local social elites played an important role. The examples corresponds to the longtime cooperation between the Ming/Qing authorities and Chinese land settlers to control those who had (or were thought to have) no fixed residence, settlement rights, and clear origin in late imperial China. The cooperation constituted the persistent efforts of the Ming-Qing state to maintain or strengthen control over the Chinese littoral population throughout the late imperial era.

The effectiveness of the above official endeavors to control Chinese people living along the coast and waterways, however, should not be overestimated. Like other late imperial times, during the Opium War and in its aftermath in the mid-nineteenth century many Chinese littoral people fell beyond the effective control of both the local Qing administration and Chinese land settlers. During that time these people, with their craft, participated in illicit activities prohibited by the Qing state, such as trading opium and provisions with the British, serving the British forces, and conducting clandestine trade and banditry on water.

Based on the findings by Ye Xian'en, Helen Siu, and Liu Zhiwei, He Xi and David Faure, in their edited volume published 2016 on boat-and-shed living people in late imperial

and modern China, conclude that in the Pearl River Delta, "over time, many people living on boats moved ashore, and some land-dwellers possibly also took to boat living."[28] The history of some Chinese littoral people during the Opium War and in its aftermath also echoes Faure and He's challenge to the linear narrative that Chinese people living afloat or sojourning in sheds settled on land throughout the late imperial and modern periods. In 1839–1842, in Guangdong's Pearl River Delta and beyond, many Chinese people went from rural and urban regions to the anchorages in bays or on islands' fringes taken by the British merchant and naval vessels, living amid the fleet or assembling to become coastal or even floating settlements alongside the shipping to collaborate with the British sojourners. One contemporary British naval officer called the coastal and floating settlements in the Pearl River Delta a "bamboo town" and a "musquito fleet" respectively.[29] What's more, after the British Expedition occupied Hong Kong in January 1841, while many people migrating from the neighboring Pearl River Estuary region settled on the island, many others chose to stay afloat and join the "boat population" in Hong Kong's Victoria Harbour. The "boat population" had been present in the harbor in the British colony for more than one century or so, until the 1950s. The history of the "boat population" during and after the Opium War, thus, indicates that in the Pearl River Delta, some people went from land to water and chose waterborne residence. This is one striking feature of late imperial and modern littoral Chinese societies.

Comparing the Opium War period with other periodic shifts in political-social order in Ming-Qing China, the thesis argues that the war brought about one of the most dramatic political-social upheavals in late imperial China's littoral regions. In late imperial littoral China prior to the war, the destabilization and reshuffling of socioeconomic order was

[28] He and Faure, *The Fisher Folk*, 2; Siu and Liu, "Lineage, Market, Pirate"; Ye, "Notes."
[29] Bingham, *Narrative*, vol. 1, 408–10, vol. 2, 70–71.

associated with political transitions and large-scale social unrest. This also occurred during the Opium War. The British advance on China's coastal and waterway regions disrupted the socioeconomic lives of many littoral people participating in waterborne trade, water transportation, and coastal and river fishery. The upsurge in piracy in wartime, which was largely due to the British Expedition's amendment of the pre-war equilibrium of power on water, brought many sufferings to Chinese people. Nevertheless, similar to other enormous political-social upheavals in late imperial China's littoral regions, the Opium War did not only bring about calamities and destruction to Chinese people. Rather, for many Chinese maritime and riverine people, the war meant opportunities and benefits. In wartime, while many merchant-shippers suffered from British naval blockade, many others benefited from the British suppression of piracy. While many Chinese locals had their craft detained, appropriated, or even sold by the British forces, many others grasped the chance that the war provided and worked for the British in littoral regions where Qing control was tenuous and British protection against the hostile local "mandarins" was available.

Among the Chinese people who took advantage of the wartime opportunities, many acted across land regions, "water margins," and waters depending on the changing political and socioeconomic conditions. Those who provisioned the British are a good example. During the Qing-British hostilities in 1839–1842, many of them went from coastal villages to the anchorages taken by the British in bays or on islands' fringes. They traveled between the British anchorages and the mainland, where they procured provisions and distributed the opium bought from foreign merchants. They hid amid British shipping or in small ports, or escaped into the mainland in face of threats from the local Qing authorities. During the 1839–1842 hostilities, many Chinese people in coastal and river regions shifted from land-bound to

waterborne occupations, and vice versa. Depending on different circumstances, such as the intensity of the Qing-British fighting, the level of threats from the local Qing administrations, and the presence (or absence) of the British expeditionary force, Chinese littoral people, at one time or another, were farmers, petty traders in bazaars, spies and pilots working for the British land and naval forces, fishers, boatmen, sailors and servants on board British merchant and naval vessels, bandits on land or water, provisioners in boat, and opium smugglers. Such malleability of the socioeconomic status featured Chinese littoral societies in the late imperial period, and in times of political-social upheavals in particular.

Last but not least, the thesis contextualizes piracy in the four southeastern provinces during the Opium War in piracy in late imperial China. Robert Anthony argues that in the Ming-Qing period, there were three waves of waterborne banditry in the four southeastern provinces. They took place during the mid-sixteenth century, the Ming-Qing transition in the seventeenth century, and the long Qianlong-Jiaqing transition (1790–1810).[30] The thesis argues that there was in fact the "fourth wave" of piracy in late imperial China, which lay in the late Qing period since the Opium War. Scholarship on piracy during that time is comparatively scant.[31] The Opium War, as the thesis will show, brought about an upsurge in piracy that persisted in the following decade and beyond. In wartime, a vast section of the waters and littoral regions across Guangdong, Fujian, Zhejiang, and Jiangsu were infested with Chinese waterborne banditry. Similar to the previous waves of piracy, Chinese pirates during the Opium War possessed diverse socioeconomic backgrounds. For example, similar to those in the south China piracy leagues in the two decades around the turn of the nineteenth

[30] Antony, *Like Froth*. In addition to Robert Antony's writings, dissertation- and book-length studies on piracy in late imperial China include Murray, *Pirates*; Wang, *White Lotus Rebels*, 81–109; Cheng, *War, Trade and Piracy*; Ho, "Sealord Lives in Vain."
[31] The scholarship includes Laai, "The Part"; Lung, "Britain and the Suppression."

century, many pirates were formerly poor fishers in the mid-nineteenth century. Similar to other piracy waves in late imperial times, many pirates during the Opium War were associated with illicit trade on water and collaborated with foreigners.

The Opium War and British Imperialism in China

The thesis reconsiders some origins of British imperialism in modern China by looking at British rule in the regions under naval blockade and occupation and the relations between the British forces and Chinese littoral people during the Opium War, the first war between China and a modern Western power. Scholars have demonstrated how the war brought about the rise of the British "informal" empire in China, which was characterized by the ascendance of British commercial interests without large-scale annexation and conquest.[32] One largely overlooked fact, however, is that the war also resulted in the emergence of the British *formal* empire in China, even though it was short in duration and modest in size. It was composed of a series of British-occupied cities and islands as well as the blockaded waters across Guangdong, Fujian, Zhejiang, and Jiangsu provinces. This far-flung British frontier regime did not end with the war. In the post-war period, it became what can be called a British "insular frontier," which comprised Zhoushan Island (1840–1846, excl. February–September 1841), Hong Kong Island (1841–1941, 1945–1997), and Gulangyu Island (1841–1845). The several British ships of war in the China Station of the Royal Navy connected these insular possessions.[33] In the second half of the nineteenth century, Kowloon Peninsula (1860–1941,

[32] On the British informal empire and Western and Japanese informal empires at large in China from the mid-nineteenth to the mid-twentieth century, see Bickers, *Britain in China*, 117–69; Dean, "British Informal Empire"; Fung, *The Diplomacy of Imperial Retreat*; Osterhammel, "Britain and China"; Osterhammel, "Semi-Colonialism and Informal Empire."
[33] Graham, *The China Station*, 260–61, 267.

1945–1997), the New Territories (1898–1941, 1945–1997), and Weihaiwei (1898–1930) also became British possessions in China.

The thesis traces the emergence of the British imperial frontier in China during the Opium War, thereby calling for more attention to the significance of this British formal empire in shaping British imperialism in modern China. It looks at the limitations of British power in China during the Opium War in order to highlight several weaknesses of British imperialism in modern China. As the past Opium War scholarship has demonstrated, British ships of war, cannons, and military tactics were far more effective than the Qing counterparts, and the Opium War signified the overwhelming British victory over the Qing and the rise of British power in China.[34] The literature, however, has paid much less attention to the fact that the British wartime power, even at its height in mid-1842, was far from dominant. The British Expedition proved to be unable to completely eradicate Qing influence from the wartime possessions, dominate China's waters, and impose full and efficient control over Chinese merchant craft. The expedition also failed to fully protect the Western community in China, Western merchantmen, and Chinese "collaborators" against the hostile Qing authorities and Chinese pirates. Politically and militarily speaking, the British imperial presence in China during the Opium War, and in the century that followed, did not only involve fighting but also rule over the vast Chinese population, which the British often found problematic.[35]

Another understudied aspect of the limitation of the British imperial presence during the Opium War is the British need for assistance from Chinese people of all ranks to fight the

[34] Fay, *The Opium War*; Mao, *Jindai de chidu*; Mao, *Tianchao*; Liu, *Zhong Ying huopao*.
[35] The problems of British rule in nineteenth-century Hong Kong exemplify the limitations of British imperialism and colonialism in modern China. See Munn, *Anglo-China*; Tsai, *Hong Kong in Chinese History*. For British rule in other possessions in modern China, see Atwell, *British Mandarins*; Davis and Gowen, "The British at Weihaiwei"; D'Arcy-Brown, *Chusan*.

war and rule the occupied regions.[36] As early as more than four decades ago, Ronald Robinson highlighted the importance of "indigenous collaboration" in shaping European imperialism in the non-Western world.[37] In fact, a war between one (or several) Western imperial power and an "indigenous regime" on a scale as large as the Opium War's never simply involved warfare in battlefields between the fighting powers. The alien power needed local assistance to fight and sustain the war. In Chapter 6 the thesis will discuss the attitudes of Chinese people living along the coast and rivers toward the invading British and the relations between the two, which were sometimes confrontational but often mutually beneficial and amicable. During the war, many Chinese littoral people, voluntarily or not, played various roles in serving the British forces.

In the existing scholarship on "indigenous collaboration" in modern China, most attention has rested on Chinese collaborators, or *hanjian* as usually called by Mainland Chinese contemporaries and scholars, who cooperated with the Japanese from the Japanese occupation of Northeast China in the 1930s to the Second Sino-Japanese War (1937–1945).[38] The thesis calls for more scholarly attention on the largely neglected collaborative roles of Chinese people from all walks of life in the Opium War, and in other wars between the Qing Empire and Western as well as Japanese Empires including the Arrow War, the Sino-French War (1884–1885), the First Sino-Japanese War (1894–1895), and the Eight Power Expedition

[36] Works that have only touched upon the topic of Chinese aid to the British during the Opium War include Carroll, *Edge of Empires*, 21–23; Lovell, *The Opium War*, 126–27, 199–205; Luk, "Collaboration and Conflict," 15–43; Munn, *Anglo-China*, 73–103. A comprehensive study of the wartime Chinese assistance to the British Expedition, however, is still lacking.
[37] Robinson, "Non-European Foundations."
[38] Representative works on Chinese collaboration with the Japanese from the Japanese occupation of Northeast China to the Second Sino-Japanese War include Brook, *Collaboration*; Mitter, *The Manchurian Myth*; Fu, *Passivity, Resistance*; Boyle, *China and Japan*; Coble, *Chinese Capitalists*.

(1900–1901).[39] By looking at the Chinese people's assistance to the foreign powers in these "imperial wars," we can better understand the foundations of Western (and Japanese) imperialism and the dynamics of relations between Chinese people and Westerners as well as the Japanese in Qing China.

The Opium War in Qing History

In *The Inner Opium War*, Polachek underscores the "'class chauvinism' of the Han Chinese," Chinese literati's long "political marginality under the Manchu dynasty," and the "lingering constitutional frustrations" that "turned the literati with particular vehemence against the post-war peace party in Peking, whose key leaders were Manchus."[40] His insightful attention to the linkage between the Opium War and Manchu-Han relations parallels the efforts of Pamela Kyle Crossley and Mark C. Elliott, two prominent scholars of the "New Qing History," to use the war as a case to illustrate the difficult Manchu-Han relationship and the evolution of Manchu identity.[41]

Polachek's, Elliott's, and Crossley's studies indicate a demand for more scholarly attention to the ethnic side of the Opium War. The thesis thus asks: how does the war reflect ethnic tensions on the Qing Empire's sea frontier? To answer this question, the thesis will examine, in Chapter 2, how the Qing rulers classified and stereotyped different peoples on the sea frontier. On the frontier, many non-Han Chinese people, foreign and indigenous alike, were categorized as "barbarians" (*yi* 夷) and savages (*fan* 番/蕃), whereas the ethnic markers

[39] Christopher Munn has discussed Chinese collaboration with the British during the Arrow War, but his focus lies on British Hong Kong. See Munn, *Anglo-China*, 257–89.
[40] Polachek, *The Inner Opium War*, 15–16.
[41] Crossley, *Orphan Warriors*, 100–18; Elliott, "Bannerman." For an introduction to the New Qing History, see Waley-Cohen, "The New Qing History."

of "Dan" and "fishers" were imposed upon many Chinese people. A huge number of them were further denounced as *hanjian* ("Han evildoers") who colluded with *yi* and *fan*.[42]

Some scholars have already recognized the importance of contextualizing the Opium War in the historical development of the maritime frontier of the Qing Empire. The Qing authorities, they noticed, regarded the Qing's anti-British hostilities in 1839–1842 as one of the wars against marauders on the maritime frontier rather than an isolated event. Crossley has perceptively recognized the resemblance between the Qing's war against the British and piracy on the Qing Empire's maritime frontier: "The war was regarded as a rather large and stubborn outbreak of piracy, and was dealt with as piracy had been dealt with in the past: warning shots fired from shore batteries, followed by sallies of armored junks."[43] Similarly, Polachek argues that Lin, "[h]aving steered the Celestial Empire into a major military confrontation that he had refused until the last minute to see coming," presented "the new enemy in the shape of other past seaborne threats that had been successfully resisted by continental imperial governments."[44] Julia Lovell contends that the Opium War constituted one of "the other domestic and frontier revolts the government was struggling to suppress around the same time."[45] Built on this scholarship, the thesis revisits the significance of the Opium War in the history of the Qing Empire from a frontier perspective.

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[42] A number of scholars have paid attention to historical issues revolving around the term *yi* in the Qing period. Among them Lydia H. Liu, in her study on the "supersign *yi*/barbarian," has examined Sino-Western relations before and after the Opium War by looking at the disagreements between the Qing and the British over the use and translation of *yi* and the ban on its use. See *Liu, The Clash of Empires*. Song-Chuan Chen has delved into the controversies among Westerners in Guangzhou and London over the English translation of *yi* in the early nineteenth century before the Opium War. He convincingly argues that "by 1837 the Canton public had in actuality agreed that *yi* meant "foreigners" and was no insult. . . . Yet, the idea that the Chinese regarded others as barbarian[s] continued to circulate in London and beyond." See Chen, "The British Maritime Public Sphere." Another study on the translation of *yi* and Sino-Western relations is Wong, "Barbarians or Not Barbarians." Rather than Sino-Western relations, the thesis focuses on relations between the Qing state and peoples *within* the empire by the time of the Opium War when examining the Qing use of *yi*.
[43] Crossley, *Orphan Warriors*, 117.
[44] Polachek, *The Inner Opium War*, 150.
[45] Lovell, *The Opium War*, 11.

Crossley, Polachek, and Lovell, however, have yet to explain in detail the links between the campaign against Western opium traders and war against the British Expedition in 1839–1842 and the preceding anti-waterborne bandit efforts of the Qing state. Filling in this gap, the thesis puts the Opium War in a wider historical context, regarding the Qing's anti-opium campaign and anti-British war in 1839–1842 as one of the occasions on which "bandits"—in the eyes of the Qing authorities—threatened the empire's maritime frontier and the state endeavored to subdue them. Many of the measures adopted by the Qing government in 1839–1842 to "tame" the sea frontier (which, however, as explained later, is not identical to the maritime frontier) can be traced back to the time of the empire's foundation, and even to the Ming. These controlling mechanisms were launched or strengthened in times of revolts or unrest on the Qing Empire's maritime frontier, the most notable being the threats of the Zheng regime in the mid-seventeenth century and the rise of the South China pirate confederation in the two decades straddling the turn of the nineteenth century. The thesis thus highlights the continuation of the evolution of the Qing Empire's maritime frontier from the Qing's foundation to the time of the Opium War.

The "Qing perspective" or "Qing-centered" approach evinced in Elliott's and Crossley's works, which evolved from the China-centered approach described earlier, has shaped two recent books that rethink the Opium War and its related issues. The first is David Antony Bello's *Opium and the Limits of Empire: Drug Prohibition in the Chinese Interior, 1729–1850*. Tracing the opium production, distribution, and prohibition in Xinjiang and southwest China from the mid-eighteenth to mid-nineteenth century, Bello regards the "opium problem" as "an empirewide crisis that spread among an ethnically diverse populace and

created regionally and culturally distinct problems of control for the Qing state."[46] Bello's transfrontier angle and "ethno-geographic reorientation of the opium problem away from the traditional narrative of a Sino-British diplomatic and military conflict on China's eastern seacoast" serve to produce "a more 'Qing-centered' account."[47]

Another recent work that exemplifies the Qing-centered approach to the Opium War is Matthew W. Mosca's *From Frontier Policy to Foreign Policy: The Question of India and the Transformation of Geopolitics in Qing China* published in 2013. Challenging Fairbank's tribute system model, Mosca has investigated how Qing administrators and Chinese intellectuals gathered, processed, and produced geographical knowledge and geopolitical intelligence regarding British India, and how the Qing rulers accordingly formulated their policies toward India on different frontiers, maritime and inland alike, before the emergence in the mid-nineteenth century of a "foreign policy," i.e. "a program of action connecting all corners of the Qing realm" that "treated the imperial frontier as a whole."[48] In his chapter on the Opium War Mosca, on the one hand, has detailed the Qing state's formulation of its anti-opium policy and anti-British strategy on the coastal frontier in 1839–1842 according to the intelligence collected by Imperial Commissioner Lin Zexu and other field officials in the maritime regions. On the other hand, he unveils "the Inner Asian Opium War" by examining the Qing collection and processing of intelligence from both the coastal frontier and western borderlands about relations among Britain, India, and Inner Asian regions and peoples, and by investigating the wartime geopolitical tensions between Xinjiang and Tibet, British India, and the Gurkhas in Nepal.

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[46] Bello, *Opium*, 1.
[47] Ibid., 14. Also see Zheng Yangwen's *The Social Life of Opium in China* for the plantation and distribution of opium in Qing China's inland borderlands.
[48] Mosca, *From Frontier Policy*, 14, 271.

While Bello, in the case of the Qing's opium problem, highlights the ethno-geographical and political disparities between different inland frontiers of the Qing Empire, Mosca argues that before the rise of a Qing foreign policy, "there were no absolute policy differences distinguishing the empire's borderlands."[49] Mosca's book highlights the necessity for a spatial focus on both the inland borders and the coast when studying the Qing's frontier policy during the Opium War. Despite the difference of Mosca's and Bello's arguments, both have adopted an empirewide and comparative perspective to look at different frontiers of the Qing Empire and paid due attention to their "dynamic relation with one another as well as with the imperial center."[50]

Before Bello and Mosca, Joseph Fletcher, in an article as early as 1978, highlighted the linkage of the Qing's different frontiers understudied in his time: "Ch'ing frontier policy as a whole has not been studied in any systematic way, but it is clear that there are more interconnections between coastal and Inner Asian policy than historians have yet brought to light."[51] Two decades ago, James Millward affirmed the "viability" and "necessity" "of embracing 'the Qing frontier' as a unit of historical inquiry."[52] Echoing Millward's affirmation, Bello's and Mosca's Qing-centered works accentuate the need for considering, in Opium War studies and beyond, the similarities, contrasts, and links between different frontiers of the Qing Empire in terms of frontier policy and ethnicity. Not only Bello's and Mosca's works, scholarship on late imperial China's borderlands and frontiers, which will be introduced below, has also demonstrated the integrity and comparability of the Qing Empire's

[49] Ibid., 8.
[50] Bello, *Opium*, 21.
[51] Fletcher, "The Heyday," 384.
[52] Millward, "New Perspectives," 129.

different frontiers.[53]

Inspired by the Qing-centered approach to the Opium War and Bello's and Mosca's transfrontier perspective, the thesis pays attention to the parallels and linkage between the Qing Empire's maritime frontier and inland borders, thereby highlighting the similarities of the Qing state policies toward different frontiers. The Qing authorities applied the inner-outer paradigm to understand both the sea frontier and inland borderlands and formulate respective frontier policies. In Qing official eyes, "barbarians" and *hanjian* spread on both the sea frontier and inland frontiers. Moreover, the strategy of "strengthening the walls and clearing the countryside" (*jianbi qingye* 堅壁清野) on the sea frontier during the Opium War was previously applied in the Qing suppression of rebels on the "internal frontier" (the concept of which will be introduced below) of the Han River highlands during the White Lotus Rebellion (1794–1805). Furthermore, the state extension of household registration took place on the sea frontier and different inland borderlands intermittently throughout the Qing period.

As for trade on different frontiers, as Zhao Gang argues, the Manchu rulers' experience with the profitable northeastern Asian trade around the establishment of the Qing in 1636 fostered among them "a special kind of procommerce tradition that treated the development of foreign [overseas] trade as key to the wealth and power of a state." Many Qing officials supported the opening of maritime trade as an "open-door policy" in the mid-seventeenth century.[54] The Qing customs in the maritime regions, moreover, as the thesis will show, found their parallel in the inland borders. In short, the thesis's spatial re-reorientation of the Opium War and refocus on the maritime frontier helps reveal the maritime frontier's

[53] Millward, "New Perspectives," 123, 129; Crossley, Siu, and Sutton, "Introduction," 17; Giersch, *Asian Borderlands*, 4–9; Shepherd, *Statecraft*, 5.
[54] Zhao, *The Qing Opening to the Ocean*, 77.

multifaceted relations with the hinterland and borderlands, which in turn illuminates the political, economic, and social dynamics within the Qing Empire.

Looking at Qing government efforts on controlling the empire's waters and their adjacent territories, the thesis reevaluates the state capacity of the Qing during the Opium War and in its aftermath in the 1840s. Bello reminds us that in the early and mid-nineteenth century, as the Qing state attempted to extend control to the empire's different corners through the process of opium prohibition, "any account of the Qing opium problem cannot ignore dynastic expansionism."[55] In Opium War scholarship, however, the Qing state has been described as one that suffered from huge financial strain and corruption, possessed backward military strategies, weapons, and naval forces, and failed to both mobilize its subjects to fight against the British and subdue local social unrest.[56] This has become part of the narrative widely accepted in modern China scholarship that the accumulation of the Qing state's administrative, military, and financial weaknesses in the war's aftermath set the stage for the resurgence in internal rebellions and external crises in the late Qing period.

Challenging the above historical narrative, the thesis reassesses the Qing state's capacity during its anti-opium campaign and anti-British war in 1839–1842 and their aftermath in the 1840s by revealing its efforts to stretch control over the empire's littoral regions in the mid-nineteenth century. In 1839–1842, the Qing rulers sought to expand administrative, military, naval, and social control to what they categorized as "outer-water regions." The local Qing administrations, for example, extended the *baojia* system to some outlying islands, established spying networks in the Westerners' "outer anchorages" in the Pearl River Delta, and launched fire attacks to the coastal and floating Chinese settlements

[55] Bello, *Opium*, 14.
[56] Fay, *The Opium War*; Lovell, *The Opium War*; Mao, *Tianchao*.

nearby. The thesis also investigates how the local Qing government and forces, though weakened by the fighting, sought to perform tasks to maintain control over the regions along the sea and rivers, and people and craft therein, during the war and in its aftermath in the 1840s. In wartime, the Qing naval forces were partially able to perform anti-piracy tasks. The local Qing authorities even maintained some kinds of collaboration with and control over Chinese pirates. After the war, the Qing forces greatly weakened by the British after the war restored, though only partly, in a rather quick pace. Furthermore, some of the customs stations that were closed due to the British threats were reopened as early as wartime, and many others resumed operation immediately after the war. The restoration of Qing customs duties to the pre-war level in most places shortly after the war suggests the restoration, at least a partial one, of Qing customs control over Chinese merchantmen.

Reassessing Qing state capacity during the Opium War and in the years that followed in the 1840s serves to reinterpret the significance of the Daoguang reign, in the middle of which the war took place, in the history of the Qing Empire. As Wang Wensheng has concluded in 2014, "Recent Western scholarship has begun to look closely at the positive stance of the Jiaqing reign."[57] Following the Jiaqing reign, the Daoguang reign, as some scholars noticed, also witnessed some institutional innovations, such as the state experiment of transporting official grain from south to north by sea in 1826 and the reform of the Huaipei salt monopoly in the early 1830s.[58] The empirewide anti-opium campaign from the mid-1830s to the early 1840s can be regarded as one of the dramatic empirewide measures launched by the Qing state to cope with contemporary challenges in Daoguang times. The Qing defeat in

[57] See Wang, *White Lotus Rebels*, 266. For the scholarship described by Wang, see Han, "The Punishment"; McMahon, *Rethink the Decline*; Mosca, "The Literati Rewriting"; Rowe, "Introduction." Wang's book itself has also cast a more positive light on the Jiaqing reign.
[58] Leonard, *Controlling from Afar*; Metzger, "T'ao Chu's Reform."

the Opium War should not overshadow the Qing's bold attempt to eliminate the "opium problem" by expanding state control to the sea frontier. The aftermath of the war saw the Qing government's struggle to restore its naval power and grip on trade and banditry in Chinese craft. Thus, what happened during the Opium War and the following years in the 1840s was not simply a linear story of the accumulative and inevitable decline of Qing state power, but a history knitted with the extension, contraction, and restoration of Qing state capacity before the rise in the empire of another "all-encompassing contentious crisis," to use Wang Wensheng's concept, of the Taiping Rebellion in 1850.[59]

Last but not least, the thesis highlights some aspects of resemblance between the Qing and British empires. Up to the 1980s, the Opium War was often interpreted as clashes between a traditional, stagnant, agricultural, closed, and Sinocentric China in the East, and a modern, dynamic, industrial, pro-free trade, navally strong, and imperialist Britain in the West. The course of the Qing-British fighting has essentially remained to be the one in which the modern, ascendant, and effective British power overwhelmed the traditional, weak, and corrupt Qing power in battle after battle.[60] Refuting "the tradition-modernity polarity" of China and Britain, Bello has compared the problems that *both* the Qing and British empires encountered in regulating the drug trade to "reveal important commonalities between the two imperial states."[61] Bello's study calls for more comparison between the Qing and British empires in terms of the Opium War and its related issues. Bello's work, moreover, fits in the

[59] Wang, *White Lotus Rebels*.
[60] Chang, *Commissioner Lin*; Collis, *Foreign Mud*; Fairbank, *Trade and Diplomacy*; Fay, *The Opium War*; Greenburg, *British Trade*; Kuo, *A Critical Study*; Owen, *British Opium Policy*.
[61] Ibid., 4, 14.

expanding body of scholarship in recent years that compares early modern Western and Asian empires and focuses on parallels between them in order to work toward a global history.[62]

Responding to this scholarly trend and based on Bello' findings, in Chapter 5 the thesis will compare Qing and British control over Chinese merchant craft and their trade during the Opium War. It argues that in many ways, they are surprisingly similar. Both the local Qing and British Expedition authorities, for example, sought to register and tax Chinese trading craft and adopted measures to promote Chinese maritime trade. Similar to Bello's work, the thesis challenges the dichotomy between the Qing and British empires and highlights some parallels between the two.

Central Argument

The thesis works toward three interconnected goals. The first is to investigate the socioeconomic lives and activities of Chinese people living along the coast and waterways during the Opium War. The second aim is to revisit the nature and legacy of the Opium War so as to better understand its significance in the evolution of late imperial and modern Chinese littoral societies, in the development of British imperialism in modern China, and in the history of the Qing Empire. The third research aim, then, is to achieve the previous two objectives by constructing and employing the conceptual framework of *water borders* to illuminate the dynamics of interactions between the British Expedition, the Qing authorities and forces, and the Chinese littoral population during the Opium War.

The central argument of the thesis is that the Opium War transformed vast maritime and waterway regions in southeast China—Guangdong, Fujian, Zhejiang, and Jiangsu

[62] Crossley, *A Translucent Mirror*; Hostetler, *Qing Colonial Enterprise*; Perdue, *China Marches West*; Struve, *The Qing Formation*; Belich, Darwin, Frenz, and Wickham, *The Prospect of Global History*.

provinces—into what can be conceptualized as "water borders." During the war, the water borders were characterized by the existence of the Qing Empire's sea frontier, a destabilized Chinese socioeconomic order, an absence of any militarily hegemonic power on water, and overlaps and interstices of the Qing and British empires.

As there was no such concept as "southeast China" in late imperial times, its meaning or definition in academic works—including the current study—has always been operational. Scholars have employed the term "southeast China" or "southeastern China" to refer to different localities. While some, for example Maurice Freeman, call Guangdong and Fujian provinces "southeastern China," William Skinner uses "Southeastern Coast" to denote his macroregion encompassing eastern Guangdong, Fujian (incl. Taiwan), and southern Zhejiang.[63]

Rather than adopting either of the two usages above, the thesis employs the term "southeast China" to refer to the regions of the four Qing maritime provinces of Guangdong, Fujian, Zhejiang, and Jiangsu, including the provinces' outlying islands (the largest being Hainan and Taiwan) and waters under Qing control, however tenuous the control was. The thesis is not the first study to consider the four provinces as southeast China. Huang Guosheng, for example, calls them "the four southeastern coastal provinces."[64] Similar to Huang's usage, "southeast China" in the thesis is essentially a geographical expression. While there have already been many good regional studies, for example works in South China Studies, which highlight particular historical experience in different localities, the thesis does not argue that the four provinces constituted one single integrated region, politically or socioeconomically, throughout the Qing period. Instead, the thesis argues that vast littoral

[63] Freedman, *Lineage Organization*; Skinner, "Marketing and Social Structure."
[64] Huang, "The Chinese Maritime Customs," 169.

regions across the four southeastern provinces experienced the same political transition and social upheaval during the Opium War. These regions are what the thesis calls the "water borders."

Water Borders: A Conceptual Framework

Water Borders versus the Sea Frontier and the Maritime Frontier

To avoid confusion, a clarification on the difference between water borders and the sea frontier as well as the maritime frontier is in order. While Wang Wensheng, as well as many other scholars, uses the terms "sea frontier" and "maritime frontier" quite interchangeably, the thesis considers them as two distinct concepts.[65] Rather than a clearly demarcated geographical region, the "sea frontier" was in fact a construct held by the Qing rulers to understand the eastern frontier of the empire from Guangdong to northeast China. For most Qing officials, the sea frontier included the China seaboard, its neighboring islands and waters, and, as historians have usually overlooked, some lower reaches of rivers and their adjacent areas close to the sea. In other words, the sea frontier included some regions outside what most scholars perceive as the maritime frontier. "Water borders," on the other hand, is an interpretative tool constructed in the thesis that denotes regions different from the sea frontier, even though the two partly overlapped. During the Opium War, the water-border regions not overlapping with the Qing Empire's sea frontier included Jiangsu's Yangzi and canal regions under British blockade and occupation.

[65] Wang, *White Lotus Rebels*, 88, 105.

Tana Li's Water Frontier

The thesis does not construct the conceptual framework of water borders from scratch. Rather, it formulates the construct by drawing on the rich literature on frontiers and borderlands in late imperial China, Inner Asia, Southeast Asia, and North America, as well as some interpretative tools in scholarship on Western imperialism in East Asia. First of all, the construct of water borders in the thesis evolves from the historian Tana Li's "water frontier." Li has employed the water frontier concept to illuminate socioeconomic relations between different foreign and indigenous parties in Southeast Asia's Lower Mekong Delta in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, then "a sparsely settled coastal and riverine frontier region of mixed ethnicities and often uncertain settlements" with no politically and militarily hegemonic force.[66] The inclusion of river regions and the existence of ethnic groups on the Lower Mekong Delta's water frontier resemble the features of the water borders introduced below.

Since the areas stricken by the Opium War included not only vast maritime regions but also some river sections and their adjacent territories, neither the term "maritime frontier" nor "coastal frontier" is adopted to refer to the locus of the thesis. This also explains why the term "water borders" is plural: during the Opium War, the water borders were multi-dimensional, including not only coastal regions but also the river and canal regions subject to the same political-social upheaval. The latter regions lay across the Yong River, the Yangzi River, and the Grand Canal as well as its branches and sub-branches in Zhejiang and Jiangsu provinces.

As a theoretical construct, the water border in the thesis is not entirely the same as Li's water frontier. Rather than sparsely populated, part of the water borders during the Opium

[66] Cooke and Li, *Water Frontier*, xi; Li, "The Eighteenth-Century Mekong Delta." In his book pertinent to piracy in South China in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, Wang Wensheng uses the terms "water frontier" and "maritime frontier" rather interchangeably. This is in fact different from Li's usage, according to which river regions are included. The thesis adopts Li's usage.

War were prosperous or densely populated, or both. Examples of these regions include the areas along the Yangzi River under British threat and attack in mid-1842, which constituted part of the rich Jiangnan region. Given that "frontiers" often—and especially in scholarship on North American frontiers—refers to wild zones to be explored, conquered, or developed, the thesis adopts the designation "water borders" instead.[67]

Frontiers and Borderlands in Late Imperial China and Inner Asia

The concept of water borders is also built on the notions of "borderlands" and "frontiers" in the recent but fast growing scholarship—especially in North America—on China's and Inner Asian borders in the late imperial period (or the "early modern period" as some scholars argue).[68] In the scholarship, frontiers are often equivalent to borders and borderlands.[69] The literature has demonstrated the dynamic relationships in the maritime and inland borderlands between Ming/Qing state agents; native rulers, indigenous elites, and aboriginal tribes; Han

[67] Classical works on the North American frontier and reviews of these works include Adelman and Aron, "From Borderlands"; Lattimore, "The Frontier in History"; Thompson and Lamar, "Comparative Frontier History"; Turner, "The Significance of the Frontier."

[68] Before the mid-1990s, influential works on late imperial China's and Inner Asian frontiers and borderlands included Barfield, *The Perilous Frontier*; Lattimore, *Inner Asian Frontiers*; Fletcher, "Ch'ing Inner Asia"; Fletcher, "The Heyday"; Waldron, *The Great Wall of China*. In the past quarter century, Richard White's concept of "middle ground" and Mary Lousie Pratt's idea of "contact zones" have greatly influenced scholarship on frontiers in late imperial China and Inner Asia. On the "middle ground" and "contact zones," see White, *The Middle Ground*; Pratt, "Arts." For works that contextualize Qing China in early modern times, see Crossley, *A Translucent Mirror*; Hostetler, *Qing Colonial Enterprise*; Perdue, *China Marches West*; Struve, *The Qing Formation*.

[69] Some scholars, however, have clarified the difference between frontiers and borderlands as they recognize that the concept of "frontier" originated in scholarship on state expansion in North America in early modern and modern times. For example, see Giersch, *Asian Borderlands*. 3–4. Moreover, James Reardon-Anderson and Leo Shin refrain from using "frontier" or "periphery" to refer to the regions under their research because this, they argue, would peripheralize the localities. See Reardon-Anderson, *Reluctant Pioneers*, 4–5; Shin, *The Making of the Chinese State*, 18.

Nevertheless, many scholars use "frontiers," "borders," and "borderlands" quite interchangeably. Peter Perdue, for example, has switched between the terms "frontier borderlands," "frontier peripheries," "frontier regions," and "border regions." See Perdue, "Nature and Nurture." The thesis also uses the terms "borders," "borderlands," "frontiers," and "frontier/border regions" interchangeably, as it does not aim to challenge the scholarly usage of "frontiers" and "borderlands." Also, the thesis argues that "borderlands" and "frontiers" in late imperial China scholarship share many of the same features.

immigrants, settlers, and sojourners such as farmers and traders, and Chinese literati; and rulers of regimes bordering the Ming/Qing Empire. Their interactions during Ming/Qing imperial and Han Chinese expansion into the maritime and inland frontier regions contributed to the political, socioeconomic, and cultural transformation of not only the border zones but also the imperial center.[70] The historian Wang Yi, in her study on the borderland of Inner Mongolia in the Qing, succinctly describes the frontier in general as "a multiplicity of overlapping and crisscrossing borders shaped by a complex set of actors who accommodated, collaborated, clashed, and negotiated with one another."[71] The interactions of peoples with distinct political, socioeconomic, and cultural orientations in late imperial China and Inner Asia's borders resemble one of the main characteristics of the water borders explained in the thesis.

Scholarship on late imperial China's and Inner Asian borderlands and frontiers, moreover, has aptly shown that in the frontier or border zones, Ming or Qing state power was not necessarily monolithic or pervasive; rather, a politically and militarily dominant power was often absent in the whole or part of the border regions. Similarly, the Opium War witnessed a lack of any militarily hegemonic power in southeast China's waters. During the war and in its aftermath in the 1840s, Qing forces, British forces, and Chinese pirates contributed to shaping the new balance of power in southeast China's waters.

One central theme in scholarship on late imperial China and Inner Asia's frontiers and borders in the last two decades or so is the complexity and pliability of the ethnicity of peoples

[70] Andrade, *How Taiwan Became Chinese*; Crossley, Siu, and Sutton, *Empire at the Margins*; Ho, "Sealords"; Giersch, *Asian Borderlands*; Herman, *Amid the Clouds*; Isett, *State, Peasant*; Khu, "The Making of a Frontier"; Li, *Zhongguo Xi'nan*; Millward, *Beyond the Pass*; Reardon-Anderson, *Reluctant Pioneers*; Shepherd, *Statecraft*; Shin, *The Making of the Chinese State*; Teng, *Taiwan's Imagined Geography*; Wang, "Transforming the Frontier"; Whittaker, "Yi and Confucian Empire."
[71] Wang, "Transforming the Frontier," abstract.

with different political, socioeconomic, and cultural traits or backgrounds.[72] The dynamics of their relations with the state and with other groups of people, and the concomitant ethnicity formation, were closely linked to Ming-Qing expansion into the frontiers as well as political and social changes within the empire, for example immigration and wars. On "ethnic frontiers" or "ethnic borderlands," the ethnic grouping was neither inherent nor rigid and static; ethnic boundaries and identities were fluid and malleable. They were formed, reinforced, reformed, or negotiated by the state, the ethnic groups concerned, and the "others" in various ways according to the changing political and socioeconomic conditions.[73] The interpretative concept of ethnicity, the thesis argues, casts light on the dynamics of relations between the Qing Manchu authorities, Westerners, Chinese people living on shore and afloat, and Chinese land settlers in vast maritime and river regions in southeast China in the late imperial period. They possessed, practiced, or were thought to possess distinct political, socioeconomic, and cultural orientations.

James Scott's Zomia and Wang Wensheng's Han River Highlands and South China Sea

The thesis also owes its theoretical insights to two recent books pertinent to the history of borderlands in China and Southeast Asia. The first one is *The Art of Not Being Governed: An Anarchist History of Upland Southeast Asia* by James Scott. Scott describes Zomia, i.e. the

[72] On the concept of ethnicity in the context of late imperial China, see Crossley, "Thinking about Ethnicity."
[73] Crossley, Siu, and Sutton, *Empire at the Margins*, 17, 20; Wang, "Transforming the Frontier," 2; Wang, *China's Last Imperial Frontier*, 1. These ways included categorizing and demarcating peoples by state policies or political and cultural markers, pursuing particular socioeconomic and cultural activities or highlighting certain conspicuous cultural traits, rewriting history, making ethnographic writings, pictorial records, and, in the late Qing, revolutionary propaganda. See Atwill, *The Chinese Sultanate*; Crossley, *A Translucent Mirror*; Crossley, Pamela, and Siu, *Empire at the Margins*; Elliott, *The Manchu Way*; Harrell, *Cultural Encounters*; Herman, *Amid the Clouds*; Hostetler, *Qing Colonial Enterprise*; Millward, *Beyond the Pass*; Rhoads, *Manchus and Han*; Shin, *The Making of the Chinese State*; Teng, *Taiwan's Imagined Geography*; Whittaker, "Yi Identity." Apart from works focusing on China's borderlands, representative studies pertinent to ethnicity in late imperial China include Crossley's *Orphan Warriors*; Crossley, *A Translucent Mirror*; Honig, *Creating Chinese Ethnicity*; Leong, *Migration and Ethnicity*; Rawksi, *The Last Emperors*; Weinstein, *Empire and Identity*; Wiens, *China's March*.

Southeast Asian Massif lying across state borders (which included China in its northeast) as a "zone of refuge" where historically many people from valley areas evaded the political and cultural incorporation of the state—be it the indigenous state, colonial state, or modern nation-state. Zomia was (and a huge part of it is still) a "shatter zone," "where the human shards of state formation and rivalry accumulated willy nilly, creating regions of bewildering ethnic and linguistic complexity." It is an entity "knitted together . . . by comparable patterns of diverse hill agriculture, dispersal and mobility, and rough egalitarianism."[74] Scott highlights the interactions and interdependence between Zomia and its neighboring states: while state formation generated frontiers, frontiers played crucial roles in state formation and collapse.

Scott's study is inspiring for the thesis in several ways. First, Scott has developed the theory of "friction of terrain," according to which the difficulties of state control over and state expansion into the peripheral regions were proportional to the latter's inaccessibility (i.e. altitude in the case of Zomia).[75] This concept is applicable to China's water borders, where the Ming/Qing state kept a weaker grip on the deeper and more turbulent sections of the waters. Second, while Zomia was a periphery vis-à-vis the state, in his book Scott takes the locus to the center stage. In Zomia "many hill people continued to conduct their cross-border lives as if the state didn't exist."[76] Similarly, rather than peripheralizing them, the thesis focuses on the water borders and the Chinese people therein who crossed the coastline and also Qing-controlled and British-controlled littoral territories during the Opium War.

Third, Scott insightfully argues that people did not necessarily switch from pastoralism to agriculture; many in fact shifted, often voluntarily, from "agriculture to pastoralism to, for

[74] Scott, *The Art of Not Being Governed*, 7, 19.
[75] Ibid., 13, 43–48.
[76] Ibid., 26.

example, evade incorporation into the state."[77] This is analogous to the case of the Chinese maritime and river population in late imperial times. Rather than being a linear history of the unidirectional settlement of the "waterborne people" on land, late imperial China witnessed the parallel historical phenomena of people settling from water to land and, on a voluntary basis in many cases, people going from land to water. This, as discussed earlier and shown in the later chapters, also happened on China's water borders during the Opium War.

The second book that enhances the thesis's water border framework is Wang Wensheng's *White Lotus Rebels and South China Pirates: Crisis and Reform in the Qing Empire* published in 2014. Employing Braudelian and political science theories to revisit the significance of the Jiaqing reign in Qing history, Wang examines how the "all-encompassing contentious crises" and "frontier protests" of the White Lotus rebellion in the Han River highlands and piracy in the South China Sea "propelled the Jiaqing state to reorganize and reposition itself, thus producing a critical conjuncture in the structural transformation of the Qing Empire as well as its place within the Sino-centric tributary system" and ensuring a more "sustainable" political development.[78] In his chapters that reinterpret "the two upheavals in their frontier contexts," he regards the Han River highlands and the South China Sea as the "internal borderland" and "external maritime frontier" respectively.[79] Wang employs Richard

[77] Ibid., 29.
[78] Wang, *White Lotus Rebels*, 6.
[79] Recent scholars have recognized the existence of internal frontiers/borderlands in the Ming and Qing empires, where state control was tenuous and where the agricultural heartland of China proper reached its limit due to the "tough terrain and low population density" of the localities. In addition to the Han River highlands, Guizhou was another internal frontier in late imperial China. See Elvin, *Retreat of Elephants*, 217–72; Herman, *Amid the Cloud and Mist*. Interestingly, the Zhongjia heartland in Qing Guizhou under Jodi L. Weinstein's purview was "located on the northeastern edge of the Southeast Asian Massif," i.e. Scott's Zomia. See Weinstein, *Empire and Identity*. Other internal frontiers under scholarly purview include the Hunan Miao frontier and the southern Shaanxi highlands. See McMahon, *Rethinking the Decline*. While the thesis pays attention to state-society and ethnic relations in late imperial China's internal frontiers, the thesis focuses on the "external" frontier/borderland, both inland and maritime, "that demarcated the territory between the Middle Kingdom and its neighboring states in terms of geographical convenience and/or geopolitical condition." (Wang, *White Lotus Rebels*, 38.)

White's "middle ground" concept: "Like the Han River highlands, the Sino-Vietnamese water frontier functioned as a 'middle ground' linking a wide array of people, goods, and ideas together."[80]

Wang's book helps the thesis to construct the water border framework in two ways. Like Bello and Mosca, Wang has adopted Qing-centered, transfrontier, and comparative perspectives in studying different borders of the Qing Empire and highlighted their linkage. Wang argues: "Taking different borderlands as similar nonstate space provides a unified perspective that allows interconnective consideration of simultaneous events and processes occurring in different parts of the empire."[81] (The idea of nonstate space will be introduced below.) While examining the water borders, the thesis will pay attention to other borderlands. Second, Wang pays close attention to the activities of people—and also goods and ideas—in the Han River highlands and the "Sino-Vietnamese water world" across boundaries drawn by the state, for example provincial and national boundaries and the administrative division of the South China Sea into the "inner ocean"/"inner waters" (*neiyang* 內洋) and "outer ocean"/"outer waters" (*waiyang* 外洋).[82] Such boundary-crossing activities of Chinese littoral people also characterized southeast China's water borders during the Opium War.

The construct of water borders in the thesis, however, differs from Wang's Han River highlands and South China Sea as well as Scott's Zomia in one critical way. Scott has

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Moreover, scholars have perceptively argued that frontiers can be tangible or intangible. As Crossley succinctly states, frontiers can be "at the political borders of empires, but very often they are located at social, economic, or cultural fissures internal to a political order." (Crossley, *Empire at the Margins*, 3.) A frontier can thus be cultural, ecological, demographic, and ethnic. The "Cantonese frontier," for example, has been regarded by Steven Miles as a "cultural frontier," i.e. the periphery of the cultural center in late imperial Jiangnan. (Miles, "Strange Encounters on the Cantonese Frontier"; Miles, *The Sea of Learning*.) Also see Lattimore, *Inner Asian Frontiers*; Scott, *The Art of Not Being Governed*; Wang, *White Lotus Rebels*, 76. The thesis focuses on the political, socioeconomic, and ethnic aspects of the water borders.

[80] Wang, *White Lotus Rebels*, 104.

[81] Ibid., 40.

[82] Ibid., 102–04, 225.

characterized Zomia as "nonstate space," i.e. regions where the state found it arduous to establish and maintain "its authority owing largely to geographical obstacles." Inspired by Scott's nonstate space concept, Wang has explored "how fluid ecology and socioeconomic patterns interacted with rigid and weak political establishments to create a sort of *nonstate* [original emphasis] space that precipitated the dual upheavals" in the two frontier regions.[83] "While big mountain chains," Wang argues, "conveniently delimit a political map, they stubbornly resist the penetration of state power into frontier society."[84]

Southeast China's water borders during the Opium War, however, were far from being totally "nonstate." Although fissures of Qing control were scattered about China's coastal waters, the Qing authorities were able to exert a certain degree of control over some sections of them. Moreover, Wang's overemphasis on the high sea section of the South China Sea and piratical craft's unpredictability and ability to hide in the deep sea and evade state control overshadows the fact that pirates, and the Chinese maritime population at large, were closely associated with and depended on the seaboard and inland territories. Bandits on water, for example, needed to procure provisions and sell their booty on land.[85] Because of the dependence of the seafaring people on land and the dangers of the "big ocean" (*dayang* 大洋), Chinese craft usually did not venture to deep sections of the sea. Rather than staying afloat for a very long time, most Chinese littoral people acted across land regions and waters.

Niches and Interstices of Empires

Some interpretative frameworks have been recently developed to conceptualize the regions in modern China where foreigners lived and agents of Western and Japanese imperialism and

[83] Wang, *White Lotus Rebels*, 12.
[84] Ibid., 58.
[85] Antony, *Like Froth*, 122–29.

colonialism dominated. There have also been concepts that illuminate zones, tangible or not, where the Western and Japanese empires and the Qing and Republican Chinese regimes met, conflicted, or failed to reach. These concepts and frameworks include the "edge(s) of empires," "new frontiers," "frontier zone," "interstices" of "multiple overlapping imperialisms," and "niches" of "weak Chinese regimes and overstretched European empires."[86]

In these areas of frontier zones, empires' interstices, and "new grey areas of contested sovereignty and control," distinct political, economic, and social conditions existed, and distinctive institutions and communities emerged.[87] A striking example is the Chinese Maritime Customs Services, "a frontier regime," as Hans van de Ven calls it, with its own "set of institutions, rules, practices, offices, and routines" that "inserted itself into niches wherever they existed or opened up as China's states lost their grip and European empires brought new ways of conducting trade, diplomacy, and war" in the late Qing and Republican periods.[88]

While fissures in state control existed on the sea frontier of the Qing Empire and across the empire at large since its foundation, more fissures of Qing control and also the interstices of the Qing and British empires emerged in southeast China's littoral regions during the 1839–1842 Qing-British hostilities. On the Qing Empire's sea frontier, fissures in state control were scattered about what the Qing authorities categorized as regions within the outer waters. The Qing's war against the British slackened its own military and naval forces and control over both the inner-water and outer-water regions. Meanwhile, the British Expedition established control over vast areas along the coast and rivers subject to British

[86] Van de Ven, *Breaking with the Past*, 4.
[87] Abe, "The City of Intermediaries"; Abe, "Intermediary Elites"; Bickers, *Britain in China*; Bickers, "Shanghailanders"; Bickers and Henriot, *New Frontiers*, 3; Chu, *Foreign Communities*; Hao, *The Comprador*.
[88] Van de Ven, *Breaking with the Past*, 4.

blockade and occupation, many (but not all) of which overlapped with the Qing Empire's sea frontier. Nevertheless, some littoral regions were subject to neither Qing nor British control. During the Qing-British hostilities, many Chinese littoral people took advantage of the existence of fissures in Qing control and interstices of the Qing and British empires, expanding their socioeconomic activities and networks into these fissures and interstitial space. Smuggling, i.e. trade that was clandestine in the eyes of both the Qing and British Expedition authorities, was thriving in the localities. Many Chinese people went to the "outer anchorages" taken by the Western merchantmen and British naval craft to trade provisions and opium with or serve the "outer barbarians" (*waiyi* 外夷). At these anchorages, some coastal and floating Chinese communities emerged. Living between the Qing authorities, the British forces, and Chinese pirates, members of those communities and Chinese littoral people at large established their own rule in or extended their own socioeconomic networks to the interstices of the Qing and British empires.

Thesis Outline

In addition to the introductory chapter, the thesis is composed of three parts and five chapters, which are thematically organized, and a concluding chapter. Part I, which includes Chapter 2, will unveil another "inner Opium War" within the Qing state in 1839–1842. It will explain how the Qing rulers, with the lens of the "inner-outer dichotomy," conceptualized the sea frontier of the empire and classified peoples thereon as "barbarian bandits" (*yifei* 夷匪)/"outer barbarians," "Han evildoers"/"inner evildoers" (*neijian* 內奸/內姦), and "villainous fishers and poor Dan people" (*jianyu qiongdan* 奸漁窮蛋). The concerns of the Qing authorities, both local and central, about the threats from both the "outer barbarians" coming from the sea and

internal “evil elements” shaped their political, military, and social measures for “taming” the sea frontier during the Qing campaign against opium and war against the British in 1839–1842, and during the first two centuries of the Qing at large. These controlling mechanisms, which can be traced back to early Qing or even Ming times, included maritime defense, port closure and blockade (*fenggang* 封港), cutting off provisions, the “sea ban” or maritime prohibition (*jinhai* or *haijin*), the *baojia* and *aojia* systems and ship registration, and the recruitment of water militiamen and civilian craft. Although there were regional variations in these measures, the thesis will highlight the common rational behind each of them. While these measures to some degree indicate the Qing endeavors to extend control over the sea frontier’s inner- and outer-water regions, in 1839–1842 many of these regions actually fell beyond effective Qing administrative, military, and social control.

Part II, which comprises Chapters 3 and 4, will explain how the war between the Qing and British empires in 1839–1842 transformed vast areas along the coast and waterways in southeast China into water borders, which, during the war, were characterized by the British destabilization of Chinese socioeconomic order and an absence of any dominant military power on water. Chapter 3 will trace the formation of the British imperial frontier in China in 1840–1842 by outlining the advance of the British Expedition, British rule in wartime China, and British naval blockade. It will also use numerous qualitative examples and some quantitative sources to illustrate how the rise of British power caused deep adverse effects on transportation and trade in regions directly affected by the war, including Eastern Zhejiang, the Pearl River Delta, and Jiangsu’s Yangzi and canal regions. The impact was far reaching: the British invasion to different extents disturbed China’s maritime trade with its outlying islands and with other East Asian and Southeast Asian regions during the war and in its

aftermath. Contextualizing Chinese waterborne trade during the war and in its aftermath in the Ming-Qing period, the second part of Chapter 3, and also Chapter 5, will review the rich Mainland Chinese, Taiwanese, Japanese, and Western literature on late imperial China's maritime and river trade.

Chapter 4 will look at the new equilibrium of power in southeast China's littorals between the British Expedition, the Qing forces, and Chinese waterborne marauders during the 1839–1842 Qing-British hostilities. In southeast China, the local Qing authorities' skirmishes and battles with the British in 1839–1842 greatly weakened local Qing military and naval power, thereby unleashing Chinese coastal and riverine banditry across the four southeastern provinces. The local Qing administration and forces, however, were still able to exert some degree of control over Chinese pirates during the war and in the years that followed in the 1840s. Rather than studying Chinese pirates as an anti-state threat, the chapter will regard them as one of the constituents of the balance of power on water. It will also compare the socioeconomic backgrounds of Chinese pirates during the Opium War with those in the previous waves of piracy in late imperial China. As for the British Expedition, although they took up some of the anti-piracy tasks that the local Qing administrators and forces failed to perform, the British forces lacked both the will and means to establish dominant control over China's waters during the war and in its aftermath.

Consisting of Chapters 5 and 6, Part III will elaborate on how the clashes between the Qing and British empires brought about the emergence of overlaps and interstices of the Qing and British empires, another salient feature of southeast China's water borders during the Opium War. Chapter 4 will expound on the ways in which the Qing state and the British Expedition regulated Chinese merchant craft and their trade on water in wartime. It will pay

much attention to the Qing's "traditional" maritime customs (*haiguan* 海關) (not to be confused with the Chinese Imperial Maritime Customs established in the 1850s) and internal customs (*queguan* 榷關) along the coast and waterways. (A review of literature on Qing customs will be included in the chapter.) The chapter will use statistical figures and particular examples to show how Qing customs control over Chinese merchantmen and their trade slackened because of the war. The chapter will also explain how the British Expedition replaced the local Qing administrative, military, and customs authorities as new ruler of the regions under blockade and occupation. During the war, the expedition's rule over Chinese waterborne trade was composed of the prize-agent system, passport system, "quasi-taxation," and free trade policy. The British control over Chinese merchant craft and their trade resembled the Qing counterpart; both of them aimed to both protect and restrict the activities of Chinese trading craft. The last section of the chapter will explain how Qing and British control over Chinese merchant craft overlapped, and how they failed to extend control to a vast number of them, thereby triggering off clandestine Chinese waterborne trade.

Chapter 6 will revolve around the activities of Chinese people living by the coast and rivers in regions affected by the 1839–1842 Qing-British hostilities across southeast China. Although the Qing authorities dichotomized regions on the sea frontier into inner and outer, the official classification did not make any sense for ordinary Chinese people, who acted across the officially categorized regions. The chapter will first discuss the features of fissures in state control on the Qing Empire's sea frontier and the emergence of the interstices of the Qing and British empires. It will then outline the roles of Chinese people in the Opium War. Not all of them, the chapter argues, suffered from the calamities of the war. Many of them negotiated with the British occupying force and even benefited from the British attack and

occupation. The chapter will then move on to illustrate how the mobile Chinese people took small craft to escape Qing surveillance, go to the anchorages where Western merchantmen and British naval vessels anchored, and work for or trade with the shipping. Many others even formed coastal and floating settlements next to the fleet. In 1839–1842, these emergent settlements existed on the coast of Fujian's Gulangyu Island and in Jiangsu's Yangzi region, Zhoushan's Dinghai harbor, and the Pearl River Estuary. Many of the Chinese people who went to help the British constituted part of the local economy and society of the regions concerned.

Chapter 6 will also discuss the threats from Chinese pirates as well as the Qing authorities' surprise attacks facing the Chinese people who served the British and many of those who lived under British rule. It will explain how the latter two, living between the Qing authorities, British forces, Chinese pirates, resorted to self-defense. They, for example, organized and militarized themselves to fight against Chinese pirates and annihilate spies sent by the local Qing authorities. This, to borrow Scott's term, was their "art of not being intimidated."

The concluding chapter will summarize the contribution of the thesis to scholarship in late imperial and modern Chinese littoral societies, British imperialism in China, and the history of the Qing Empire. It will then conclude the features of southeast China's water borders during the Opium War, and discuss the applicability of the water border framework in examining late imperial southeast China's littorals. The chapter will also explore the possibility of employing the water border framework in studying some other East Asian littoral regions and maritime Southeast Asia. Furthermore, it will make a brief comparison between the water borders and other frontier regions in the Qing Empire. In so doing, the

thesis seeks to facilitate comparison between frontiers, maritime and inland alike, in late imperial China, in Southeast Asia, and beyond. The last section of the chapter will suggest some future research directions.

A Note on Terminology

"Opium War," "China War," and "Qing-British War"

Some key terms and concepts that frequently appear in the following chapters merit some clarification. The first issue concerns the designations that refer to the hostilities between China/the Qing Empire and Britain/the British Empire in 1839–1842. There has been no consensus on whether the Opium War—or the first Opium War—started in 1839 or 1840.[89] The disagreement largely stems from how one defines its beginning. While the Tory cabinet decided to send an expedition to China in late 1839, the British expeditionary campaign began in China in mid-1840. September 1839, however, saw the first skirmish, at Jiulong (Kowloon), between the Qing and the British, half a year after the inception of Commissioner Lin's Guangdong anti-opium campaign. While Lin denounced this military clash as a battle instigated by the British, in the Qing state there was no such concept as the declaration of war by the time of the Opium War.

To avoid ambivalence, the thesis will avoid using the term "Opium War" to refer to any specific time period. Instead, the thesis will use the designation "China War," which was commonly used by the British Expedition authorities, to denote the period from the expedition's arrival in mid-1840 to the conclusion of peace in August 1842. Highlighting the fact that the war was fought between the Qing Empire and the British Empire, the thesis will

[89] On academic controversies over the use of the term "Opium War" and the war's nature, see Tan, *China*, 1–12.

also use the term "Qing-British War" to refer to the 1840–1842 China War, and employs "Qing-British hostilities" rather than "Sino-British hostilities" to represent the time from the start of Commissioner Lin's Guangdong anti-opium crusade in March 1839 to the signing of the Treaty of Nanjing in August 1842.[90]

Nautical Terms

One terminological problem regarding nomenclature entails the terms "junks" and *ting* 艇 as well as *chuan* 船, which were widely used in English-language and Chinese-language records respectively in late imperial times to refer to different kinds of craft. The origin of "junks" as a term adopted by contemporary Westerners to denote Chinese sailing craft is still open to debate, and there is still no consensus among scholars on the definition of "junks."[91] In fact it is impossible to provide a single definition of the term, as contemporary Westerners held different opinions on whether a Chinese craft was a "junk." While some Westerners did not use "junks" to refer to Chinese sailing craft in river trade and transportation, a British horticulturalist stated in the 1840s that "Under the term junk . . . are comprised almost every native vessel, from the beautiful pleasure boat of the high mandarin, to the filthy tenement of the water beggar."[92]

In Chinese records of late imperial times, there is no such category as "junks" in the nomenclature of craft. In these records, the names of Chinese craft with different origins,

[90] For the convenience of readers, the thesis still uses the conventional terms "Arrow War," "Sino-Japanese War," and "Sino-French War" rather than "second Qing-British War," "Qing-Japanese War" "Qing-French War," even though "Qing elements" in these wars deserve more research.
[91] For the academic debate on the origin of the term "junk," see Chen, *Zhongguo fanchuan*, 135–37.
[92] Forbes, *Five Years in China*, 236.

purposes, outlooks, and structures are extraordinarily numerous.[93] Considering all these names, it is problematic to translate *chuan* into "ship" and *ting* into "boat." *Miting* 米艇, for example, were used in Qing cruising forces at sea and as big as more than 100 tons, whereas *kaipingchuan* 開平船 were small boats commonly used by people labeled as Dan. To complicate the terminological problems, Western and Chinese understandings of the size of a craft were different. On many occasions, contemporary Westerners called a Chinese craft a boat although it was huge in Chinese eyes.

To prevent confusion, the thesis will avoid using the term "junks," which is actually a culturally loaded term connoting old Western perceptions of Chinese craft. In the thesis, while the terms *ting* and *chuan* are normally translated as "craft," there are exceptions such as "boats" for *xiaoting* 小艇, "boat-householders" for *tinghu* 艇戶, and "ship taxes" for *chuanchao* 船鈔. "Boats" will be carefully used in the thesis. Canoes, sampans (*sanban* 三板, lit. "three planks"), and rowing craft belong to boats. The use of "ships" will be avoided in the thesis except the term is directly quoted from primary sources. The term "craft" will be used to refer to ships or boats of all sizes.

A Note on Primary Sources

Based on two years of painstaking research in archives and libraries in the U.K., Mainland China, Hong Kong, and Canada, the thesis draws on a wide range of published and unpublished textual sources. As for archival materials, although many central and local Qing documents produced during the war, as well as some other useful Qing archive materials, have

[93] For lists and illustrations of "traditional" Chinese craft of different types, see Worcester, *The Floating Population*; Worcester, *The Junks and Sampans*.

already been published, many others have not.[94] A significant portion of the latter are currently housed at the First Historical Archives of China in Beijing, The National Archives in London, and the Asian Library of the University of British Columbia.[95] Regarding British official documents related to the Opium War, the original and microfilm versions of records kept by Britain's Foreign Office, Admiralty, War Office, India Office, and Colonial Office—in both English and Chinese—are housed at The National Archives, the British Library, and the libraries of the University of Hong Kong and the Chinese University of Hong Kong. Unofficial sources include witnessing accounts by British Expedition officers and soldiers, Westerners in China's littorals during the Qing-British hostilities, and contemporary Qing officials and Chinese literati in local regions.

How can we study such an "old" topic as the Opium War from the aforementioned sources, many of which have already been deployed in the past scholarship? The thesis employs these sources in a number of new ways. As the thesis is essentially a study of the

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[94] The most famous published sources on the Opium War include *Chouban yiwu shimo* (China's management of barbarian affairs from beginning to end), *Yapian zhanzheng* (The Opium War), *Yapian zhanzheng wenxueji* (Collection of literary writings on the Opium War), *Ahen sensō no kenkyū. Shiryō hen* (Study of the Opium War: documents), and *Yapian zhanzheng dang'an shiliao* (Archive materials on the Opium War). The thesis does not employ the oft-cited *Chouban yiwu shimo* because the memorials in the collection were much edited, which results in a number of problems with the published documents, such as the omission of memorials' date. All the memorials in *Chouban yiwu shimo* are in fact included in the seven-volume *Yapian zhanzheng dang'an shiliao*, by far the most comprehensive collection of correspondence between the Qing emperor and senior officials, central and local alike, during the Opium War and its aftermath in the 1840s. The thesis is heavily based on *Yapian zhanzheng dang'an shiliao*.

Under Mainland China's "National Project for the Recompilation of Qing Dynasty History" inaugurated in 2002, more and more Qing documents on different topics and themes have been published. They include many mid-nineteenth-century Qing documents that are useful for the thesis, for example those in the 230-volume *Ming Qing gongcang Taiwan dang'an huibian* (Collection of documents on Taiwan stored at the palace of the Ming and Qing dynasties).

[95] During the Arrow War, the British took away the Qing's Guangdong provincial archives from the yamen, in Guangzhou, of the Guangdong-Guangxi governor general Ye Mingchen. Currently stored at The National Archives in London and catalogued under FO 931, they have been published in Mainland China in December 2012 as *Ye Mingchen dang'an: Qingdai Liangguang zongdu yamen candu* (Ye Mingchen's Guangdong provincial archives). As its publication predates most of my research conducted at The National Archives, the thesis quotes the original documents housed at The National Archives rather than the published ones. Many other Qing documents are also currently stored at The National Archives under various categories, for example FO 682. For a catalogue of files pertinent to Sino-Western relations and categorized under FO 682 at The National Archives, see Wong, *Anglo-Chinese Relations*.

interactive relationships between the Qing state, the British Expedition, and Chinese littoral people during the Opium War, the thesis has filtered from the primary sources much information on their encounters and connections, a great portion of which has yet to receive due scholarly attention. For example, as it happens, Opium War scholarship has largely overlooked the huge impact of the British invasion in 1840–1842 on water transportation in Jiangsu's Yangzi and Jiangnan regions as evinced in records by contemporary Chinese locals published in *Yapian Zhanzheng* (The Opium War) as early as 1954.[96] Second, while Mainland Chinese scholars have often analysed the sources about the activities of Chinese people during the Opium War under the paradigm of traitor-patriot divide, the thesis will make no moral judgment from the sources on the activities of Chinese littoral people who resisted or helped the British. Third, the thesis widely employs, in Chapters 3 and 5, qualitative and quantitative sources regarding China's waterborne trade and customs dues during the Opium War in the court archives as well as understudied memorials published in *Daoguang Xianfeng liangchao chouban yiwu shimo buyi* (Appendix to the complete record of the management of barbarian affairs in the Daoguang and Xianfeng reigns).[97] Last but not least, the thesis regards the edicts by the Qing emperor and memorials by his court and local officials as a genre and concludes from these numerous documents the Qing official understanding of the Qing Empire's sea frontier.

Admittedly, during the Opium War, and in late imperial China at large, most of the ordinary Chinese people who lived along the coast and rivers did not leave written records on their own. How can we study their backgrounds and activities? China scholars in historical anthropology attempt to overcome the limitations of textual materials by visiting different

[96] Zhongguo Shixuehui, *Yapian zhanzheng*.
[97] Zhongyang yanjiuyuan jindaishi yanjiusuo (hereafter cited as ZYJY), *Chouban yiwu shimo buyi* (hereafter cited as *Buyi*).

parts of the Mainland, Taiwan, and Hong Kong to collect local sources ranging from land deeds to stone inscriptions and to genealogical documents, talk to people in different generations, and observe their lives and activities. Rather than a historical anthropological approach, the thesis adopts a strictly historical approach, working mainly on archival and published sources. This is because nowadays no local contemporaries in China have the most distant memory of the Opium War, because most of the local sources regarding the war have already been published or allowed public access, and because the geographical and human landscape of the littoral regions affected by the Opium War have been greatly transformed. As He Xi and David Faure plainly conclude, "Through the twentieth century, water-margin life as it had been known earlier was all but totally displaced.[98] To mitigate the problems with the virtual absence of Chinese littoral people's own records during the Opium War, the thesis extensively employs sources produced by other parties, including the Qing and British authorities, Westerners in China, and Chinese land settlers. It is hoped that comparing these sources, which were kept by people with different perceptions of and personal experience with Chinese littoral people, could serve to draw a fuller picture of the activities of Chinese people in littoral China during the Opium War.

Two types of Western unofficial records are crucial for the thesis to revisit the Opium War. The first one is the English-language newspapers published by Westerners in Guangzhou, Macao, and Hong Kong in the mid-nineteenth century. While some historians have extensively employed the newspapers to study foreigners in Guangzhou, early-nineteenth-century Sino-British relations, and early British Hong Kong, historians of the

[98] He and Faure, *The Fisher Folk*, 20.

Opium War have yet to pay enough attention to the usefulness of most of the journals.[99] They include rare but detailed reports, editorials, and correspondents' letters on the proceedings of the 1839–1842 Qing-British hostilities as well as occurrences in China's littorals and the British wartime possessions. They contain much exclusive information on the Qing-British fighting, Qing and British rule in Opium War China, and the socioeconomic conditions of littoral regions affected by the war.[100] To study the Opium War, the thesis pioneers to widely employ sources in these journals, which complement Qing and British official sources.

To further complement textual sources and to better illustrate China's maritime and river regions during the Opium War, the thesis will cite many pictorial and cartographical materials. Very few Western individuals drew pictures during the Opium War; the naval surgeon Edward H. Cree did a lot. During his service in China on board the *Rattlesnake* troopship (1840–1843), Her Majesty's Ship (HMS) *Vixen* (1843–1846), and HMS *Fury* (1847–1850), Cree produced more than a thousand of watercolors and sketches of China's coastal and river landscapes and sceneries, and also made frequent journal entries, when he followed the British Expedition to travel across vast littoral regions in southeast China. By courtesy of the owner of the journals, which are now housed at the Caird Library of the National Maritime Museum, Greenwich, a considerable number of Cree's precious drawings are to be inserted in the thesis.[101]

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[99] Chen, "The British Maritime Sphere"; Cowell, "Form Follows Fever"; Lung, "Britain and the Suppression"; Luk, "Monopoly, Transaction and Extortion"; Luk, "Occupied Space, Occupied Time"; Munn, *Anglo-China*. Among the English journals published in Guangzhou, Macao, and Hong Kong, only the *Chinese Repository*, the most accessible one, has been often employed in Opium War scholarship.

[100] The newspapers also include the English translation of the *Jingbao* (Peking Gazette), a regular journal of correspondence between the Beijing court and Qing provincial officials. They also contain the English translation of numerous Qing official documents, many of which are unavailable elsewhere. They include orders from Beijing, provincial officials' memorials, and proclamations to Chinese people by local officials.

[101] Only a small part of Cree's journals and drawings have been published. See Levien, *The Cree Journals.* Unfortunately, the thesis is not able to employ the journals' volume 6, dated 1842, which has been on display at the National Maritime Museum by the time of thesis submission.

Cree's drawings and journal entries help us better understand the impact of the British advance on, occupation of, and rule over littoral southeast China. As a naval surgeon following the expeditionary force, he travelled across China in wartime, leaving valuable records on vast littoral regions in Guangdong, Fujian, Zhejiang, and Jiangsu provinces. Cree's textual and visual documents, and also information in the aforementioned English newspapers, support the argument of the thesis that those regions in the four southeastern provinces experienced the same political-social upheaval during the Opium War. His drawings serve to visualize and literally colorize the areas of what the thesis conceptualizes as "water borders." The thesis will also employ annotated maps on the British Expedition's operations in China to indicate its advance routes and scope of activities in southeast China's littorals during the Opium War.

In fact, the thesis is not the first study that pays attention to the great value of Cree's journals for studying British rule in China. Liam D'Arcy-Brown has deployed it in studying British-occupied Zhoushan in the 1840s. See D'Arcy-Brown, *Chusan*.

PART I: ANOTHER INNER OPIUM WAR

Chapter 2:

"Outer Barbarians" and "Inner Evildoers": The Sea Frontier of the Qing Empire

Now as inspection is strict at different ports, opium cannot be transported in chest to the inner waters, whereas Dan and fishing craft frequently approach barbarian vessels, taking advantage of the existence of fissures [in state control] *to buy retail opium and resell it for profits.*

Memorial by Lin Zexu and Deng Tingzhen, September 1, 1839[1]

Introduction

While central and local Qing officials occasionally designated China's maritime regions as the "frontier" (*bianjiang* 邊疆), they more often referred to the empire's entire eastern edge from northeast China to Hainan Island as the "sea frontier" (*haijiang*). In 1839–1842, the Qing authorities sought to eradicate opium and fought against the British coming from the sea on the sea frontier of the Qing Empire. While the Qing rulers regarded the deep sea as "a mysterious, nonterritorial void" and an "untamable space" that fell "beyond state possession,"[2] they, up to the mid-nineteenth century, had striven to "tame the sea frontier" (*suijing haijiang* 綏靖海疆) in times of political-social upheavals. How did the Qing state formulate its sea frontier policy during the anti-opium campaign and the anti-British war in 1839–1842?

This chapter wil elucidates how the central and local Qing authorities had conceptualized the sea frontier by the time of the Opium War, and explain how they "calmed" the sea frontier based on this conceptualization. Most China historians have seen no difference

[1] Memorial by Lin Zexu and Deng Tingzhen, Sept. 1, 1839, Zhongguo diyi lishi dang'anguan (hereafter cited as "ZDLD"), *Yapian zhanzheng dang'an* (hereafter cited as "*Dang'an*"), vol. 1, 671.
[2] Wang, *White Lotus Rebels*, 100–02.

between the sea frontier and the "coastal frontier" or "maritime frontier."[3] In fact, the concept of "sea frontier" is not self-evident, and the sea frontier, as a Qing official construct, refers to areas different from the maritime or coastal frontier. The Qing understanding of the sea frontier was largely based on the relational concepts of "inner"/"inside" (*nei* 內) and "outer"/"outside" (*wai* 外) as well as "near" (*jin* 近) and "far" (*yuan* 遠), according to which the waters and their adjoining land regions were classified into inner/near or outer/far. This inner-outer division also existed in the Qing official discourse on the relationship between China proper and the empire's inland borderlands.

The concepts of "inner," "outer," "near," and "far" might seem self-explanatory, but in fact the Qing authorities' application of these concepts in conceptualizing the sea frontier were contextual, depending on the geographical and socioeconomic features of and Qing administrative and military control over the localities concerned. In the minds of most Qing officials, the sea frontier included not only the seaboard from northeast China to Guangdong province and its neighboring waters and outlying islands, but also the "inner rivers" (*neihe* 內河) and their adjacent areas near the coast.[4]

Of course the Qing rulers' inner-outer division, as Wang Wensheng has highlighted, made "little sense to local seafarers." As the following chapters will show, Chinese littoral people acted across land territories and waters, which straddled the territories categorized by the Qing authorities as inner-water and outer-water regions. The theme of the current chapter is how the Qing rulers *saw* the empire's sea frontier and peoples thereon. The inner-outer

[3] For example of the interchangeable use of "sea frontier" and "maritime frontier" in late imperial China scholarship, see Wang, *White Lotus Rebels*.

[4] While the sea frontier only meant the littoral for some Qing officials, in the emperor's mind it encompassed all the empire's maritime provinces and northeast China. Lying between these two usages, the majority of Qing officials used the expression to refer to the coast and its adjoining waters, outlying islands, river deltas, and some river sections. This chapter will elaborate on the notion of sea frontier based on this understanding.

dissection, as Wang Wensheng aptly argues, "functioned primarily to set limits on the reach and responsibilities of the [Qing] state and to regulate government operations across the fluid, dangerous ocean space."[5]

The Qing Empire's inland and maritime borderlands were similar in terms of the Qing characterization of frontiers. In Qing official eyes, "barbarians" (*yi*), "savages" (*fan*), and also *hanjian*, i.e. "Han evildoers," existed not only on the sea frontier but also on the inland borders. (The chapter will explain why *hanjian* should be translated as "Han evildoers" rather than "Han traitors," "Chinese traitors," or "traitors to the Han Chinese.") Holding the inner-outer paradigm, the Qing emperor and his central and local officials believed that on the sea frontier, there were "outer barbarians" (*waiyi*) and "inner evildoers" (*neijian*), the latter often simultaneously denounced as "Han evildoers." On one hand, the Qing state fought on the sea frontier against opium coming from the "outer waters"/"outer ocean" (*waiyang*) and the "outer barbarians." On the other hand, the Qing government endeavored to eliminate the "inner evildoers" and "Han evildoers," who were believed to be the "ears and eyes," "talons and teeth," and "wings" of the "English barbarians" (*Yingyi* 嗼夷). Moreover, the Qing authorities bemoaned that among the "Han evildoers" and "inner evildoers" on the sea frontier, many were "villainous fishers and indigent Dan people" (*jianyu qiongdan*). In 1839–1842, the Qing government strove to control the Dan and fishers on the sea frontier to prevent them from both joining the "outer barbarians"/"English barbarians" and becoming "guileful people" (*jianmin* 奸/姦民 or *jiangui* 奸/姦宄) who disrupted social order. This constituted one layer of the "inner Opium War" largely overlooked in the existing scholarship.

[5] Wang, *White Lotus Rebels*, 102.

Based on their understanding of the sea frontier and perceptions of different groups of people thereon, the Qing authorities developed various methods to eliminate the "outer barbarians"/"English barbarians," "inner evildoers"/"Han evildoers," and "villainous" Dan and fishers during the anti-opium campaign and the Qing-British War. These measures for "taming" the sea frontier in 1839–1842 included maritime and riverine defense, port closure and blockade, and the "sea ban" (*jinhai* or *haijin*), all of which were in fact conventional mechanisms traceable to the time of the establishment of the Qing Empire, or even to the Ming period. Although these sea frontier-controlling methods were carried out in various degrees of vigor at different places in different phases of the 1839–1842 Qing-British hostilities, all of them were invariably based on the relational concepts of inner and outer. During that time the Qing authorities, albeit with limited success, sought to tighten grip on regions within both the inner and outer waters.

To strengthen control over those labeled as Dan people and fishers, Chinese islanders, and also foreign "barbarians" in Macao, the local Qing administration sought to reinforce and expand the self-surveillance and registration systems of *baojia* and *aojia* across the regions threatened by the war in southeast China. Moreover, many fishers, Dan people, as well as sailors on merchant and fishing craft were organized into "water braves" or "water militia" (*shuiyong*). This was not only intended to enhance Qing naval power and manipulate the "bad elements" to crush the "rebellious barbarians" (*niyi* 逆夷), but also to put the recruits under supervision and prevent them from turning to such evil deeds as banditry and serving the British enemy. The Qing rulers hoped that under the *baojia* and *aojia* systems and the organization of water militia, the registered and enlisted people, many living on shore or afloat, would be subject to the surveillance of local social leaders who resided on land.

To what extent did the old regulations above help the Qing state "calm" the sea frontier during its anti-opium campaign and anti-British war in 1839–1842? Although the local Qing authorities sought to extend naval power to some outer-water regions, the power was not strong enough to expel the British. Most territories within the outer waters on the sea frontier remained to be fissures of Qing control, where British forces and merchant vessels sailed or stayed freely and those accused of being "Han evildoers" assisted the "outer barbarians." The Qing state also found it exceedingly difficult, if not impossible, to deal with both the "inner evildoers" and "outer barbarians" at the same time. While, it should be noted, a certain degree of Qing control existed in some parts of the sea frontier throughout the 1839–1842 hostilities, the generally loose Qing grip on the entire sea frontier and Chinese subjects thereon is a crucial background for the rise of British power in regions along China's coast and waterways during the Opium War.

The chapter will elucidate the Qing official construct of sea frontier by drawing upon a vast number of edicts from the throne and memorials by central and local Qing officials directly or indirectly taking part in the 1839–1842 anti-opium campaign and anti-British war. Textual and pictorial materials in local gazetteers, many of which were compiled under official supervision, as well as personal writings by Qing officials have also been used to illustrate the Qing conceptualization of the sea frontier. While Scholars have already recognized the unreliability and even fictiveness of Qing official memorials, examining in particular the great discrepancies between what was described in the memorials and what really happened on the spot during the 1839–1842 hostilities.[6] Even though details about the war proceedings reported in many—if not most—Qing official correspondence are untrustworthy, they are not totally imaginary. Despite the diverse political stances and

[6] Kuhn, *Soulstealers*; Mao, *Tianchao*.

backgrounds of the emperor and his central and provincial officials, they held a considerably high degree of consistency regarding the understanding of the sea frontier. What's more, the Qing view of the sea frontier in 1839–1842, as many Qing official records in the first two centuries suggests, had its historical roots in the foundation of the Qing Empire.

Conceptualizing the Sea Frontier: Inner versus Outer

As Fairbank has noticed, *nei* and *wai* "were very ancient Chinese categories, widely applied both geographically and figuratively."[7] "Qing documents," as Evelyn Rawski aptly notes, "referred to those newly acquired peripheral regions [e.g. Tibet and Xinjiang] as the 'outer' (*wai*) domains, which were thus classified apart from the 'inner' (*nei*) domains made up of the former Ming territory."[8] The Qing rulers regarded inland frontier zones as "outer land" (*waidi* 外地) or localities "outside" passes or fortresses (*guanwai* 關外 or *saiwai* 塞外) in the border regions. Areas within the established bureaucratic administration of the Qing were "inner land" (*neidi* 內地) or hinterland (*fudi* 腹地).[9]

Similar to the Qing understanding of inland borders, the relational concepts of inner and outer, and also the dichotomy of near and far, shaped the Qing conceptualization of the sea frontier. The Qing authorities often dichotomized coastal areas and inner land/hinterland. The China coast was described as the "near coast" (*jin'an* 近岸), seacoast (*hai'an* 海岸), or "near sea" (*jinhai* 近海).[10] Along the coast were the inner waters/inner ocean, "inner seas" (*neihai* 內海), "hinterland's inner waters" (*fuli neiyang* 腹裏內洋), or "near waters"/"near ocean" (*jinyang* 近洋). (The Qing authorities switched between the terms *hai* 海 and *yang* 洋,

[7] Fairbank, "Maritime and Continental in China's History," 4, 8.
[8] Rawski, "Reenvisioning the Qing," 833.
[9] Millward, "New Perspectives," 115.
[10] As adjectives in Qing official records, *jin'an* and *jinhai* mean "coastal."

both denoting the sea.) Map 2.1 below illustrates a section of the "inner sea" (*neihai* 內海) in Guangdong's Guangzhou prefecture, which includes the waters and land territories in the Pearl River Delta region north of Humen (the Bogue).



Map 2.1 "Guangzhou prefecture's inner sea" (*Guangzhou neihai* 廣州內海) in the Qing official Chen Lunjiong's *Haiguo wenjian lu* (Record of things heard and seen in the maritime countries)[11]

On the seaboard, and also on islands' fringes, there were ports (*haikou* 海口, *kou'an* 口岸, *koumen* 口門, or *matou* 馬頭). Many of them were regarded as "inner ports" (*neigang* 內港) or "shallow ports" (*qian'gang* 淺港). Some of these ports silted up, which rendered them unsuitable for navigation. But seagoing ships, by taking advantage of wind and tide, could enter the inner ports that were navigable, or depart from inner ports to not only the inner

[11] Chen, *Haiguo wenjian*, vol. 1, 55; Mosca, *From Frontier Policy*, 54–56.

waters but also the outer waters/outer ocean, "outer sea" (*waihai* 外海), or "far waters" (*yuanyang* 遠洋). The outer waters far from the coast were also called the "great waters"/"great ocean" (*dayang* 大洋 or *wangyang* 汪洋), "great sea" (*dahai* 大海), or "deep waters" (*shenshui dayang* 深水大洋). Many islands on the sea frontier, the largest being Taiwan, were described as "hanging isolated in the sea" (*guxuan haiwai* 孤懸海外). Considering contemporary Qing officials' understanding, Wang Wensheng's definition of the outer waters as a "region of deep seas, offshore islands and coral reefs" is problematic. This is because for the Qing authorities, the outer waters consisted of not only waters and regions remote from China's coast but also waters adjacent to inner ports and the inner waters.[12] In many cases, coastal waters and offshore islands lay within the inner waters.

While the Qing officials clearly distinguished between the sea and rivers, many of them thought that river sections next to the coast and their adjacent land regions constituted part of the sea frontier. This is the major difference between the sea frontier and the maritime/coastal frontier. The concept of outer waters was relational to not only the notion of inner waters but also the idea of inner rivers. According to the Qing conceptualization of the sea frontier, inner rivers joined inner land and coastal waters, and linked together inner land and deltas. Many coastal ports joined inner rivers and the sea. Moreover, some of the rivers' lower reaches close to the coast and some channels in the deltas were considered as the inner waters. The scholar-official Chen Lunjiong's "Complete Map of the Coast" (*yanhai quantu* 沿海全圖) (see map 2.2) shows that in his mind, the sea frontier included the lower reaches of the Yong River, one of its branches, and Ningbo, a riverine prefectural city 30 miles from the

[12] Wang's definition of the inner and outer oceans is based on Dian Murray's. See Wang, *White Lotus Rebels*, 102. Wang Hongbin recognizes the Qing's categorization of China's waters into the inner and outer waters, but his definition of these waters is unclear. See Wang, *Qingdai qianqi*.

sea.[13] Lower reaches or branches of rivers adjoining the coast were sometimes called "extensions from the sea" (*haicha* 海汊).



Map 2.2 Part of eastern Zhejiang from Chen Lunjiong's "Complete Map of the Coast"[14]

The Qing official use of the inner-outer and near-far paradigms to conceptualize the sea frontier resonated with contemporary Chinese literati's view of the maritime world. In Qing times, the inner-outer discourse was commonplace in the literati's expositions of maritime defenses and ways for regulating the Chinese coastal population, and in the accounts

[13] Chen, *Haiguo*, vol. 1, 47.
[14] Ibid.

of the geography of coastal China as well as overseas countries. The writers distinguished between the inner and outer seas or waters in China's maritime regions, and sometimes employed the inner/outer framework to describe foreign waters and rivers.[15] In their works, the term *waiyang*, as an adjective, denoted overseas. The authors, for examples, designated overseas trade as "outer-ocean trade" (*waiyang maoyi* 外洋貿易). Although much opium, in the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, was transported overland, imported to the Qing Empire's borderlands, and planted across the empire, many Qing officials contended in 1839–1842 that all the opium "came from the outer waters," meaning it was imported from overseas.[16]

How did local Qing administrators classify waters and ports on the sea frontier into inner/near or outer/far? One criterion was the geography of the locality concerned. Here James Scott's "friction of terrain" is useful to explain this criterion. According to the theory, the more inaccessible the peripheral regions, the more difficult the state extends control over the localities.[17] Generally speaking, the inner or near waters on the sea frontier were usually shallow and littered with submerged rocks, shoals, and reefs. In contrast, the waters identified as outer or far were relatively deep and remote from the coast, characterized by potential dangers from storms, gales, and waves.[18] Based on the geographical difference between the inner and outer waters, the Qing authorities believed that these waters were navigable or unnavigable for different kinds of craft. Sampans, for example, were only able to sail in the comparatively calm inner/near waters. Large vessels drawing water as much as several *zhang*

[15] For example, see Chen, *Haiguo*, vol. 1, 33; Yang, *Hailu*, 2.
[16] Lovell, *The Opium War*, 31–32; Waley, *The Opium War through Chinese Eyes*; Memorial by Tohombu, Jan. 12, 1840, ZDLD, *Dang'an*, vol. 1, 763. For the plantation and distribution of opium in the Qing Empire's inland borderlands, see Bello, *Opium*; Zheng, *The Social Life of Opium*.
[17] Scott, *The Art*, 13, 43–48.
[18] Memorial by Lin Zexu et al., Apr. 27, 1840, ZDLD, *Dang'an*, vol. 2, 67.

丈 (1 *zhang* being equivalent to 10 feet) were unable to sail in the shallow inner waters, otherwise they would run aground.[19]

Geography, however, was not the only factor that determined whether a particular region was classified by the Qing authorities as inner or outer. While many outlying islands lay in the outer waters, many others were situated within the inner waters.[20] In addition to geography, the locality's socioeconomic condition mattered. Ports and areas within or adjacent to the inner waters were usually more developed and populated than those surrounded by the outer waters. As discussed below, the Qing classification of an area into inner or outer was also related to Qing administrative and military control over the territory concerned.

Different Qing officials, central and local alike, usually held the same opinion on whether a place lay within the inner or outer waters. On some occasions, however, they held conflicting views. As far as the period of the 1839–1842 Qing-British hostilities is concerned, this was partly due to the attempt of local officials to explain their anti-British measures. In the gazetteer of Guangdong province (*Guangdong tongzhi*) published in 1822, the waters around Shazhou Island and Chilijiao Island in the Pearl River Delta belonged to the inner waters. In 1839, however, Imperial Commissioner Lin Zexu classified these waters as the outer waters in his memorial on the British activities.[21] For Lin this served to justify his inaction against the British in the outer waters, where, as explained below, Qing naval forces were not obliged to pursue and attack the enemies. The change of a region from an inner-

[19] Memorial by Tohombu, Jan. 12, 1840, ZDLD, *Dang'an*, vol. 1, 763; Memorial by Yuqian, Mar. 17, 1840, ZDLD, *Dang'an*, vol. 2, 43. For a description of sampans, see Worcester, *Sail and Sweep in China*, 3. Qing officials sometimes used *sanban* to refer to British sailing vessels.
[20] Liu et al., *Ningbo fuzhi*, vol. 7, 39–45; Moll-Murata, "Sundry Notes," 119–20.
[21] Ruan et al., *Guangdong tongzhi*, vol. 124, 745–46; Memorial by Lin Zexu, Nov. 21, 1839, ZDLD, *Dang'an*, vol. 1, 734.

water one to an outer-water one, or vice versa, was also related to the change of Qing administrative and military control over the locality concerned. This point will be elaborated later in this chapter and in Chapter 6.

Characterizing the Sea Frontier

Outer Barbarians and Barbarian Bandits

In Qing official narratives up to the 1850s, *yi*, i.e. "barbarians," as well as *fan* and *man* 蠻, i.e. "savages," spread across not only the inland borderlands but also the sea frontier from northeast China to Guangdong.[22] The Qing rulers categorized "barbarians" and "savages" on different borders across the empire in a variety of ways.[23] Many "barbarians" in Qing frontier regions were called *waiyi*, i.e. "outer barbarians." Here the word "outer" carries two slightly different meanings. The first is "non-indigenous." With this meaning, *waiyi* were non-indigenous people in comparison with indigenes. The second meaning is "coming from afar." With the inner-outer dichotomy in mind, the Qing rulers called "barbarians" coming from the sea as "outer barbarians" vis-à-vis "inner landers" (*neidi minren* 內地民人). "Barbarians" coming from afar on the sea frontier were believed to originate overseas. The "black waters and barbarian seas" (*heishui yiyang* 黑水夷洋) in Qing official records referred to the outer waters that were very deep and extremely far from the coast.

In addition to the inner-outer divide, the Qing authorities classified "barbarians" coming from afar on the sea frontier in terms of the country or region they resided or

[22] The Treaty of Tianjin signed in 1858 after the first phase of the Arrow War (1856–60), which was fought between the Qing and the British-French allied forces, stipulated the proscription of the use of the Chinese character *yi* in Qing official documents. See Liu, *The Clash of Empires*, 31–69.
[23] Dikötter, *The Discourse of Race*; Hostetler, *Qing Colonial Enterprise*; Teng, *Taiwan's Imagined Geography.*

originated, and skin as well as hair color. By the time of the Opium War, there were on the sea frontier "Macao barbarians" or "Macao savages" (*Aoyi* 澳夷 or *Aofan* 澳蕃, i.e. Westerners in Macao), "Bengal barbarians" (British), "England barbarians" (British), "Greater Western Ocean barbarians" (*Daxiyang yi* 大西洋夷, i.e. Portuguese), "Luzon barbarians" (Spanish), and also "black barbarians," "white barbarians," "red barbarians," and "red-bristled barbarians."[24]

Recognizing the power relations among the "outer barbarians," the Qing authorities hierarchized them. Sent by the Qing's Zhejiang governor to British-occupied Zhoushan in 1840, a Chinese spy reported that "among the barbarian bandits, black devils [i.e. Indians] were servants, red devils were soldiers, and white devils were officers."[25] In Jiangsu province, the official reward for everyone who killed a "white barbarian" was $100 (in Spanish dollar), whereas the life of a "black barbarian" was worth $50 only.[26]

China, as Frank Dikötter has argued, has a long history of demonology and dehumanizing foreigners.[27] To explain and condemn their unpredictability, greediness, cunningness, immorality, and rebelliousness, in 1839–1842 the Qing rulers denounced the British as dogs, sheep, pigs, devils (*gui* 鬼 or *guizi* 鬼子), and "barbarian devils" (*yigui* 夷鬼). In addition to hierarchizing and dehumanizing the "outer barbarians," the Qing authorities stereotyped them. The "black barbarians," i.e. Indians, for example, were thought to be so

[24] For the relations between skin color and the categorization of "barbarians" in Chinese history, see Dikötter, *The Discourse of Race*, 10–17. For a contemporary Chinese ethnographic description of the "red-bristled savage English," see Wang Wentai, "Hongmaofan Yingjili kaolüe," in A Ying, *Yapian zhanzheng wenxueji*, vol. 2, 756–63.
[25] Report by a commissioner sent to Dinghai, 1840, Ningbo shi shehuikexuejie lianhehui dang'anguan and ZDLD, *Zhejiang Yapian zhanzheng*, vol. 2, 293.
[26] Memorial by Yuqian, Mar. 11, 1841, ZDLD, *Dang'an*, vol. 3, 220.
[27] Dikötter, *The Discourse of Race*, 36–38.

dim-witted that they were manipulated by the "English barbarians" to fight against the Qing and did not know how to resist English oppression.[28]

The historian Song-Chuan Chen has aptly argued that *yi* was a designation employed by the Qing rulers "to distinguish 'aliens,' who could invade the central kingdom."[29] Condemning the "English barbarians" for their unlawful activities in China and unrighteous invasion in 1839–1842, the Qing authorities further denounced the British as "evildoers" (*jian* 奸/姦), "barbarian robbers" (夷匪), "barbarian bandits" (*yikou* 夷寇), "sea bandits" (*haikou* 海寇), "rebellious robbers" (*nifei* 逆匪), and "English rebels" (*yingni* 暎逆), and their craft as "bandit craft" (*zeichuan* 賊船) and "rebel craft" (*nichuan* 逆船). The Qing authorities presented the anti-British fighting as a war on the sea frontier against the "rebellious barbarians" and bandits from the outer waters. For the Qing state, such threats from bandits coming from the sea on the sea frontier was not novel; prior to the 1839–1842 Qing-British hostilities, the most serious ones were the rise of the Zheng regime in the mid-seventeenth century and the upsurge in South China piracy in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries.[30] Rather than an isolated event, the Qing authorities regarded the anti-British hostilities in 1839–1842 as one of the wars against marauders on the sea frontier since the regime's foundation.[31]

Han Evildoers and Inner Evildoers

According to the Qing official discourse, in the inland borderlands and on the sea frontier of the Qing Empire, there were not only "barbarians" but also *hanjian* who cooperated with,

[28] Memorial by Yao Ying, Feb. 24, 1842, ZDLD, *Dang'an*, vol. 5, 135.
[29] Chen, "The British Maritime Public Sphere, 17.
[30] Murray, *Pirates*; Andrade, *How Taiwan Became Chinese*; Ho, "Sealords"; Wang, *White Lotus Rebels*.
[31] Crossley, *Orphan Warriors*, 117; Polachek, *The Inner Opium War*, 150.

worked for, or manipulated the former. While the historian Li Man has revealed that the expression *hanjian* 漢姦 was used as early as the Yuan period (1271–1368) in a scholarly work on classics to refer to vile officials serving the court of the Eastern Han dynasty (25–220), the historian Wu Mi has discovered that the term *hanjian* was first employed in official records in the late Ming, in which *hanjian* were those who provoked revolts among the Yi people in the "barbarian land" (*yidi* 夷地) of southwest China.[32] The official usage of *hanjian* had become prevalent since the time of the Qing's Yongzheng reign (1722–1735).[33]

By the time of the Opium War, the Qing authorities identified their subjects as *hanjian* only when the labeled people was a Han Chinese having contacts with "aborigines" (*tumin* 土民) or "barbarians"/"savages," be they indigenous or foreign. In other words, the existence of *hanjian* was related to the existence of indigenous or foreign non-Han peoples. These peoples included the Miao, the Yi, the Yao, the Ling, the Dong, the Li, Muslims (*hui* 回), non-Han East and Southeast Asians, South Asians, and Westerners. In addition to the Qing Empire's "internal frontiers" where aborigines and the Han intermingled, *hanjian* existed on virtually all the "external frontiers" including Tibet, the "Miao frontier" (*miaojiang* 苗疆) in southwest China, the Guangxi-Vietnamese border, the Guangdong-Vietnamese border, the Yunnan-Burmese border, and Taiwan as well as the sea frontier at large.[34] Many of those identified as *hanjian* in the internal borderlands were Han immigrants from outside regions or "floating people" (*youmin* 游民 or *liumin* 流民) without a fixed residence.

[32] Li, "Rumour"; Wu, "'Hanjian' kaobian," 108.
[33] Wu, "Qingdai guanshu."
[34] Chen, *Wensu lu*, 108; Memorial by Jiang Pu, Jan. 8, 1745, *Daoguang chao Junjichu Hanwen zhupi zouzhe* (hereafter cited as DCJHZZ), 04-01-01-0106-034; Memorial by Shen Mengxi, Aug. 25, 1760, DCJHZZ, 04-01-01-0245-024; Memorial by Changming, June 26, 1812, DCJHZZ, 04-01-01-0543-042.

Contemporary Westerners and most historians have customarily translated the term *hanjian* as "traitors," "native traitors," "Chinese traitors," "traitorous Chinese," "Han traitors," or "traitors to the Han Chinese."[35] In fact, it would be anachronistic to translate *hanjian* as "Chinese traitors" or Han traitors" when the term appeared in Qing documents written before the rise of the modern idea of "selling out the country" (*maiguo* 賣國), which was concomitant with the concepts of sovereignty, nationalism, and nation-state that emerged in late Qing China. Using "traitor" for translation before the rise of these ideas would be projecting very different modern ideas back in time. The meanings of *hanjian*, as Wu Mi and Li Man have shown, evolved and changed from time to time in different contexts throughout the Qing period.[36]

Considering the usage of *hanjian* from the late Ming period up to the time of the 1839–1842 Qing-British hostilities, the designation should instead be translated as "Han evildoers," "Han villains," "Han rogues," or "Han guileful people." Semantically speaking, the expression *hanjian* during that time combined two elements: Han and evildoers/villains/rogues/guileful people (*jian*). By the time of the Opium War, those identified by the Qing authorities as *jian* were not limited to the Han; there were "barbarian evildoers" (*yijian* 夷奸), be they indigenous or coming from afar, and also "Muslim evildoers" (*huijian* 回奸).[37] By the time of the Opium War, no Manchus had been labeled as *hanjian* in any records. The Manchu officials in the "pro-peace clique" (*zhuhe pai* 主和派), for example

[35] Atwill, *The Chinese Sultanate*, 3; Brook, C*ollaboration*, 10; *Canton Press*, Aug. 17, 1839, July 17, 1841; Wakeman, "*Hanjian*," 298–341; Scott, *The Art*, 125–26; Wakeman, *Strangers*. One exception is Li Man, who keeps the original term "hanjian" rather than translating it in his English essay. See Li, "Rumour."
[36] Li, "Rumour"; Wu, "'Hanjian' kaobian."
[37] Atwill, *The Chinese Sultanate*, 60; Wu, "Qingdai guanshu."

Kišan (Qishan), have been criticized for being a *hanjian* only since the late nineteenth century.[38]

"Han traitors" is an inaccurate translation of *hanjian* in Qing official sources produced before 1842 also because the labeled people pursued a very broad range of activities, many of which were unrelated to sedition, and because the *yi* or *fan* whom they contacted included not only foreigners but also indigenous people with no intention of rebelling against the Qing. In Qing official narratives, the activities of *hanjian* were not limited to helping foreign invaders to fight against the Qing, representing Southeast Asian rulers to send tributes to China, and inciting indigenes to rebel. The *hanjian* were also accused of cooperating with foreign or indigenous "barbarians" or "savages" to make profits; taking advantage of the encounters with foreign or native *yi* or *fan* or exploiting them; luring or teaching *yi* or *fan* to conduct misdeeds; and helping foreigners and indigenes on the empire's frontiers, both maritime and inland, in many other ways.[39] The Qing government used *hanjian* for the first time to refer to those who had contacts with Westerners and committed misdeeds on the sea frontier in 1793, when where Britain's Macartney embassy stopped in the Zhoushan Archipelago, Zhejiang province. The Qianlong emperor (r. 1735–1796) expressed his worry in an edit that *hanjian* might go from "inner land" to Zhoushan to trade illicitly with the "English barbarians" (*yingjili yiren* 暎咭唎夷人) or the "red-bristled" (*hongmao* 紅毛).[40]

In the above edict, the expressions *hanjian* and *jianmin*, i.e. villains, referred to the same group of people. During the Qing's anti-opium campaign and anti-British war, many of the Chinese people were branded in Qing memorials as "Han evildoers" or villains who

[38] Mao, *Tianchao*, 1–23.
[39] Chen, *Wensu lu*, 109–10; Fairbank, *Trade and Diplomacy*, vol. 1, 53.
[40] *Da Qing Gaozong Chunhuangdi shilu*, vol. 1436. On the 1793 Macartney embassy, see Hevia, *Cherishing Men*.

colluded or conspired with (*gouchuan* 勾串) the "villainous barbarians" (*jianyi* 奸夷 or *chouyi* 醜夷) out of British coercion or enticement. Many of the labeled Chinese were accused of taking advantage of the British invasion or relying on the British to pursue their "evil deeds." Those stamped to be *hanjian* during the war included linguists, guides, pilots, and spies working for the British, and provisioners as well as opium dealers trading with Westerners. Some were even alleged mercenaries fighting for the "English barbarian." Denounced as a "famous Han evildoer," Chen Bingjun was suspected of helping the British to attack Zhenhai city in Zhejiang province in October 1841. He was also charged with going to Ningbo city to collect military intelligence in the Qing camp and squeeze money from the rich.[41]

Under the brush of local Qing officials, "Han evildoers," whether potential or actual, existed wherever the British passed, stayed, attacked, or occupied, or the British threat was felt. In other words, in 1839–1842 "Han evildoers" existed when, and only when, "English barbarians" or their real or possible threats were present. Generally speaking, during the Qing-British hostilities before the China Expedition's arrival in mid-1840, the "Han evildoers" associated with Westerners on the sea frontier were, in memorials by local Qing officials, mostly limited to Chinese people originating in Guangdong and Fujian provinces. Later when the British military activities spread to the north, potential and actual *hanjian* in local Qing official documents spread to or emerged in Zhejiang, Jiangsu, Shandong, Zhili, and northeast China.

The present chapter does not aim to fully investigate the real or imaginary activities of "Han evildoers" and the Qing scapegoating of those labeled as *hanjian* during the Opium War, as the so-called "hanjian problem" during the war has been the research topic of many

[41] Testimony of Chen Bingjun, Attachment to Memorial by Ijing (Yijing) et al., Apr. 1, 1842, ZDLD, *Dang'an*, vol. 5, 131–32.

Mainland Chinese and Taiwan historians.[42] As concluded by Mao Haijian, "during the Opium War, *hanjian* was the most uncertain designation; all the causes, responsibilities, and consequences that were difficult to explain were put on the shoulders of *hanjian*."[43] Not only the Qing authorities, Chinese people also singled out *hanjian* from the other Chinese. Their labeling of *hanjian* reflects two "inner" aspects of the Opium War: confrontation between local Han officials and the Chinese population and conflicts among the Chinese people during and after the war. In Guangdong, the naming and elimination of *hanjian* after the famous Sanyuanli Incident in May 1841, Wakeman argues, "coagulated all of the antiurban, antimercantile and antiforeign sentiments" among the rural gentry and peasantry and also their discontent at the conciliatory acts of the Han Chinese officials who made peace with the British.[44]

The Qing stamping of *hanjian* during the Opium War, moreover, reflects the uneasy relations between Manchus and the Han. As Mark Elliott has demonstrated, in Zhenjiang, a Jiangsu prefectural city on the Yangzi River under British attack in mid-1842, the Manchu leader Hailing conducted a vigorous anti-*hanjian* campaign against Han Chinese dwellers. This, Elliott argues, reflects the deep-rooted Manchu-Han tensions within the Qing Empire.[45] The contemporary Chinese literatus Liu Changhua asserted that during the anti-British war, the widespread presence of *hanjian*—"guileful people on Han land" (*hantu zhi jianmin* 漢土之奸民)— propelled the Qing emperor to trust Manchus rather than Han officials and the talented Chinese. This, Liu claimed, partly explained the Qing failure in the war.[46]

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[42] Chen and Jin, Yapian zhanzheng zhong"; Chang, "Yapian zhanzheng shiqi de 'hanjian'"; Hou, "Shilun Yapian zhanzheng"; Ji, "Yapian zhanzheng qijian"; Zheng, "Yapian zhanzheng shiqi de hanjian wenti."
[43] Mao, *Tianchao*, 306.
[44] Wakeman, *Strangers*, 49–53.
[45] Elliott, "Bannerman," 51–56.
[46] Liu, "Yapian zhanzheng shiliao," Zhongguo shixuehui, *Yapian zhanzheng*, vol. 3, 154.

Many local Qing officials deployed the inner-outer paradigm in explaining the close relations and interdependence between the "Han evildoers" and the British. They switched between the designations *hanjian* and *neijian*, i.e. inner evildoers. Contending that "to resist the outer threat it is necessary to pacify the interior first," the Qing ruling authorities fought the anti-opium campaign and anti-British war in 1839–1842 against both the "outer barbarians," i.e. foreign opium merchants and the British, and "inner evildoers."[47] A Qing provincial censor vividly opined in 1842: "the rebellious barbarians were our armpit injury, whereas *hanjian* were our real internal disease. . . . As long as *hanjian* are not to be eradicated, the rebellious barbarians definitely will not leave. . . . to annihilate outer-water bandits [the British], [we have to] remove inner-land evildoers first."[48] When memorializing about threats from the "outer barbarians" or "outer bandits" (*waikou* 外寇) in 1839–1842, many Qing provincial officials enumerated measures, which will be discussed later, to eliminate the "Han evildoers" and "inner evildoers." This resembles the persistent endeavors of the Qing state to regulate and fought against both the aborigines and "Han evildoers" for sabotaging and suppressing upheavals and rebellions in the empire's inland borderlands, for example in Yunnan.[49]

Dan People and Fishers

In Qing official documents dated 1839–1842, many "Han evildoers" and "inner evildoers" along the coast and inner rivers in Guangdong were simultaneously labeled as Dan. In late imperial China, *dan* was both a specific kind of household in the province and an ethnic marker. In Ming times, the "Dan-household" (*danhu* 蛋戶/蜑戶/疍戶) was a hereditary

[47] Memorial by Yuqian, Apr. 23, 1841, ZDLD, *Dang'an*, vol. 3, 381.
[48] Memorial by Shi Songnian, Mar. 7, 1842, ZDLD, *Dang'an*, vol. 5, 62.
[49] Atwill, *The Chinese Sultanate*, 48–63.

household in Guangdong's littoral regions. The Qing state inherited the Ming registration of *danhu*. In the Ming and early Qing, many Dan people were organized into paramilitary groups on water.[50] Although Dan-householders were allowed to become a "tithing household" (*jiahu* 甲戶) member under the so-called "emancipation edict" in 1729 issued by the Yongzheng emperor, Dan-households had still been commonplace in Guangdong by the time of the Opium War. Throughout the Qing period, the official identification of Dan people in Guangdong continued.[51] Unofficial Chinese records ranging from literati's miscellanies (*biji* 筆記) to local lineages' genealogical sources and to oral records indicate that from the Southern Song (1127–1279) up to the early twenty-first century, contemporary Chinese land settlers discriminated against many locals in Guangdong who lived by the coast and waterways—or on the "water margins," with Dan, boat living, and shed living as ethnic markers.[52] While the presence of those labeled as Dan was limited to Guangdong by the time of the Qing-British War, after the mid-nineteenth century they existed in not only Guangdong but also other provinces including Guangxi, Fujian, and even Zhejiang and Jiangsu.[53]

The Qing authorities also used the ethnic marker of Dan to label Chinese people whose livelihoods were closely related to waters. Many of them lived afloat and/or worked on water fishers, sailors, pilots, provisions dealers, boaters ferrying passengers, cargoes, and commodities, and waterborne bandits, whereas many others lived in sheds and worked in littoral regions. The latter's jobs included planting stake-nets, farming sedimentary delta land

[50] Faure, *Emperor*; Yang, "Pinhai," 63; Ye, "Notes," 83–84; Chen, "Shuilu jian"; Chen et al., *Dongguan xianzhi*, vol. 3, 4.
[51] *Daoguang chao xingke tiben*; *Qingdai Guangdong dang'an lu*. For discussions on Emperor Yongzheng's edict aiming at "emancipating" the Dan as well as other "wicked peoples" (*jianmin* 賤民), see Hansson, *Chinese Outcasts*, 126–32; Zhan, "Lun Yongzheng di."
[52] He and Faure, *The Fisher Folk*; Faure, *Emperor*; Siu and Liu, "Lineage, Market, Pirate"; He, "Fujia fanzhai."
[53] Huang, "Cong Danmin yanjiu."

(*shatian* 沙田), weaving bamboo-baskets, and so on.[54] The Dan woman (*danfu* 蜑婦) Mrs. Li, née Liang, farmed swampy land (*tantian* 坦田) and lived in a shed with another man also surnamed Li in Panyu district (*xian* 縣) within the Pearl River Delta region. In 1846, some robbers broke into her house at night.[55] Many Dan people, according to Qing official records, also fell victim to piracy.[56]

Many Chinese littoral people classified as Dan in Qing official records had a long history of working for foreigners under the Canton System—which regulated China's trade with the West in 1759–1842— as pilots, boaters conveying foreigners, waterborne provisioners, and opium traders on water.[57] Prior to the anti-opium campaign, the Qing Guangdong authorities had already condemned many Dan people as the "Han evildoers" who worked for or traded with Westerners on the sea frontier. According to a Qing trial report, in 1834 the Dan old woman Yakai employed He Yaniu and Huang Yaqing as sailors and shipped provisions to Huang Cheye, reportedly a "Han evildoer" working as a comprador on board a foreign opium vessel in the Pearl River Delta waters.[58] The local Qing officials often thought that the "poor Dan" (*pindan* 貧疍) and villains belonged to the same category.[59]

During his anti-opium crusade, the Qing imperial commissioner Lin Zexu attributed the persistence of the foreign opium traffic on water partly to the help offered by the countless "Dan craft" (*danting* 蛋艇). Many Dan people on board were classified as "Han evildoers"

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[54] He and Faure, *The Fisher Folk*, 6; Ye, "Notes," 84. On Dan people being pirates, see Antony, *Like Froth*; Murray, *Pirates*, 12–17.
[55] For example, see Report by Kiyeng (Qiying), June 26, 1847, *Daoguang chao xingke tiben*, 02-01-03-10857-011.
[56] For example, see Memorial by Ding Tingzhen and Wu Wenrong, Aug. 5, 1840, DCJHZZ, 04-01-01-0795-049; Memorial by Qi Gong and Cheng Yuecai, June 3, 1843, DCJHZZ, 04-01-01-0813-034.
[57] Guan, *Chouhai chuji*, vol. 2, 33; Liang, *Yue haiguan zhi*, vol. 28, *yishang* 3, 27, in Shanghai guji chubanshe, *Xuxiu sikuquanshu*, vol. 835. The most comprehensive English-language work on China's maritime trade under the Canton System is van Dyke, *The Canton Trade*.
[58] Memorial by Lin Zexu et al., Nov. 21, 1839, ZDLD, *Dang'an*, vol. 1, 726–27.
[59] Chen, "Shuilu jian," 104; Liang, *Yue haiguan zhi*, vol. 20, *zeli* 4, 7.

being "eager after profit and careless of life," and willing to trade provisions for opium with the "outer barbarians" or "barbarian craft" (*yichuan* 夷船 or *yijian* 夷艦) in the outer waters.[60] Described as "a cunning people among the Dan," Lu Yajing or Lu Jing, alias Loo Aqui, was criticized for being the famous leader of "Han evildoers" in British-occupied Hong Kong. Although the Qing authorities tried to recruit him from the British camp by granting him a sixth-rank official title, Loo, knowing English, continued to work as a comprador provisioning the British naval forces. Purportedly, he also robbed in villages and waters, led a piracy league, and established a protection network over Chinese merchant craft in the Pearl River Estuary.[61]

Even though not all the Dan people recorded in Qing official documents fished, Dan people, fishers, Dan boats, and fishing craft were inseparable for many local Qing officials, who shared the sedentary Chinese' perceptions of people with a waterborne occupation and/or residence. Thus, in Qing official accounts, there are such terms as "fishers and Dan-households" (*yuren danhu* 漁人蛋戶), "fishers and Dan craft" (*yumin danting* 漁民蛋艇), "fishing and Dan craft," (*yudan geting* 漁蜑各艇) and, pejoratively, "villainous fishers and indigent Dan people."[62] Similar to the Dan-household, the "fishing-household" (*yuhu* 漁戶) was a specific kind of household in late imperial times.[63] Concerning fishing craft, their types were diverse, ranging, in terms of size, from oceangoing vessels to rafts navigating narrow channels. Rather than being full-time fishers, many Chinese maritime people practiced

[60] *Canton Press*, Mar. 28, 1840; Memorial by Lin Zexu et al., Sept. 1, 1839, ZDLD, *Dang'an*, vol. 1, 671; Memorial by Lin Zexu et al., Jan. 28, 1840, ZDLD, *Dang'an*, vol. 1, 796; Memorial by Lin Zexu et al., Mar. 7, 1840, ZDLD, *Dang'an*, vol. 2, 27; Proclamation to Lin Zexu et al., Apr. 8, 1840, ZDLD, *Dang'an*, vol. 2, 54; Memorial by Lin Zexu and Yiliang, ZDLD, *Dang'an*, Apr. 12, 1840, vol. 2, 56.
[61] Memorial by Yišan (Yishan) et al., Aug. 4, 1842, ZDLD, *Dang'an*, vol. 5, 811; Memorial by Yišan et al., Nov. 4, 1841, ZDLD, *Dang'an*, vol. 4, 304–05; Memorial by Lü Xianji, July 2, 1842, ZDLD, *Dang'an*, vol. 5, 529; "Yingyi ru Yue jilüe," in Zhongguo shixuehui, *Yapian zhanzheng*, vol. 3, 22, 25–26.
[62] Guan, *Chouhai chuji*, vol. 2, 54, 56; Memorial by Shen Heng, July 30, 1840, ZDLD, *Dang'an*, vol. 2, 209–10; Memorial by Qi Gong, May 2, 1841, ZDLD, *Dang'an*, vol. 3, 403.
[63] Yin, *Ming Qing Changjiang*, 353–72.

temporary or seasonal fishery. In Guangdong and Fujian provinces, it was said that a considerable part of the coastal population spent seven-tenths of their time fishing and farmed only when the fishing season was off.[64]

The Qing authorities bemoaned that those in the numerous Dan and fishing craft on the sea frontier were poor, greedy, and immoral scoundrels, vagabonds, and desperadoes unconcerned with family links and righteousness. For the Qing rulers, many fishers and fishing householders cooperated with "Han evildoers," or were potential or actual "Han evildoers" or "inner evildoers" themselves during the 1839–1842 Qing-British hostilities.[65] Fishing-householders and "Han evildoers" were often regarded as one inseparable group of people.[66] The activities of fishers, the Qing authorities claimed, were unpredictable on the coast and rivers. They went to the outer waters to help or trade with the British via "small ports" (*xiaokou* 小口), "illicit ports" (*sikou* 私口), or "remote ports" (*pikou* 僻口), i.e. ports beyond effective Qing administrative and military control.[67] (*Xiaokou*, as Chapter 3 will show, also means substations of the Qing maritime customs.) Moreover, in late imperial times, many people on board Chinese craft were recurrently accused of participating in sea banditry when the fishing season was off or their catching unsatisfactory.[68] During the anti-opium campaign and the anti-British war in 1839–1842, the local Qing administrations strove to control those "unruly" elements so as to prevent them from becoming "Han evildoers" or "inner evildoers" and joining the "outer barbarians" on the one hand, and to preempt their villainous activities

[64] Memorial by Lin Zexu et al., Apr. 27, 1840, ZDLD, *Dang'an*, vol. 2, 67; Memorial by Qi Junzao, Apr. 28, 1840, ZDLD, *Dang'an*, vol. 2, 92.
[65] Memorial by Ilibu (Yilibu) et al., July 15, 1840, ZDLD, *Dang'an*, vol. 2, 163; Memorial by Yin Detai, Oct. 24, 1841, ZDLD, *Dang'an*, vol. 4, 248.
[66] Memorial by Ijing, Jan. 1, 1842, ZDLD, *Dang'an*, vol. 4, 591.
[67] Memorial by Songpu et al., Sept. 29, 1839, ZDLD, *Dang'an*, vol. 1, 694; Proclamation to Lin Zexu et al., Apr. 8, 1840, ZDLD, *Dang'an*, vol. 2, 56; Memorial by Lin Zexu and Yiliang, June 16, 1840, ZDLD, *Dang'an*, vol. 2, 135.
[68] Chen, *Wensu lu*, 116–17; Ouyang, *Haishang renjia*, 120.

that disrupted social order on the other. This is another "inner" layer of the Opium War that has yet to be scrutinized in the past scholarship.

Nevertheless, the Dan and fishers were not entirely useless for the Qing authorities. In their eyes, Dan people, fishers, as well as some semi-human creatures in China's waters were reputed to be excellent swimmers, divers, rowers, steersmen, and seafarers. The local authorities, and also some yamen underlings, thought that the maritime and river regions were littered with "water ghosts" (*shuigui* 水鬼), "water beasts" (*shuishou* 水獸), and "sea ghosts" (*haigui* 海鬼) that possessed exceptional navigational, seafaring, and diving skills.[69] In his memorial to the throne in 1840, Imperial Commissioner Lin Zexu implied the linkage between these non-human creatures and the Dan and fishers:

> We have investigated that in eastern Guangdong, fishers, Dan-householders, and coastal inhabitants catch and fish for their living and are unafraid of dangers from gales and waves. Those called "water ghosts" by natives are everywhere. For example, in Da'ao of Xin'an district, Qi'ao of Xiangshan district, Gaoluo of Lufeng district, and Jingzhou of Raoping district, there are always good swimmers who are said to be able to walk in daytime and stay at nighttime on the seabed, and be able to sink a vessel by perforating its bottom.[70]

Lin's description of the water ghosts and exceptional divers resembled the Chinese literatus Qu Dajun's depiction of Dan people in his seventeenth-century work *Guangdong xinyu* (New items relating to Guangdong, which was actually forbidden in Lin's time), according to which the Dan were able to struggle with enormous fish under the sea for a very long time.[71] Those semi-human creatures resembled the mountain beasts able to release poisonous gas which the Qing authorities intended to recruit against the "rebellious barbarians" during the anti-British

[69] Li, *Li Xingyuan riji*, vol. 1, 307; Memorial by Cai Jiagan, Dec. 23, 1840, ZDLD, *Dang'an*, vol. 2, 648; Memorial by Chen Guanjun, Feb. 4, 1841, ZDLD, *Dang'an*, vol. 3, 58; *Yifei fanjing*, vol. 2, 22.
[70] Memorial by Lin Zexu, Sept. 23, 1841, ZDLD, *Dang'an*, vol. 2, 403.
[71] Qu, *Guangdong xinyu*, vol. 18, 485.

war.[72] Though many Dan people and fishers were considered to be potential or actual "Han evildoers" or villains, the Qing authorities saw them as a pool of excellent candidates for mercenaries fighting against or surprising the "barbarian craft" on the sea frontier in 1839–1842.

Calming the Sea Frontier

Maritime and Riverine Defense

The Qing categorization of waters and their adjoining territories into inner and outer was closely related to the organization of the Qing's local civil and military administrations, and also to the distribution of Qing forts as well as military and naval forces on the sea frontier. In theory, inner ports and other regions within the inner waters lay within Qing bureaucratic control and/or the reach of Qing military and naval power. As a rule the coastal fortifications were located at inner ports or strategic positions surrounded by or adjacent to the inner waters (see map 2.3). Both civil and military officials in the localities were responsible for crimes in regions within the inner waters, and Qing customs stations and substations were only set up in inner-water regions (see Chapter 5 on the Qing customs).[73]

In sharp contrast, areas within the outer waters on the sea frontier were subject to only limited Qing naval control and fell beyond the reach of Qing fortifications and effective Qing administrative rule. Rather than both the local civil and military administrations, only the local naval authorities were responsible for crimes committed in the outer waters.[74] The naval authorities were even exempt from being accountable for the activities of Chinese opium

[72] *Yifei fanjing*, vol. 4, 58.
[73] Kišan to Elliot, Jan. 11, 1841, in Sasaki, *Ahen sensō*, 61.
[74] Memorial by Tohombu, Jan. 12, 1840, ZDLD, *Dang'an*, vol. 1, 763; Zhu, *Yue Dong cheng'an chubian*, vol. 36.

trading craft taking illicit ports.[75] Yet, the outer-water regions were far from what Wang Wensheng describes as "nonstate space."[76] Qing control, however tenuous, was far from absent in the outer waters on the sea frontier. As shown below, the Qing's anti-opium campaign and anti-British war in 1839–1842 saw the expansion of Qing control to some outer-water regions.



Map 2.3 Part of the Pearl River Estuary region in the 1822 provincial gazetteer of Guangdong. The gazetteer was an official undertaking under the editorship-in-chief by the famous Guangdong and Guangxi governor-general Ruan Yuan. In the map, all the forts are situated within the inner waters.[77]

[75] Memorial by Lin Zexu and Yiliang, June 16, 1840, ZDLD, *Dang'an*, vol. 2, 135.
[76] Wang, *White Lotus Rebels*, 40.
[77] Ruan et al., *Guangdong tongzhi*, vol. 124, 748.

During the 1839–1842 hostilities, local Qing administrators found it useful to classify waters and territories into inner/near and outer/far to explain the strengths and weaknesses of the military and naval power of the British as well as their own, and to justify their action or inaction when facing British threats. Theoretically speaking, the British forces would be subject to Qing containment or attack only when they appeared in inner ports and inner rivers on the sea frontier. The local Qing officials claimed that the British "barbarian craft" could only fire their heavy cannons in the outer waters because if they did so on the near coast characterized with uneven seabed, the recoil would drive them to run aground. The British ships of war, moreover, were considered to be so bulky that they could not operate well at inner ports.[78] Before the British Expedition commenced the Yangzi River campaign in mid-1842, the Qing rulers apparently believed that the British, with their enormous "barbarian craft," were unable to enter most of the inner rivers from the sea unless they employed smaller craft and took advantage of tides. When the "barbarian craft" entered the inner rivers, however, the Qing emperor and local officials appeared confident that fire attacks and sieges against the intruders were likely to become successful, and cutting off supplies to the enemy would become much easier.[79]

Regarding territories within the outer waters, although the local Qing authorities maintained some degree of naval control over the outer-water regions, they often turned a blind eye to the activities of the "outer barbarians" therein. In theory, Qing naval forces were obliged to expel any "barbarian craft" in the outer waters; in practice, they usually failed to do

[78] Memorial by Lin Zexu et al., Sept. 1, 1839, ZDLD, *Dang'an*, vol. 1, 673; Memorial by Ilibu, Sept. 28, 1840, ZDLD, *Dang'an*, vol. 2, 415–17; Memorial by Yuqian, Mar. 11, 1841, ZDLD, *Dang'an*, vol. 3, 215; Memorial by Yuqian, June 7, 1841, ZDLD, *Dang'an*, vol. 3, 466.

[79] Memorial by Senggerinchen (Senggelinqin) et al., ZDLD, *Dang'an*, vol. 4, 472; Memorial by Qi Gong, Feb. 7, 1842, ZDLD, *Dang'an*, vol. 4, 594–95; Memorial by Tohombu, Feb. 18, 1842, ZDLD, *Dang'an*, vol. 5, 13; Proclamation to Kiyeng et al., July 16, 1842, ZDLD, *Dang'an*, vol. 5, 629; Proclamation to Kiyeng et al., July 19, 1842, ZDLD, *Dang'an*, vol. 5, 662; Memorial by Saišangga (Saishang'a) et al., July 26, 1842, ZDLD, *Dang'an*, vol. 5, 728–29.

so.[80] On the one hand, local Qing officials on the sea frontier sought to expel all "outer barbarians' craft" out of the inner-water regions during the anti-opium campaign and the anti-British war. On the other hand, they strove to limit the presence of the "barbarian craft" to the outer waters and did not venture to chase them in these waters.[81] Both the Qing emperor and his central and local officials agreed that it was unwise to fight directly in the turbulent outer waters against the British, who possessed bigger, stronger, and better-armed vessels. The emperor and court officials generally admitted that the British naval activities were unpredictable in the outer waters, where dangers from storms were great, whereas the local Qing authorities responsible for conducting the war were not confident of defeating the British naval forces in the outer waters.[82] Upon the conclusion of the first truce of the Qing-British War in late 1840, the throne ordered the Qing military to stay on defense rather than attacking the British as long as they remained not "rebellious" in the outer waters.[83]

Although the Qing authorities held only limited military control over the outer waters, they sometimes sought to extend their naval grip over some outer-water regions during the 1839–1842 hostilities. This will be further discussed in Chapter 6. Suffice to say, the local Qing authorities launched several fire attacks in the outer-water regions in the Pearl River Delta where British trading craft, including opium vessels, took anchorages in 1839 and 1840. Moreover, at the height of Commissioner Lin's anti-opium campaign, Qing fortifications and naval forces were reinforced in some of the inner-water regions in the estuary. To defend

[80] Regulations respecting ships, Jiaqing reign, FO 233/189, 74; Memorial by Deng Tingzhen, May 24, 1840, ZDLD, *Dang'an*, vol. 2, 106.
[81] *Chinese Repository*, vol. 10, no. 11, Nov. 1841, 621; Terms of peace, May 26, 1841, Sasaki, *Ahen sensō*, 107; Memorial by Wu Wenrong, Feb. 25, 1840, ZDLD, *Dang'an*, vol. 2, 12–13.
[82] Lin to Yao and Wang, 1842, A Ying, *Yapian zhanzheng wenxue*, vol. 2, 807–08; Memorial by Lin Zexu, 6th month, Daoguang 20 (Sept. 26–Oct. 24, 1840), ZDLD, *Dang'an*, vol. 2, 466; Memorial by Yišan et al., Jan. 2, 1842, ZDLD, *Dang'an*, vol. 4, 498.
[83] Memorial by Ilibu, Sept. 28, 1840, ZDLD, *Dang'an*, vol. 2, 418; Memorial by Chen Guanjun, Feb. 4, 1841, ZDLD, *Dang'an*, vol. 3, 59; Memorial by Yišan et al., Jan. 2, 1842, ZDLD, *Dang'an*, vol. 4, 498.

against and intimidate the floating British community in Hong Kong Bay, which was categorized as the inner waters, two forts, Chengying and Linchong, were constructed in 1839 on the adjacent peninsula of Jiulong, with three cruising craft stationed in the bay (see figure 2.1).[84] Because of this military threat, the British fleet moved to another anchorage within the outer waters in late 1839. In 1839–1842, the local Qing officials in southeast China also extended their spying networks into the coastal and floating Chinese settlements close to the British vessels in the outer waters. They were successful in inflicting some damage upon these settlements and capturing many culprits accused of being "Han evildoers" serving the British. In short, the 1839–1842 hostilities saw the endeavors of the local Qing authorities to extend control to both the inner-water and outer-water regions on the empire's sea frontier.

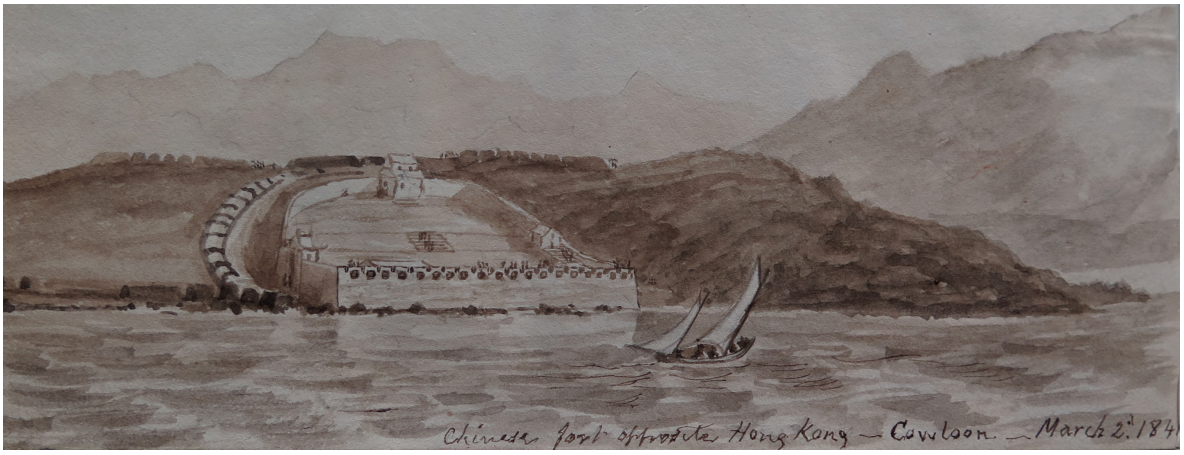


Figure 2.1 One of the two forts constructed in 1839 by the Qing Guangdong authorities in the Jiulong peninsula, which lay within the inner waters (Watercolor by Edward Cree, 1841)[85]

© National Maritime Museum, Greenwich, London

[84] Memorial by Qi Gong and Yiliang, July 16, 1841, ZDLD, *Dang'an*, vol. 3, 560.
[85] Cree, Journals, vol. 5, 1841.

Port Closure and Blockade, Cutting off Provisions, and the Sea Ban

Under the Canton System, the Qing government sometimes closed and blockaded ports, ceased overseas trade (*fengcang* 封艙; lit. "to seal cabins"), and "strictly cut off supplies" (*yanduan jieji* 嚴斷接濟) against "disobedient barbarians" coming from the sea to trade with China. These conventional measures were also targeted at the Chinese people—many being considered as "Han evildoers," "poor Dan people," and "villainous fishers"—who might provision the "defiant" foreigners and/or trade with them.[86] In the early nineteenth century, the Qing Guangdong administration on four occasions closed the port of Guangzhou, the only one open for foreign trade under the Canton System, and stopped provisioning the British. One of them took place in 1808, when the British Rear Admiral William O'Brien Drury intended to occupy the Portuguese settlement of Macao during Britain's war with Napoleonic France, which then occupied Portugal. Another occasion happened in 1834, when the first British superintendent of trade Lord Napier forced his way up the Pearl River by firing at the forts in the delta.[87]

Following the precedents to deal with "insubordinate barbarians" in Guangdong, Commissioner Lin Zexu started his anti-opium crusade by, in late March 1839, restricting supplies to foreigners incarcerated in the Factories, their residence-cum-warehouse in Guangzhou, and suspended foreign trade from late March to May. The waterways south of Guangzhou city "were completely barricaded" with rows of junks.[88] Partly in order to evict the British from Macao after the Lin Weixi Incident in July 1839, the Qing authorities interdicted provisioning the British in the Portuguese settlement in mid-August. Seeing that

[86] For example, see Guan, *Chouhai chuji*, vol. 2, 58–63.
[87] Chang, *Commissioner Lin and the Opium War*, 51–62; Wang, *White Lotus Rebels*, 229–51.
[88] Kerr, *Letters*, 112; Lovell, *The Opium War*, 66.

the import of opium from the outer waters persisted, Lin ordered an indefinite cessation of China's trade with Britain in December 1839.[89]

In late imperial China, port closure and blockade, bans on maritime trade, and prohibition against supplying those nonsubmissive to state control constituted part and parcel of the well-known policy of "sea ban," which also included depopulating the coast (*qianjie* 遷界) and restricting the activities of Chinese merchant and fishing vessels. In the mid-seventeenth century, the Qing state carried out the sea ban vigorously against the "quasi-governmental commercial enterprise" of Zheng Chenggong (Koxinga) and his successors, which very much depended on waterborne trade and banditry for revenue.[90] Revoked in 1684, the ban was launched on a considerable scale again to suppress the pirate leagues on the Qing-Vietnamese maritime frontier in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries.[91] It was targeted not only at insurgents and raiders on water, but also at those who might sail their craft to provision the unruly on the sea frontier.

In early 1840, when the anti-opium campaign reached its height, the Qing government announced a sea ban against the British on the entire sea frontier of the empire, i.e. the whole maritime regions from northeast China to Guangdong.[92] Throughout the Qing-British hostilities, local Qing officials, in their official correspondence and proclamations, repeatedly prohibited Chinese people, many being criticized as "Han evildoers," from provisioning the

[89] *Canton Press*, Aug. 17, 1839; Memorial by Lin Zexu and Deng Tingzhen, Dec. 14, 1839, ZDLD, *Dang'an*, vol. 1, 742. On the Lin Weixi Incident, see Chang, *Commissioner Lin*, 196–99.
[90] The term is coined by Hang Xing. See "Between Trade and Legitimacy." On the maritime activities of Zheng forces in southeast China in the seventeenth century, see Andrade, *How Taiwan Became Chinese*; Tonio Andrade, *Lost Colony*; Ho, "Sealords."
[91] Murray, *Pirates*; Wang, *White Lotus Rebels*, 81–109.
[92] Memorial by Zeng Wangyan, Jan. 14, 1840, ZDLD, *Dang'an*, vol. 1, 768–69.

"barbarian craft."[93] On some occasions, the Qing authorities forbad the provisions trade vigorously by sending naval forces to intimidate and surprise Chinese provisions dealers.[94]

During the anti-British war, Qing provincial officials in northern China wrote in their memorials that stopping provisions, closing and blocking ports, strengthening maritime defense, and depopulating threatened coastal areas constituted part and parcel of the strategy of "strengthening the walls and clearing the countryside" (*jianbi qingye*) against the "English rebels" or "barbarian bandits" on the sea frontier.[95] The *jianbi qingye* strategy had a deep historical root, traceable to the local suppression of rebels on the internal frontier of the Han River highlands in the late Ming. The White Lotus Rebellion during the Qianlong-Jiaqing transition (1794–1804) saw the application of *jianbi qingye* by local administrators in the same localities.[96]

The inner-outer paradigm shaped the Qing's maritime prohibition in 1839–1842. As many contemporary Qing officials admitted, it was unfeasible to implement a complete sea ban on the sea frontier given the long and tortuous coastline and countless seaports.[97] As far as the blockade of waters is concerned, the sea ban during the Qing-British hostilities actually only involved blockades of the inner waters, waters near the coast, and some sections of inner rivers and canals neighboring the sea.[98] According to a contemporary British narrative of the Qing-British War, on the eve of the British attack on Zhenhai city in October 1841, the Yong River in Zhejiang province "was strongly staked across just within the entrance . . . A little

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[93] For example of such interdictions, see *Canton Press*, Sept. 7, Sept. 14, and Nov. 2, 1839, June 27, 1840, Jan. 16, 1841; Attachment to Memorial by Kiyeng, Jan. 6, 1841, ZDLD, *Dang'an*, vol. 2, 708; Memorial by Yuqian, Apr. 23, 1841, ZDLD, *Dang'an*, vol. 3, 380; Memorial by Ijing et al., May 14, 1842, ZDLD, *Dang'an*, vol. 5, 257.
[94] *Canton Press*, Aug. 17, 1839.
[95] Memorial by Xi'en, July 8, 1842, ZDLD, *Dang'an*, vol. 5, 578.
[96] Kuhn, *Rebellion*, 41–45, 75, 142; Wang, *White Lotus Rebels*, 197–200.
[97] Memorial by Yan Boxi, Oct. 22, 1841, ZDLD, *Dang'an*, vol. 4, 236; Memorial by Yan Boxi, Oct. 23, 1841, ZDLD, *Dang'an*, vol. 4, 245.
[98] Memorial by Yišan et al., Sept. 17, 1841, ZDLD, *Dang'an*, vol. 4, 82.

lower down to the southward . . . there was a creek, with a good landing-place at the foot of the hills, and the entrance to it was staked across in a similar manner.[99] The stakes as well as the sunken junks fixed at the entrance to the Yong River and the creek are indicated in map 2.4 below.



Map 2.4 Zhenhai and its environs under British attack in October 1841 (Extracted from E. J. Hebert's map, 1843)[100]

In addition to blockading the inner waters, the wartime sea ban entailed entire or partial closures and blockades of inner ports, and ports adjoining the inner waters and inner rivers on the sea frontier and beyond. When the war spread to the Yangzi River in mid-1842,

[99] Bernard, *The Nemesis*, 256.
[100] Hebert, Map illustrative of the operation, WO 78/990/3/33.

the local Qing authorities tried to blockade ports along the inner rivers in Jiangsu's Yangzi region.[101] The local Qing officials occasionally ordered the blockade of "illicit ports" on the seacoast, which lay within the outer waters, but the attempt either proved futile or remained to be dead letters.[102] Another constituent of the Qing policy of port blockade was the closure of customs stations since the advent of the British Expedition in 1840. This will be examined in Chapter 5.

Across southeast China's littorals, the local Qing authorities blockaded ports, rivers, and creeks by sinking stones, anchors, and craft; installing nets, stockades, and booms; planting "iron gorse" (*tie jili* 鐵蒺藜), iron spikes, wooden stakes, and even the whole trees onto river-beds; berthing and chaining craft that ranged from seagoing vessels to small rafts; constructing embankments and dams to control the flow of waters, leaving a water gate only for navigation. Bamboo, wood fragments, firewood, and grass were also used to damage and clog the wheels of British armed steamers. While the local authorities were responsible for organizing many of the blockades, the local gentry often sponsored the undertaking and sometimes even constructed the blockades themselves.[103] The gentry's effort in helping the Qing authorities to fight the anti-opium campaign and anti-British war will be further examined below.

In order to stop those regarded as Dan, fishers, and "Han evildoers" from provisioning the "outer barbarians," buying opium from them, and assisting them in other ways, the Qing authorities in southeast China sought to restrict their activities within the inner waters and inner ports along China's coast and waterways. In Guangdong, fishing craft were barred from

[101] Memorial by Kiyeng, July 26, 1841, ZDLD, *Dang'an*, vol. 5, 730–31.
[102] Memorial by Yuqian, Apr. 23, 1841, ZDLD, *Dang'an*, vol. 3, 380.
[103] Memorial by Liu Yunke, Aug. 1, 1841, ZDLD, *Dang'an*, vol. 3, 597; Memorial by Muzhang'a et al., Aug. 26, 1841, ZDLD, *Dang'an*, vol. 4, 27; Memorial by Baochang et al., Sept. 28, 1841, ZDLD, *Dang'an*, vol. 4, 120; Memorial by Yišan, Jan 2., 1842, ZDLD, *Dang'an*, vol. 4, 499.

sailing when foreign vessels lay at anchor nearby. All kinds of fishing craft leaving any ports were allowed to carry food for only one day. Other restricted and prohibited items included taels and silver dollars, the media of exchange in the opium trade.[104] In Fujian, after the British attack on Xiamen (Amoy) Island in August 1841, the Qing authorities kept all fishing craft within the inner ports of Fuzhou provincial city.[105] In Zhejiang, although Qing port blockade became relaxed in late 1841 partly due to its disastrous impact on the fishing and seafaring population as well as merchant-shippers, craft were allowed to fish in the inner or littoral waters only and were prohibited from going to the outer waters.[106] In Jiangsu, whenever British vessels were present, Chinese fishing and merchant craft were to be impounded and dragged back to nearby ports, and the ports would then be closed.[107] Many Qing provincial officials proposed to confine the activities of Chinese fishing craft and other civilian vessels to inner ports and the inner rivers when the British forces threatened the localities concerned. Many Qing injunctions to cut off supplies to the British were specifically targeted at the Dan and/or fishers departing from inner ports.[108]

Baojia, Aojia*, and the Registration of Households and Craft*

Another conventional mechanism adopted by the Qing state to strengthen control over its subjects on the sea frontier, and also in inland frontier regions, was to reinforce the *baojia*, a dual system of household registration and self-surveillance at a subadministrative level. The Qing inherited the *baojia* system from the Ming. According to the archetype of the *baojia*

[104] Memorial by Lin Zexu, Apr. 27, 1840, ZDLD, *Dang'an*, vol. 2, 67.
[105] Memorial by Baochang, Sept. 18, 1841, ZDLD, *Dang'an*, vol. 4, 121; Memorial by Yuqian, July 27, 1840, ZDLD, *Dang'an*, vol. 2, 205.
[106] Memorial by Liu Yunke, Dec. 28, 1841, ZDLD, *Dang'an*, vol. 4, 458.
[107] Memorial by Yuqian, Mar. 17, 1840, ZDLD, *Dang'an*, vol. 2, 44.
[108] For example, see Memorial by Yuqian, July 27, 1840, ZDLD, *Dang'an*, vol. 2, 205; Memorial by Qi Gong, May 2, 1841, ZDLD, *Dang'an*, vol. 3, 403; Memorial by Qi Gong, July 6, 1841, ZDLD, *Dang'an*, vol. 3, 538; Memorial by Xi'en, July 8, 1842, ZDLD, *Dang'an*, vol. 5, 577–78.

system in the Qing, every ten households were arranged into one *pai* 牌 under the leadership of a *paizhang* 牌長 or *paitou* 牌頭. Every ten *pai* formed a *jia* 甲, its head being a *jiazhang* 甲長 or *jiatou* 甲頭. Every *jia* constituted a *bao* 保 led by a *baozhang* 保長 or *baozheng* 保正.[109] Householders within the same *pai* were mutually responsible for the others' misdeeds: if a householder committed a crime and got punished, other householders within the same *pai* who knew the crime but failed to report it to local authorities were to be punished. *Baojia* heads were obliged to report crimes and delinquencies to the local administration and, in many cases, capture criminals. As Kung-chuan Hsiao puts it, the Qing government employed the *baojia* "as a device to watch and check the number, movements, and activities of the people, through agents selected from the local inhabitants themselves." "[L]ocal officials supervised its operation without taking any direct part in it."[110]

As "an instrument of police control," the *baojia* system was locally reinforced in various degrees in times of banditry, local unrest, and political-social upheavals throughout the late imperial period.[111] It was implemented in a variety of forms in different villages, towns (*zhen* 鎮), and cities in the hinterland, and also in some areas inhabited by non-Han people and frontier regions in the Ming and Qing empires. Despite the regional variations, and despite the ineffectiveness of the *baojia* in many regions as historians have frequently highlighted, the entire Qing period witnessed the intermittent state extension of the *baojia* to border regions across the empire. As late as the early twentieth century, for example, the Qing state expanded the *baojia* system to the newly pacified internal borderland of Sichuan's Kham

[109] Hsiao, *Rural China*, 28.
[110] Ibid., 28, 46.
[111] Ibid., 277.

region adjoining Tibet.[112] For local Qing administrators, the *baojia* was a measure to eliminate potentially heterodox, unruly, and evil elements in border areas populated by indigenes and Han immigrants, many of who were labeled as "Han evildoers." In the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, for example, the Qing authorities extended the *baojia* system to "Miao villages" (*miaozhai* 苗寨) in southwest China to prevent the "Han evildoers" from in-migrating, committing misdeeds, exploiting the Miao, and inciting them to upheavals.[113]

In addition to being a mutual-surveillance system, the *baojia* was a *de facto* census system, under which the local Qing governments kept registers of the households' male members. The registered households were required to pay taxes and, until the early eighteenth century, provided labor corvée to the government.[114] In Qing Taiwan, the "cooked savages" (*shufan* 熟番) in contemporary records were the aborigines registered as householders and paying taxes to the state, whereas the "raw savages" (*shengfan* 生番) lay "wholly outside the state population" and were subject to neither official registration nor taxation.[115] The Qing extension of the *baojia* system to non-Han natives in borderlands, a process starting in the Ming, can thus be regarded as an extension of Qing administrative, financial, and social control to maritime and inland frontier regions.[116]

There were various kinds of households registered under the *baojia* across the Qing Empire. By the time of the 1839–1842 Qing-British hostilities, the *baojia* system and household registration had been an indispensable instrument for the Qing government to

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[112] Wang, *China's Last Imperial Frontier*.
[113] Atwill, *The Chinese Sultanate*, 57; Bello, *Opium*.
[114] As Hsiao has argued, it was the *lijia* system that was originally designed to execute the function of keeping registers of taxable households. In the mid-eighteenth century, however, the *lijia*'s task of registering households was transferred to the *baojia*, and "in many instances, even the matter of tax collection went into the hands of *pao-chia* agents." See Hsiao, *Rural China*, 35. On the *lijia* system and its tax-collecting function in Qing China, see Hsiao, *Rural China*, 84–143; Liu, *Zai guojia*.
[115] Teng, *Taiwan's Imagined Geography*, 28.
[116] Shepherd, *Statecraft*.

maintain control—however tenuous—and strengthen rule over the sea frontier. On the sea frontier, by the time of the Opium War, there were fishing-households, "salt-households" (*zaohu* 灶戶), "boat-households," and, exclusively in Guangdong, Dan-households.[117] Take the fishing-household as an example. The Qing authorities registered people who practiced fishery as *yuhu*, thereby keeping records of their origin, occupation, and the type of their craft. Fishing taxes (*yuke* 漁課), ship taxes (*chuanchao*), and salt taxes (*yanshui* 鹽稅) were levied from fishing-householders, boat-householders, and salt-householders.[118] In the aforementioned "emancipation edict," the Yongzheng emperor intended to allow the Dan to "be included in the household registers along with ordinary people," thereby incorporating them into the Qing state and local society.[119] Like other "commoners of good standing" (*liangmin* 良民), the "emancipated" Dan were allowed to build houses or sheds and become farmers on land.[120] In Qing times, many islanders and many of those living in seaside or riverside sheds or settling in coastal villages were registered under the *baojia*, or the *aojia* system described below.[121] This was partly to prevent clandestine trade and robbery both on land and on water.

While the targets of the *baojia* system were both Han and non-Han peoples across the empire, the *aojia* system was specifically targeted at Chinese people and craft in the coastal waters and on rivers, and was implemented in Zhejiang, Fujian, and Guangdong provinces only, including Hainan and Taiwan. The *aojia* can be traced back to the mid-Ming, when "Japanese pirates" (*wokou* 倭寇) was rampant along the southeastern coast. The Qing state

[117] Chen, "Shuilu jian," 100.
[118] Yang, "Government Registration"; Yin, *Ming Qing Changjiang*, 353–67.
[119] Ye, "Notes," 85.
[120] *Qing Shizong Xianhuangdi shilu*, vol. 81.
[121] Chen, "Shuilu jian," 93–97.

inherited the system.[122] As Chen Zhiguo and Yang Peina have argued, the *aojia* was in fact a variation of the *baojia*. The *aojia* can be classified into two types, one targeted at people and another at vessels.[123] Roughly speaking, the first type of *aojia* was similar to the *baojia* system described above. Regarding the second type, *ao* 澳 or *jia* was a unit of craft functioning as a mutual security group. Usually ten craft, and sometimes five, were organized into one *ao* or *jia*, within which the members were mutually responsible for the others' activities. Sometimes called the *chuanjia* 船甲, the *aojia* was concomitant with craft registration.[124]

The *aojia* system is a good example of the efforts of the Qing government to manipulate land settlers to control people living by the coast and waterways or working afloat. *Aojia* 澳甲 or *aozhang* 澳長, chiefs of every ten *jia* or *ao* installed at different bays (*ao* 澳), were responsible for investigating the license of the craft within the same *jia* or *ao*. For the Qing authorities, the *aojia* was a means of suppressing waterborne smuggling and banditry. The *aojia* system regulated not only the activities of craft of different kinds but also their construction, purchase, sale, and armament. To facilitate the *aojia*'s self-surveillance function, constructors and owners of craft within the same unit were often required to obtain a pledge from the "neighbors" (*linyou* 鄰佑 or *zulin* 族鄰) and *ao* headmen. Moreover, craft owners, sailors, steersmen, and even passengers were required to sign a "willing bond of mutual guarantee" (*hubao ganjie* 互保甘結), under which the pledgers were mutually responsible for any misdeeds committed by other signatories in littoral regions.[125]

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[122] He and Faure, "Introduction," 6–7; "Liu, "Qing zhengfu"; *Ming Shizong Suhuangdi shilu*, vol. 189; *Ming Shenzong Xianhuangdi shilu*, vol. 503.
[123] Chen, "Shuilu jian," 93–102; Yang, "Pinhai," 186. Other variations of the *baojia* imposed on Chinese craft in the Qing period included *lianjia* 聯甲 and *yujia* 漁甲.
[124] For example, see *Qing Gaozong Chunhuangdi shilu*, vol. 750; *Qing Xuanzong Chenghuangdi shilu*, vol. 403.
[125] Chen, "Shuilu jian."

Variations of the *aojia* system were imposed on different kinds of craft. For fishing craft working in pair, every ten pairs were organized into one *jia*. "Small fishing craft" (*xiao guchuan* 小罟船) and "Dan craft" (*danchuan* 蛋船) were singled out respectively and organized into different *jia*.[126] The registration of different sorts of craft under the *aojia* also facilitated the Qing collection of taxes from the registered. The *ao* chiefs helped the Qing government collect taxes by checking the craft under their supervision.[127]

During the Qing's empirewide anti-opium campaign in the late 1830s and early 1840s, which began before Lin's crusade against opium in Guangdong, the Qing authorities in maritime provinces, hinterland, and border regions as far inland as Xinjiang elaborated in their memorials the reinforcement of the *baojia* system in or its extension to cities, towns, villages, islands, and even mountains to root out opium smokers and those associated with the opium traffic and sale, both on land and on water. In the empire's inland borderlands, through registering households under the *baojia*, the Qing authorities sought to collect geographic and demographic information of different localities in order to eradicate opium smoking and the overland opium trade. On inland borders, for example in southwest China and Xinjiang, the registered people included not only the Han Chinese but also indigenous people, many of who were *yi* or *fan* in official records.[128]

As an anti-opium measure, the Qing Guangdong authorities registered the "outer barbarians" along with Chinese people in the Portuguese settlement of Macao in mid-1939. Thanks to the registration, the Qing authorities acquired a census, accurate or not, of the whole Macao population, according to which there were 720 households of 5,612 "Western

[126] Lu, *Guangdong haifang*, vol. 33, *fanglue* 22, *baojia*.
[127] Yang, "Pinhai," 186–99; Yang, "Government Registration."
[128] Bello, *Opium*; Memorial by Tohombu, May 11, 1841, ZDLD, *Dang'an*, vol. 3, 413.

Ocean barbarians" (*Xiyang yiren* 西洋夷人), fifty-seven households being British.[129] Moreover, Commissioner Lin sought to secure bonds from foreigners pledging not to import opium into China under pain of heavy punishment.[130] Resembling the campaign to eradicate the "opium problem" on the Qing Empire's inland frontiers, the anti-opium crusade starting in 1839 on the sea frontier saw the Qing attempt to strengthen social control over people, Chinese and "barbarian" alike, through the *baojia* system and mutual pledge mechanism.

During their war against the British, the Qing officials in regions threatened by the enemies, and in the littoral regions in particular, reiterated the consolidation and extension of the *baojia* system to eliminate actual or possible "Han evildoers" trading with or working for the "outer barbarians" and also villains committing banditry.[131] In Guangxi province, craft on rivers were registered based on the *baojia*.[132] In Shandong province, the Qing authorities extended the *baojia* implemented in "inner land" to outlying islands. They registered islanders as household members, many being fishing-householders. During the registration process, the Qing Shandong authorities also investigated the geography of some islands and the seacoast.[133] Such an endeavor constituted part of the Qing efforts to subject unregistered people on the sea frontier to administrative, economic, and social control, thereby incorporating them into the empire, since the rescinding of the coastal depopulation in the late seventeenth century.

Before the advent of the British Expedition in China in mid-1840, the Qing authorities in Guangdong and Fujian paid much focus on improving the *aojia* system in major ports to

[129] Proclamation by Liu Kaiyu and Jiang Li'ang, June 8, 1839, FO 682/1972/36; Memorial by Lin Zexu, Sept. 18, 1839, ZDLD, *Dang'an*, vol. 1, 682–83.
[130] Chang, *Commissioner Lin*, 179–88.
[131] For example, see Memorial by Na'erjing'e, Apr. 2, 1842, ZDLD, *Dang'an*, vol. 5, 143–44.
[132] Memorial by Liang Zhangju, Apr. 23, 1841, ZDLD, *Dang'an*, vol. 3, 377.
[133] Memorial by Tohombu, May 11, 1841, ZDLD, *Dang'an*, vol. 3, 413; Memorial by Tohombu, Nov. 29, 1841, ZDLD, *Dang'an*, vol. 4, 375–76.

prevent the Chinese littoral population from engaging in the opium trade and provisioning foreign opium vessels. In Guangdong, Lin Zexu ordered *ao* headmen to register and number Chinese craft in ports. He also demanded mutual guarantee (*hubao* 互保) from each unit of five craft, ordering all craft owners to write their name, native place, and the unit of their tithing (*li* 里), *pai*, and *bao* in conspicuous characters on both sides of the canvas and hull.[134] Similar directives were also proclaimed in Macao.[135] In Fujian, it was stipulated that every ten of large Chinese merchant and fishing vessels within the same *ao* and also their *ao* headmen and neighbors should declare in a mutual pledge that the craft concerned transported no opium.[136] Throughout the 1839–1842 Qing-British hostilities, many local Qing officials proposed numbering Chinese merchant and fishing craft as a means to eliminate Han evildoers, inner evildoers, and local villains on the sea frontier.[137]

Some *ao* chiefs, who were local leaders settling on land, played an active role in suppressing the waterborne opium traffic on the sea frontier. In August 1839, a foreign vessel laden with opium as well as some Chinese opium traders arrived in Hanjiang, which lay within the outer waters of Antou in Hui'an district, Fujian. An official cruiser helped the Chinese opium dealers to convey their goods ashore. Some locals discovered their acts and hailed, which propelled the cruiser to fire at the shouters, thereby causing several casualties. Afterward the *aojia* Lin Shiyuan investigated the incident and reported it to the district naval officers, who arrested the culprits concerned accordingly.[138]

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[134] Memorial by Lin Zexu, Apr. 27, 1840, ZDLD, *Dang'an*, vol. 2, 67.
[135] *Canton Press*, Feb. 1, 1840.
[136] Memorial by Wei Yuanlang et al., Oct. 26, 1839, ZDLD, *Dang'an*, vol. 1, 712; Memorial by Muzhang'a, Dec. 16, 1839, ZDLD, *Dang'an*, vol. 1, 747.
[137] For example, see Memorial by Kišan, Aug. 6, 1840, ZDLD, *Dang'an*, vol. 2, 237.
[138] Memorial by Wei Yuanliang, Oct. 26, 1839, ZDLD, *Dang'an*, vol. 1, 712; Memorial by Guiliang et al., Feb. 18, 1840, ZDLD, *Dang'an*, vol. 2, 17.

Through reinforcing or extending the *baojia* and *aojia* systems in different localities, the Qing authorities attempted to deploy local land-based community leaders to control the registered fishers, Dan people, and fishing craft. In Shandong, local officials selected experienced "elders" (*qimin* 耆民) as "community headmen" (*shezhang* 社長) on islands where inhabitants were registered as fishing-householders under the *baojia*.[139] Under the *baojia* and *aojia*, the registered households and craft were required to obtain security guaranteeing their own good behavior from local *baozhang*, *aojia*, neighbors, and/or "local constables" (*dibao* 地保), all being land dwellers thought to possess "good" characters. These local social leaders also signed bonds with the registered householders and people on craft, thereby becoming accountable for their activities. Rather than being a novel strategy, this mutual responsibility mechanism was one of the conventional methods adopted by the Qing state to put people living by the coast and waterways under the control of Chinese land settlers across the empire since the empire's foundation in the mid-seventeenth century.

Water Militia and Conscripted Craft

Similar to Ming times, braves or militias (*yong* 勇) were organized to become the state's auxiliary forces in times of rampant banditry, social unrest, and political revolts in the Qing. Generally speaking, militias were formed in two ways: recruitment (*zhaomu* 召募 or *gumu* 雇募) and *tuanlian*. As a verb, *tuanlian* means "to gather and train"; as a noun, it means the irregular forces thereby assembled. In late imperial China *tuanlian,* as Philip Kuhn has shown,

[139] Memorial by Tohombu, Nov. 29, 1841, ZDLD, *Dang'an*, vol. 4, 375–76.

were usually organized based on the *baojia* system out of the initiatives of local officials and communities when local unrest became serious.[140]

Despite the apparently confusing classification of militias in Qing official records, the water militia was certainly one specific kind of militias. It was entered as a single category into registers (*ce* 冊) sent by local authorities to the Board of Revenue (Hubu 戶部) for reimbursement.[141] During the Qing's anti-opium campaign and anti-British war in 1839–1842, many fishing-householders, sailors on fishing craft, and those labeled as Dan were officially recruited or locally "*tuanlian*-ed" into the water militia. This was at a particularly large scale in some littoral regions densely populated by the aforementioned people in southeast China, including Guangdong's Pearl River Delta region; Fujian's Xiamen Island, Maxiang sub-prefecture (*ting* 廳), and districts of Tong'an, Hui'an, and Jinjiang; Zhejiang's Daishan, Zhenhai, and Shipu districts; and Jiangsu's Chongming district. Though on a smaller scale, water militias were also formed in northern China in 1839–1842.[142]

In addition to fishers and those labeled as Dan, the local Qing authorities recruited Chinese craft of various types during the 1839–1842 Qing-British hostilities. The history of the Qing recruitment of civilian craft into auxiliary naval forces can be traced back to the mid-

[140] Kuhn, *Rebellion*, 31–66.

[141] Memorial by Yišan, Oct. 4, 1841, ZDLD, *Dang'an*, vol. 4, 149. In 1840, a Qing official classified militias into two types according to their duties: "those who are locally assigned to defend on land are called township braves (*xiangyong* 鄉勇); those who can be ordered to set out to sea fighting are called water braves (*shuiyong* 水勇)." See Memorial by Ilibu, Oct. 30, 1840, ZDLD, *Dang'an*, vol. 2, 509–10. This official categorization of militias was very common during the Qing-British hostilities, but it was not the only one. Some officials, for example, distinguished the water militia from the "able-bodied militia" (*zhuangyong* 壯勇), "righteous militia" (*yiyong* 義勇), "trained militia" (*lianyong* 練勇), or "native militia" (*tuyong* 土勇). To make the nomenclature more complicated, while some township-militiamen included fishing-householders who made their living on water, there were also "fishing-militiamen" (*yuyong* 漁勇) recruited from fishers and performing duties exclusively on water. Some township militias carried out duties on water, whereas some others performed duties both on land and on water.

[142] Fishing householders, sailors on fishing craft, and those regarded as Dan were not the only source of water militiamen. Sailors on merchant and official grain vessels, port coolies, salt smugglers (*yanxiao* 鹽梟), river and sea bandits, and even wild goose hunters were also recruited into the water militia. See Li, *Li Xingyuan*, 372; Memorial by Ijing et al., Mar. 6, 1842, ZDLD, *Dang'an*, vol. 5, 57.

seventeenth century, when local fishing and merchant vessels were employed against the Zheng and other rebel and pirate forces in southeast China.[143] As early as the inception of Commissioner Lin's anti-opium campaign in 1839, some Qing officials expressed their worries about the quantity and quality of their own naval craft.[144] Because of the long construction time, scarce construction materials, and heavy construction expense, many local officials were not willing to build a large number of new craft, especially large vessels, on top of the official quota. Moreover, it was difficult for the local Qing authorities to construct craft in places under British threat. Thus, to save time and money, Qing administrators on the sea frontier often turned to Chinese merchants, fishers, boatmen, and even illicit traders for their ready-made craft along the coast and waterways.

Many local Qing officials asserted that Dan people and fishers as well as fishing and Dan craft were respectively pools of ideal water militiamen and civilian craft for Qing naval use. The Qing authorities expected water militiamen to be good at swimming, diving, seafaring, and sailing craft in a stormy weather, and familiar with the sea weather and the location of reefs and hidden shoals.[145] These requirements matched the aforementioned abilities of the Dan, fishers, who were thought to resemble the "sea ghosts," "water ghost," and "water beasts." In 1839–1842, while many censors and yamen underlings proposed to recruit these people, many local officials did enlist them into the water militia.[146]

For the Qing authorities, the recruitment in 1839–1842 of the Dan, fishers, other Chinese people living along the littorals, and civilian craft served the dual yet inseparable

[143] Yang, "Pinhai," 149–72.
[144] Memorial by Tuohunbu, May 2, 1841, ZDLD, *Dang'an*, vol. 3, 401. On the naval strength of the Qing Empire prior to the Opium War, see Elleman, *Modern Chinese Warfare*, 1–34; Mao, *Jindai de chidu*; Rawlinson, *China's Struggle for Naval Development*, 1–18.
[145] Memorial by Yuqian, Feb. 12, 1841, ZDLD, *Dang'an*, vol. 3, 100; Memorial by Yuqian, Apr. 4, 1841, ZDLD, *Dang'an*, vol. 3, 320.
[146] Memorial by Lin Zexu, Sept. 24, 1840, ZDLD, *Dang'an*, vol. 2, 403.

purpose of weakening the enemy's power and stabilizing local society on the empire's sea frontier.[147] In September 1840, on the same day of receiving the edict on his demotion, Commissioner Lin Zexu admitted in a memorial that the enlisted water militiamen were not as able as their reputation indicated. Yet, Lin did not immediately disband the recruits, most of who were thought to be violence-prone, immoral, and indigent, in order to prevent them from becoming land and waterborne bandits or "Han evildoers" who served the British.[148] Moreover, seeing that the livelihoods of many Chinese littoral people were hard hit by the Qing's port closure and sea ban (see below), the Qing court and local authorities were afraid that they would turn to robbery or piracy. In short, in 1839–1842, on the sea frontier, the Qing state struggled to remove "unruly" Chinese subjects from local society by offering them jobs, organizing them into paramilitary groups under the leadership of local authorities, and hiring (if not appropriating) their craft.

Given the negative Qing perceptions of fishers and Dan people, the philosophy behind the Qing enlistment of them and their craft can be summarized, in Lin Zexu's words, as "controlling villains with villains, and using poison against poison" (*yi jian zhi jian*, *yi du gong du* 以奸治奸. 以毒攻毒). Holding a low opinion on water militiamen, the Jiangsu governor Yuqian plainly remarked:

> These water militiamen belong to banditti; [people in] Guangdong call them rascals (*lanzai* 爛崽). Manipulating them to attack barbarians can serve the purpose of using poison against poison. They are unworthy of sympathy even when they suffer casualties. There will be no injury to the Heavenly prestige; at the same time, a local evil can be removed.[149]

[147] Memorial by Shen Heng, July 30, 1840, ZDLD, *Dang'an*, vol. 2, 209–10; Memorial by Song Qiyuan, Sept. 1, 1840, ZDLD, *Dang'an*, vol. 2, 311; Memorial by Lin Zexu, Sept. 24, 1841, ZDLD, *Dang'an*, vol. 2, 404; Memorial by Gao Renjian, Jan. 9, 1841, ZDLD, *Dang'an*, vol. 2, 730.
[148] Memorial by Lin Zexu, Sept. 24, 1840, ZDLD, *Dang'an*, vol. 2, 403–04.
[149] Memorial by Yuqian, Mar. 11, 1841, ZDLD, *Dang'an*, vol. 3, 221.

This strategy exemplifies the Qing attempt to eliminate both the internal "undesirable subjects" and the "outer barbarians" threatening the empire's sea frontier in 1839–1842. Another strategy associated with "using poison against poison" and commonly suggested by local Qing officials during that time was the "stratagem of sowing dissension" (*fanjianji* 反間計), which aimed to cause mutual hostility and suspicion between the "Han evildoers"/"inner evildoers" and "English barbarians"/"outer barbarians."[150] Under the *fanjianji*, the Qing authorities offered rewards to water militiamen—many of whom were actually employed from the suspected or actual "Han evildoers" or "inner evildoers"—to encourage them to behead the "barbarian eyes" (*yimu* 夷目), i.e. the leaders of the British Expedition.[151]

Some local officials devised plans to destroy the "barbarian craft." Figure 2.2 is a proposal dated 1841 by the local Guangdong authorities to defeat British naval vessels in the Pearl River Delta's inner rivers. The vessel on the right is a British ship of war with seventy-four cannons, whereas the two boats on the left belong to a kind of native boat or sampan called *kaiping chuan* 開平船. The Qing authorities regarded many of these sampans as "Dan craft" and those sailing them Dan people. According to the proposal, water militiamen were to sail these sampans covered with provisions or miscellaneous items to burn the enemy craft at night.[152]

[150] For example of memorials in which the stratagem of sowing dissension was suggested, see Memorial by Cai Jiagan, Dec. 23, 1840, ZDLD, *Dang'an*, vol. 2, 648–49.
[151] Memorial by Zhu Chenglie, Apr. 9, 1841, ZDLD, *Dang'an*, vol. 3, 334; Memorial by Yang Fang, Mar. 6, 1841, ZDLD, *Dang'an*, vol. 3, 202.
[152] *Yifei fanjing*, vol. 2, 112; Plan to blow up a foreign ship, FO 931/70.

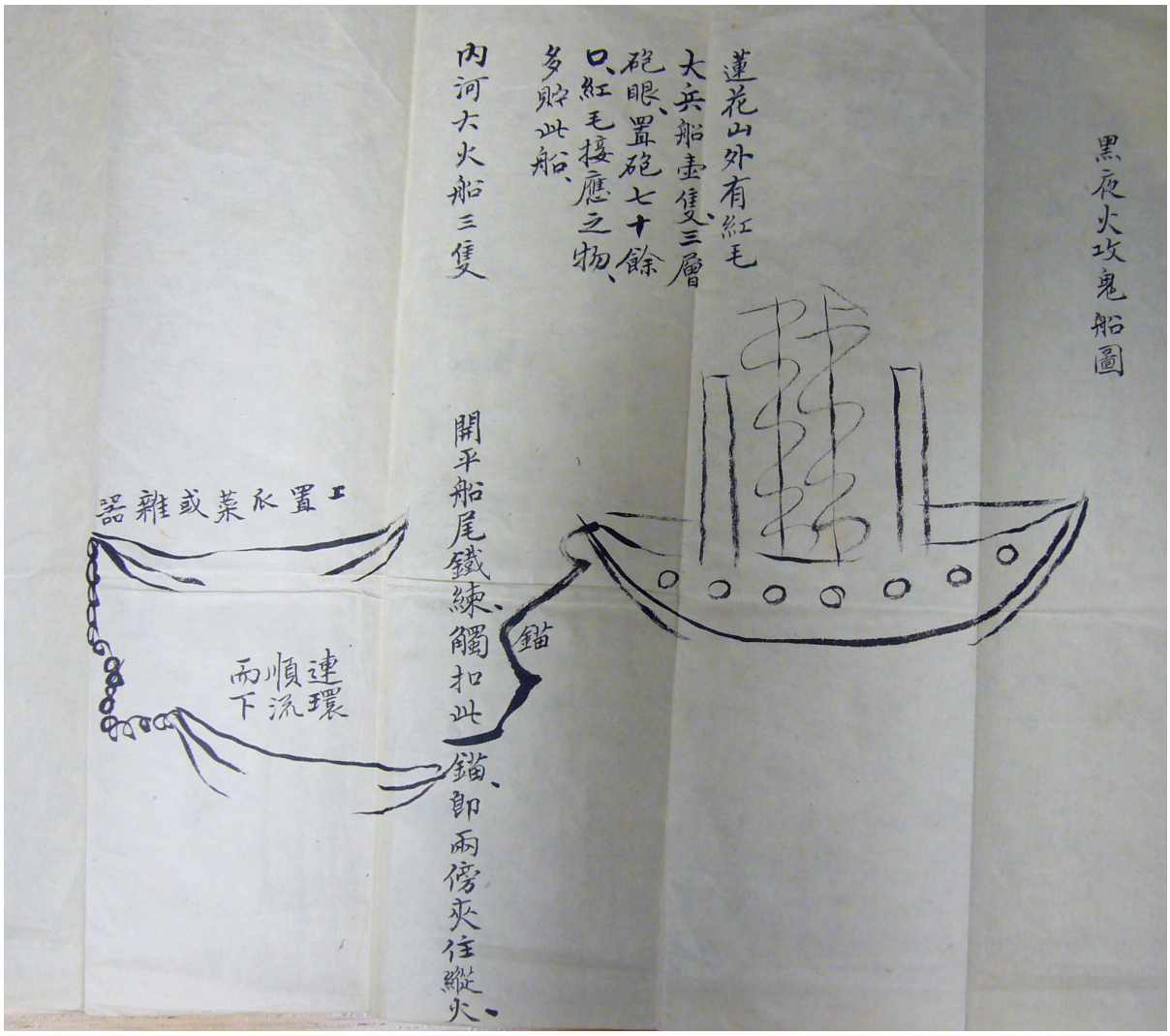


Figure 2.2 "Drawing of fire-attacking devil craft at night" (*heiye huogong guichuan tu* 黑夜火攻鬼船圖)[153]

The Qing deployment of water militiamen did not exist on paper only; they were sometimes sent to surprise the "outer barbarians" and "Han evildoers." In his memorial to the throne reporting the fire attack in late February 1840 against Chinese provisions dealers at a British anchorage in the Pearl River Delta, Lin Zexu complained that numerous "Dan and

[153] Ibid.

fishing craft," the greedy, and Chinese desperadoes went to the outer waters to provision the "villainous barbarians." He then elaborated his strategy of "controlling villains with villains": with the Guangdong military commander-in-chief (*lulu tidu* 陸路提督), Lin taught the recruited fishing-householders and boat-householders how to sail "fire craft" (*huochuan* 火船), each led by one or two officers or soldiers. After the training, the water militiamen hid in outlying islands and bays within the outer waters of the Pearl River Estuary. In the early morning of February 29, 1840, eighty water militiamen were dispatched to the British anchorage for attacking Chinese provisioners. It was reported that in total twenty-three provisions craft of various kinds were burnt, six beachside mat sheds were destroyed, and ten "Han evildoers" were arrested. Lin Zexu confidently concluded that this attack sufficed to dishearten both the "Han evildoers" and "English barbarians."[154]

While enlisting potential and actual "Han evildoers" and "inner evildoers" in the water militia, the Qing authorities kept records of the recruits. In the recruitment process, the prospective candidates were required to provide details about their family and relatives as well as guarantee from a local constable. Each of the successful recruits, with his information recorded on registers, were given a waist badge (*yaopai* 腰牌) as an identity proof. For the local administration, the registers served the dual purpose of making reimbursement and keeping population records to control the recruits.[155]

Apart from provincial, prefectural, and district officials, the local scholar-gentry played an important role in organizing the water militia. To strengthen coastal defense against the opium trade in Xiamen, Chen Rongshi and Chen Rongzhi, respectively a local gentry member in Tong'an district and an elevated scholar (*jüren* 舉人) who were probably within

[154] *Canton Press*, Mar. 7, 1840; Lin Zexu et al., Mar. 7, 1840, ZDLD, *Dang'an*, vol. 2, 27–28.
[155] Memorial by Lin Zexu, Sept. 24, 1840, ZDLD, *Dang'an*, vol. 2, 404.

the same kinship, enrolled four or five hundred water militiamen with the Tong'an magistrate.[156] In many other cases, the gentry cooperated with community heads to form water militias under local official patronage and supervision. Directed by the local authorities, the gentry established bureaus (*ju* 局) for forming both the water militia and township militia. Inside the bureaus, gentry-managers (*shendong* 紳董) collected and allocated the funding. They usually donated the most. Prospective water militiamen had to provide securities acquired from local headmen, elders, or neighbors to the gentry-led bureaus, which then offered each of the successful candidates a waist badge.[157] The local administration sometimes ordered the gentry-managers to select water militiamen and send them to a certain place.

Thus, by patronizing and supervising the semi-unofficial bureaus dedicated to recruiting water militiamen, the local Qing authorities, with the assistance of local social heads living on land, placed the recruited fishers, sailors on civilian craft, and those regarded as Dan under the gentry's regulation. This constituted part of the persistent state efforts to subordinate Chinese people living and/or working on water to Chinese settlers living on land throughout the late imperial period.

Conclusion: Limitations of Taming the Sea Frontier

During the Qing's campaign against opium and war against the British in 1839–1842, the Qing state's measures to "calm" the sea frontier and control both the "outer barbarians"/"barbarian bandits" and "inner evildoers"/"Han evildoers" proved ineffective.

[156] Memorial by Deng Tingzhen, Aug. 28, 1840, ZDLD, *Dang'an*, vol. 2, 298–300; Memorial by Baochang, Sept. 13, 1840, ZDLD, *Dang'an*, vol. 2, 349–50.
[157] *Canton Press*, July 17, 1841; Memorial by Baochang, Sept. 13, 1840, ZDLD, *Dang'an*, vol. 2, 350; Memorial by Lin Zexu, Sept. 24, 1841, ZDLD, *Dang'an*, vol. 2, 404; Memorial by Ilibu, Oct. 30, 1840, ZDLD, *Dang'an*, vol. 2, 509–10; Memorial by Yuqian, May 2, 1841, ZDLD, *Dang'an*, vol. 3, 399–400; Memorial by Liu Yunke, Jan. 22, 1842, ZDLD, *Dang'an*, vol. 4, 560.

During that time, and in the decades that followed, opium was never eradicated from the sea frontier. In 1840–1842, the British Expedition swept across southeast China, attacking, blockading, and occupying vast littoral regions. In the meantime, while many Chinese littoral people went to trade with or serve the British, many others conducted banditry both on land and on water. Their activities, which will be discussed in the following chapters, were prohibited in Qing interdictions against "Han evildoers" and "inner evildoers."

Historians have examined from geographical, military, political, economic, and social perspectives why the Qing's maritime defense, port blockade and sea ban, *baojia* system, and militia recruitment failed to counter the British threats during the 1839–1842 Qing-British hostilities. The reasons included the extensive length of China's coastline, the inferior Qing military, corruption in the Qing administration, the strained Qing finance, and the inability of the Qing state to mobilize its subjects.[158] While these reasons are generally valid, there are two limitations of the sea frontier controlling measures during the Qing-British hostilities that have been largely neglected in the previous scholarship but are closely related to the themes of the present chapter.

The first limitation is the Qing rulers' application of the inner-outer paradigm in "taming" the sea frontier. As shown above, the Qing's maritime defense, port closure and blockade, and sea ban were largely limited to the inner waters and inner ports. The *baojia* and *aojia* systems only served to control the activities of the registered people and craft in inner-water regions. In most cases, Qing control over the outer waters was weak at best and totally absent at worst. The local civilian and military authorities were unable to restrict the activities of the "English barbarians," fishers, the Dan, and also Chinese craft in most of the regions within the outer waters. As Lin Zexu admitted,

[158] Liu, *Zhong Ying huopao*; Mao, *Jindai de chidu*; Mao, *Tianchao*.

> As to stipulating that fishers are only allowed [to fish] in the inner waters, this is understandable, but as they are allowed to go to sea, it is difficult to judge how far [they will go]. So, how can they be restricted in the waters? Even if [we] order naval forces to inspect and ban [the seafaring activities], they hide in daytime and move at nighttime, escaping when being traced. With this, there is nothing we can do.[159]

Although the Qing authorities sometimes sought to extend control to some outer-water regions on the sea frontier (see Chapter 6), the fact that the British usually sailed freely in the outer waters indicates the Qing's inability to impose effective control over most of the outer waters. Fissures in Qing control were thus scattered about the sea frontier's outer-water regions, where many Chinese, as Chapter 6 will show, conducted their own socioeconomic activities such as provisioning the British.

Another weakness of the Qing state in "calming" the sea frontier during the 1839–1842 Qing-British hostilities is the dilemma of subjugating both the "outer barbarians"/"English barbarians" and "inner evildoers"/"Han evildoers" simultaneously. This difficulty is exemplified by the Qing imposition of the sea ban. The Qing authorities worried that if ports were open and Chinese craft were kept outside the ports, they might become *hanjian* helping the British or waterborne bandits.[160] Port closure, however, would adversely affect the lives of the vast maritime and river population, thereby driving them to robbery or other evil deeds. The dilemma is well reflected in the hardcore anti-British Mongol official Yuqian's attitude toward port closure. In his memorial written in early 1841 after the British first retreat from Zhoushan Island, he underscored the primary importance of strictly forbidding fishers from provisioning the British. Nevertheless, he strongly opposed closing

[159] Memorial by Lin Zexu et al., Apr. 27, 1840, ZDLD, *Dang'an*, vol. 2, 67.
[160] Memorial by Liu Yunke, Dec. 28, 1841, ZDLD, *Dang'an*, vol. 4, 458.

ports, contending that this would seriously affect the livelihoods of the coastal population from Jiangsu to Guangdong. Accepting his proposal, the Beijing court finally abandoned the closing of ports in Zhejiang and Jiangsu.[161]

Another good example of the Qing state's difficulties in controlling the "outer barbarians" and eliminating the "Han evildoers" at the same time concerns the mobilization and demobilization of water militiamen. Many Qing officials did not wholeheartedly support recruiting "undesirables" as paramilitary forces, as sufficient Qing forces were necessary to counterbalance the violent-prone water militiamen, who easily turned to evil deeds. The Qing authorities were also afraid of being unable to demobilize the recruits, who might then become bandits or "Han evildoers." Deserters from the water militia were another source of social instability. When water militiamen were dispatched to attack the British, for example in the Qing counterattack on Zhoushan in early 1842, many water militiamen escaped after the assaults failed. As the Qing authorities believed and Western witnessing accounts show, many runaways were reduced to land robbery or waterborne banditry during the Opium War and in its aftermath in the mid-nineteenth century.[162] This indicates the failure of the local Qing authorities to eradicate the potential villains by the sea frontier-controlling measure of recruiting them into the water militia.

Nevertheless, while Qing naval control over the sea frontier was weak in most regions within the outer waters, and while the control became more and more feeble when the Qing suffered one defeat after another from the British in 1839–1842, Qing administrative and military grip on the sea frontier during that time should not be underestimated. At least until

[161] Memorial by Yuqian, Apr. 6, 1841, ZDLD, *Dang'an*, vol. 3, 316; Proclamation by the Grand Council, Apr. 13, 1841, ZDLD, *Dang'an*, vol. 3, 349; Proclamation by the Secretariat, Apr. 16, 1841, ZDLD, *Dang'an*, vol. 3, 359–60.
[162] *Canton Press*, Mar. 5, 1842; *Friend of China*, Jan. 19, 1843.

the arrival of the British Expedition, Qing naval forces in Guangdong, as Western records suggest, were fairly effective in suppressing the opium trade along the coast.[163] Many Chinese were arrested for being opium sellers or provisions dealers trading with the British. Moreover, many Chinese craft were detained at ports closed by the local authorities. As the chapter has shown, the *aojia* system to some extent helped suppress the opium traffic, whereas water-militiamen were sometimes useful in fire attacks against the "Han evildoers" in the outer waters where British merchant craft stayed. In short, the Qing authorities were able to maintain a certain degree of control over the sea frontier as a whole in 1839–1842. Qing control over China's littoral regions during that time will be further discussed in the following chapters.

While the Qing government struggled to control the empire's sea frontier during the anti-opium campaign, the arrival of the British Expedition in mid-1840 signified the rise of British military and naval power in southeast China's coastal and waterway regions. Shifting the focus from the Qing state to the British expeditionary force, the next chapter will study the advance of the British Expedition, showing how the expeditionary force established itself in China's vast littoral regions, which led to the formation of a British frontier regime in southeast China during the Opium War.

[163] Bingham, *Narrative*, vol. 2, 61–99.

PART II: THE FORMATION OF WATER BORDERS IN SOUTHEAST CHINA

Chapter 3:

"Entering the River from the Sea": The Rise of British Power and the British Imperial Frontier in China

It will be inevitable undoubtedly that in the operation of the campaign the internal trade of the country will be altogether interrupted. This is a legitimate measure of War, by which we may hope to distress and coerce the Government of China.

Earl of Ellenborough to Hugh Gough, March 23, 1842[1]

Introduction

Following London's declaration of war against the "Tartar regime" in late 1839, the British Indian authorities dispatched an expeditionary force to China in 1840. Its advent in Guangdong province in mid-1840 signified the rise of British military and naval power in modern China. In the early nineteenth century, the British naval presence in the country was usually unimpressive and limited to the Pearl River Delta region of Guangdong province, the southernmost of the Qing Empire.[2] Between the commencement of Commissioner Lin's anti-opium crusade in March 1839 and the British Expedition's arrival, in China's waters there were at most three British men-of-war, whose activities were confined to Guangdong. In 1839, the British superintendent of trade in China Charles Elliot

[1] Earl of Ellenborough to Gough, Mar. 23, 1842, PRO 30/12/26/3.

[2] Fox, *British Admirals*, 29–34. The British military threat to the Pearl River Estuary region, however, was not totally absent in the early nineteenth century. "Exploiting the chaotic situation [caused by pirates] in Chinese waters and the simultaneous Great Wars in Europe (1792–1815), Britain launched two naval expeditions to occupy the longtime Portuguese settlement of Macao in 1802 and 1808. Together they represent the most critical confrontation between the Chinese and the British prior to the Opium War." See Wang, *White Lotus Rebels*, 229. Moreover, in 1834, two British frigates sailing up the Pearl River broke through the Qing defense at Humen and skirmished with the Qing forts. See Graham, *The China Station*, 44–64.

even needed to contract private merchantmen, including opium clippers, to protect the precarious British community in the Pearl River Estuary and perform other tasks on water.[3]

In sharp contrast to the limited British power before the advent of the expeditionary force, the British Expedition swept over huge coastal, riverine, and canal regions in southeast China from mid-1840 to the conclusion of peace in August 1842. Although they fought in China for only two years, their advance, assault, blockade, and occupation had a profound impact on the economy and society of southeast China's littoral regions during the war and in its aftermath. Part II, which includes this chapter and the next, will examine how the British Expedition's military and political penetration transformed huge maritime and waterway regions in southeast China into what the thesis conceptualizes as "water borders." As Parts II and III will show, southeast China's water borders during the war were characterized by clashes between the weakening Qing Empire and the emergent British imperial frontier in China, a destabilized Chinese socioeconomic order, and an absence of any militarily hegemonic power on water.

The present chapter will trace the escalation of British power and the concomitant emergence of a British imperial frontier in Guangdong, Fujian, Zhejiang, and Jiangsu provinces in 1840–1842. The British Expedition advanced from the Pearl River Estuary up along the seaboard to the mouth of the Yangzi River in Jiangsu, "entered the river from the sea" (*you hai ru jiang* 由海入江), and sailed 200 miles upriver to the provincial capital of Nanjing.[4] Conquering and ruling a number of China's insular, coastal, and riverine territories and imposing an extensive (but incomplete) blockade of China's waters, the

[3] Lubbock, *The Opium Clippers*, 172–74.
[4] Proclamation to Kiyeng (Qiying) et al., July 19, 1842, in ZDLD, *Dang'an*, vol. 5, 662.

expedition established a wartime frontier regime in southeast China, a great (but not whole) section of which overlapped with the southern part of the Qing Empire's sea frontier.

The chapter will also investigate the destabilizing impact, both deep and spiraling, short-term and long-term, of the 1840–1842 British imperial expansion on China' littoral regions. The British military and naval activities in 1840–1842 greatly interrupted the socioeconomic lives of many Chinese littoral people in southeast China and beyond. The British invasion disturbed water transportation in war-stricken regions, the most notable ones being eastern Zhejiang, Guangdong's Pearl River Delta, and Jiangsu's Yangzi and canal regions. Moreover, it had a far-reaching impact on regional, national, and international trade in Chinese craft. Its impact on China's maritime and riverine economies and societies was not only short-term; the war in some ways triggered the decline of Chinese waterborne trade in China that began in the second half of the eighteenth century. The rise of British power in China in 1840–1842, thus, destabilized the Chinese socioeconomic order of vast maritime and waterway regions in southeast China, one of the main features of China's "water borders" during the Opium War.

The second part of the chapter, and also Chapter 5, will contextualize Chinese waterborne trade and transportation during the Opium War in the Ming-Qing period. Discussions on the war's impact on trade and transportation in Chinese craft will be preceded by a brief introduction to the trade and transportation in late imperial times, which is based on the rich Mainland Chinese, Taiwanese, Japanese, and Western secondary literature on the topic.

The British Expedition in China, 1840–1842

Advance, Attack, and Occupation

Before analyzing the activities of the China Expedition in 1840–1842, a brief introduction to its leadership structure is in order. It reflects that the "China War," as contemporary Westerners called it, was a British diplomatic, naval, military, and political undertaking involving negotiations with the Qing government, battles both on land and water, and the conquest and rule of Chinese regions. While the British governor-general of India was the supreme commander-in-chief overseeing the operations in China, the highest authorities in the expeditionary force were the plenipotentiary (or joint plenipotentiaries sometimes) and the military and naval commanders-in-chief.[5] The plenipotentiary reported to the Foreign Office, the naval commander-in-chief to the Admiralty, and the military commander-in-chief to the War Office. They are what the thesis calls the "British Expedition authorities." The plenipotentiary was chiefly responsible for tackling diplomatic relations with the Qing, whereas the two commanders-in-chief were primarily responsible for designing and executing war plans.[6] In addition to undertaking campaigns, the military and naval commanders supervised the rule of conquered land regions and their neighboring waters respectively. On some occasions, however, the plenipotentiary and the two commanders made joint decisions with regard to the fighting and the occupation of wartime possessions. The leadership of the China Expedition, therefore, indicates that the British fought the

[5] Graham, *The China Station*, 255. In 1841, Charles Elliot and the naval-commander-in-chief J. Gordon Bremer, who was succeeded by William Parker, were joint plenipotentiaries for a short time. See Fox, *British Admirals*, 55–56.

[6] The plenipotentiary often advised the two commanders-in-chief on war plans, but he usually did not interfere with the military and naval operations unless he thought that peace negotiation with the Qing authorities was at stake.

1840–1842 war on a diplomatic and military level with the practical dimension of ruling the occupied territories in China.

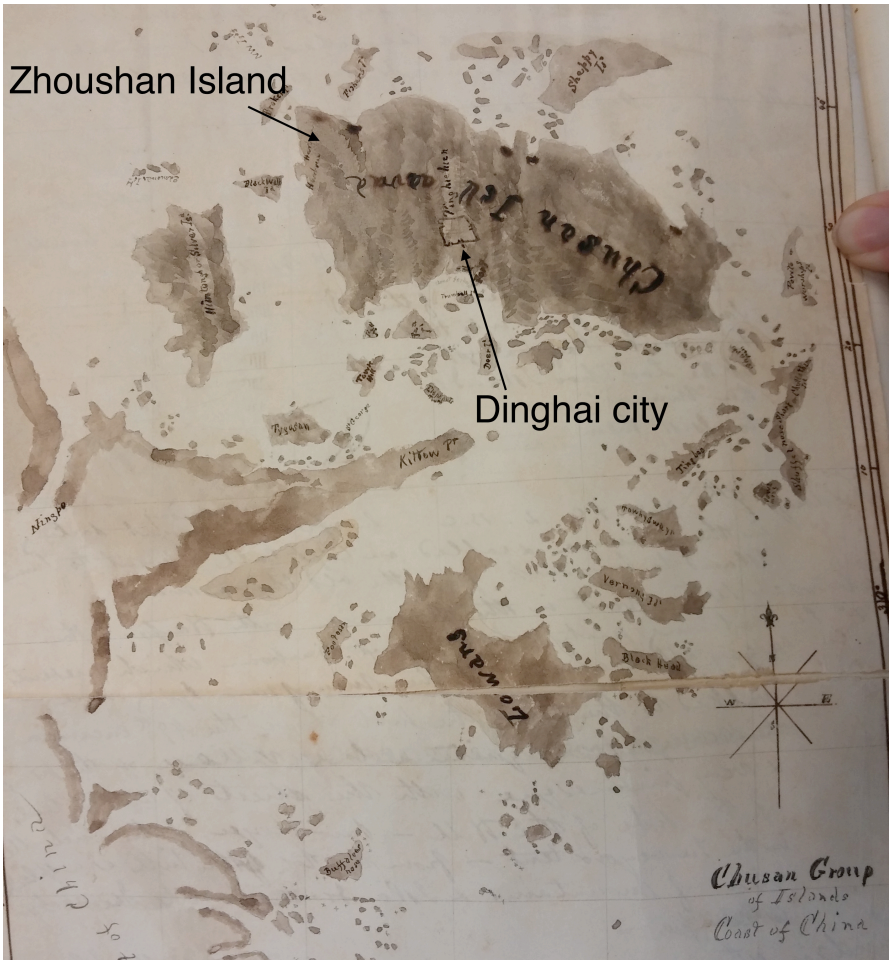
There have already been numerous detailed contemporary and scholarly accounts of the British fighting in the China War.[7] Rather than repeating the narratives in these works, the following is a summary of the activities of the expeditionary force supplemented with lesser-known details of the British attack and occupation, which highlights the expedition's deep penetration into huge maritime and waterway regions in southeast China.

Arriving in Guangdong's Pearl River Estuary in June 1840, the first British expeditionary force was composed of thirteen ships of war, four steamers, one surveying schooner, twenty-one troopships and transports, and four British regiments as well as the Bengal Volunteers, Madras Native Infantry, Madras Artillery, and a detachment of Sappers and Miners. The majority of the British fleet sailed northward along the coast to Zhejiang province and, in early July 1840, attacked and occupied the Qing district city of Dinghai and Zhoushan Island (see map 3.1).[8] The British evacuated Zhoushan in late February 1841. In Fujian province, the British and Qing forces were engaged in two skirmishes on the coast of Xiamen Island in July and August 1840. In August 1840, the British military remaining in the Pearl River Estuary conflicted with and dispersed the Qing forces

[7] Comprehensive narratives by contemporary Westerners of the military activities of the British Expedition to China include Bernard, *The Nemesis in China*; Bingham, *Narrative*; Ouchterlony, *The Chinese War*. Representative contemporary Chinese narratives of the war include Wei, *Yisou rukou*; Liang and Shao, *Yifen wenji*. Wei's account of the war was translated into English as early as the late nineteenth century. See Parker, *Chinese Account of the Opium War*. The most detailed scholarly accounts of the course of the Opium War can be found in Fay, *The Opium War*; Mao, *Tianchao de bengkui*.

[8] According to Qing administrative division, from 1688 to 1841 Dinghai (lit. "calming the sea") was a district including not only the district city of the same name but also the countryside of Zhoushan Island and a number of neighboring islands. Before 1688, the district was called Zhoushan (lit. "boat-mountain"), whereas Dinghai was the district that was called Zhenhai after 1688. Having suppressed the Zheng regime in eastern Zhejiang, in 1688 the Kangxi emperor changed the name of Zhoushan district to Dinghai, which indicated a settled status of the locality. The district previously called Dinghai was renamed Zhenhai. See Dinghai xianzhi bianzuan weiyuanhui, *Dinghai xianzhi*, 133–34. The British usually used "Ting-hae" to refer to the district city only. For a study on Zhoushan Archipalego in the late imperial period prior to the British occupation, see Xie, "Dispersal and Regrouping."

stationed at Guanzha (the Barrier) on the neck of land separating the Portuguese settlement of Macao from the northern part of Xiangshan district.[9]



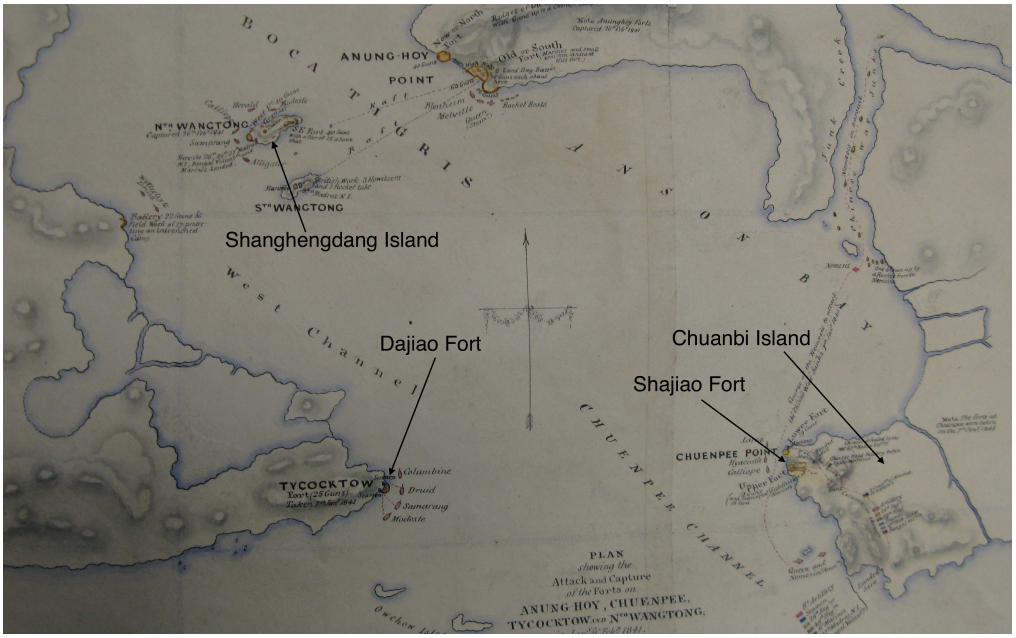
Map 3.1 Zhoushan Archipelago. "Zhoushan" (Chusan) is also the name of the largest island, where Dinghai city is located. (Cree's watercolor, 1840)[10]

© National Maritime Museum, Greenwich, London

In August 1840, the British joint-plenipotentiaries George Elliot and Charles Elliot traveled northward to the mouth of the Hai River (Pei-ho), Zhili province to complain to the

[9] *Canton Press*, Aug. 22, 1840; *Chinese Repository*, vol. 9, no. 4, Aug. 1840, 237–39.
[10] Cree, Journals, vol. 4, 1840.

Qing emperor about Commissioner Lin's anti-British measures. A truce was then reached in October 1840. In late 1840 and early 1841, Charles Elliot, who then became the sole plenipotentiary after George Elliot's resignation, negotiated peace in Guangdong with Kišan (Qishan), the Qing imperial commissioner who replaced Lin. Unsatisfied with the negotiation's progress, Elliot sent the British forces up the Pearl River to destroy, at Humen, Shajiao Fort and Shajiao Fort on January 7, 1841. Chuanbi Island, where Shajiao Fort was located, was under British occupation for a short time in January 1841 (see map 3.2).[11]

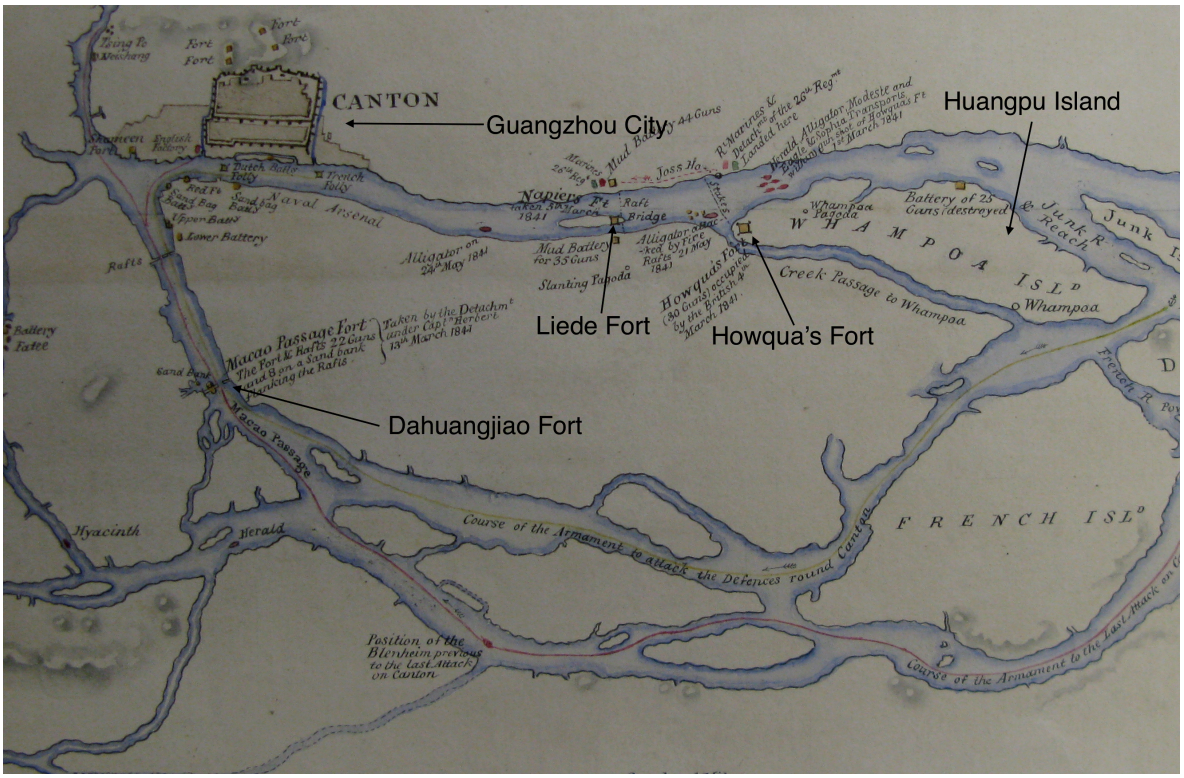


Map 3.2 Humen in the Pearl River Delta. Shajiao Fort, Dajiao Fort, Chuanbi (Chuenpee) Island, and Shanghengdang (North Wangtong) Island are indicated on the map. (Extracted from Hebert's map, 1843)[12]

[11] *Canton Press*, Jan. 23, 1841.
[12] Hebert, Map illustrative of the operation, WO 78/990/3/33.

After the first British campaign in Guangdong, the peace negotiation continued. Based on the so-called "Chuanbi Convention," Elliot directed a small portion of the British forces to occupy Hong Kong Island, 80 miles southeast of Guangzhou city, in late January 1841.[13] Kišan's humbug and the reinforcement of Qing defenses in the Pearl River Delta propelled Elliot to terminate the peace talk again and instruct the expeditionary force to disable all the Qing fortifications in the delta south of Guangzhou. This second campaign in Guangdong from late February to March 1841 resulted in the temporary British occupation of Dahuangjiao Fort, Liede Fort, and "Howqua's Fort," and also Humen's Shanghengdang Island from late February to June 1841 (see map 3.2 above and map 3.3 below).[14] The British also conquered the peninsula of Jiulong (Kowloon) opposite to Hong Kong from around mid-April 1841 to the end of war.[15] The last British battle in Guangdong took place in late May 1841, when the British forces sailed up the Pearl River again, destroyed all the Qing defenses in the vicinity of Guangzhou city, landed in the suburbs, and threatened to attack the provincial capital.

[13] The so-called "Chuanbi Convention" was in fact never concluded, as Elliot and Kišan failed to reach a peace settlement. See Yu, Liu, and Liu, *Xianggang lishi wenti*, 37–43.
[14] Bernard, *The Nemesis*, 135, 140–41.
[15] Bingham, *Narrative*, vol. 2, 219; *Canton Register*, June 22, 1841; Elliot to Palmerston, Mar. 10, 1841, IOR/R/10/72, dispatch no. 10 of 1841; Elliot to Auckland, June 21, 1841, CO 129/1, 210a; Memorial by Qi Gong and Yiliang, July 16, 1841, ZDLD, *Dang'an*, vol. 3, 560; Memorial by Yišan et al., June 5, 1842, ZDLD, *Dang'an*, vol. 5, 585.

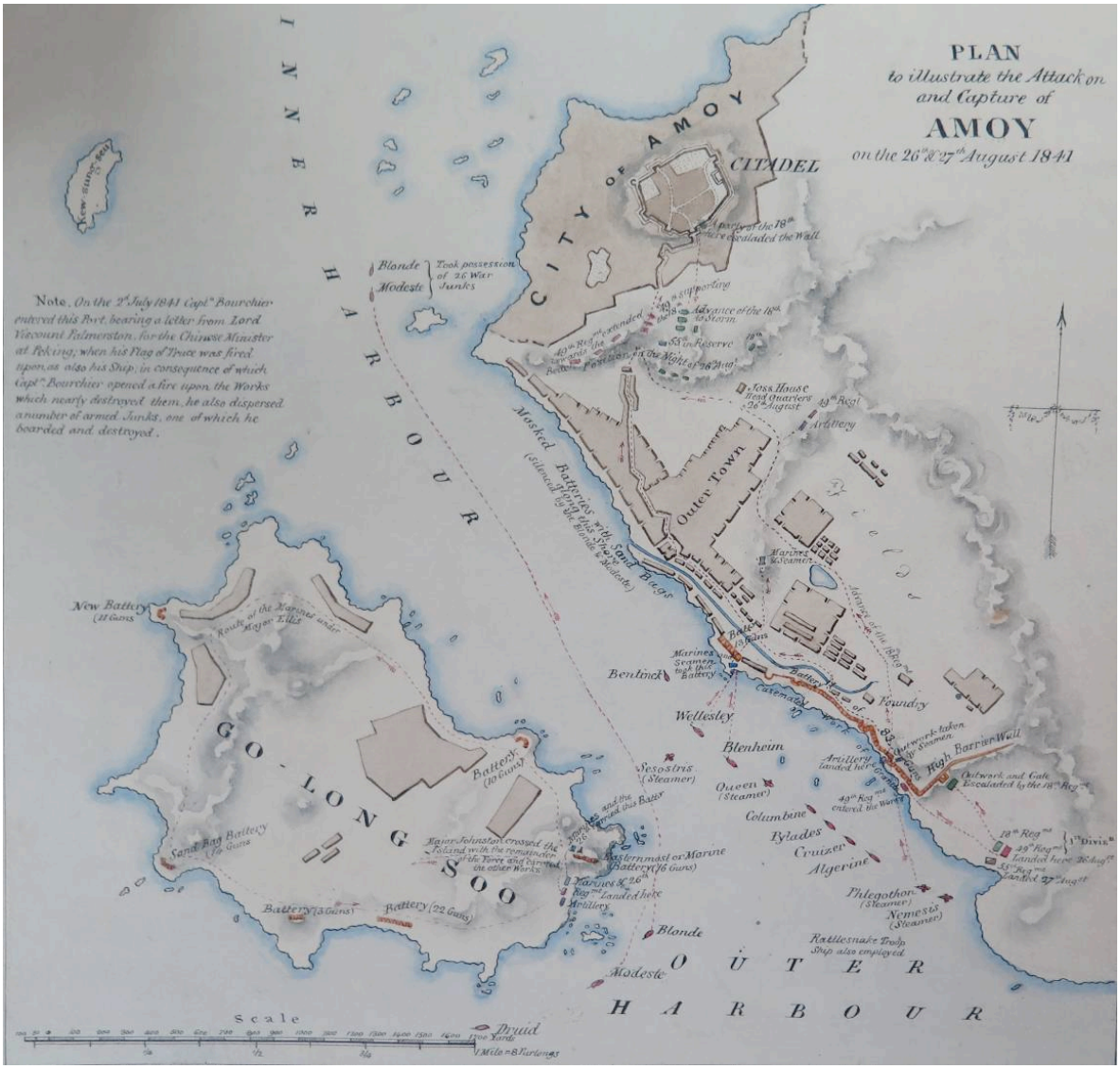


Map 3.3 Guangzhou city and its vicinity in the Pearl River Delta (Extracted from Hebert's map, 1843)[16]

After Henry Pottinger arrived in mid-1841 to replace Elliot as plenipotentiary and the expedition was reinforced, the majority of the British forces sailed northward again. In late August 1841, the expedition struck Xiamen Island and its neighboring isles. They occupied Gulangyu (Go-long-soo), an island separated with Xiamen by a channel (see map 3.4). In the first half of October 1841, the British forces retook Zhoushan Island and, on the mainland of eastern Zhejiang, conquered Zhenhai district city and Ningbo prefectural city along the Yong River. Spending the winter in eastern Zhejiang, the occupying forces had retained Zhenhai and Ningbo cities until May 1842. In late 1841 and early 1842, the British

[16] Hebert, Map illustrative of the operation, WO 78/990/3/33.

routed the Qing forces around the district cities of Cixi, Yuyao, and Fenghua along the Yong River and occupied the cities for a short time.



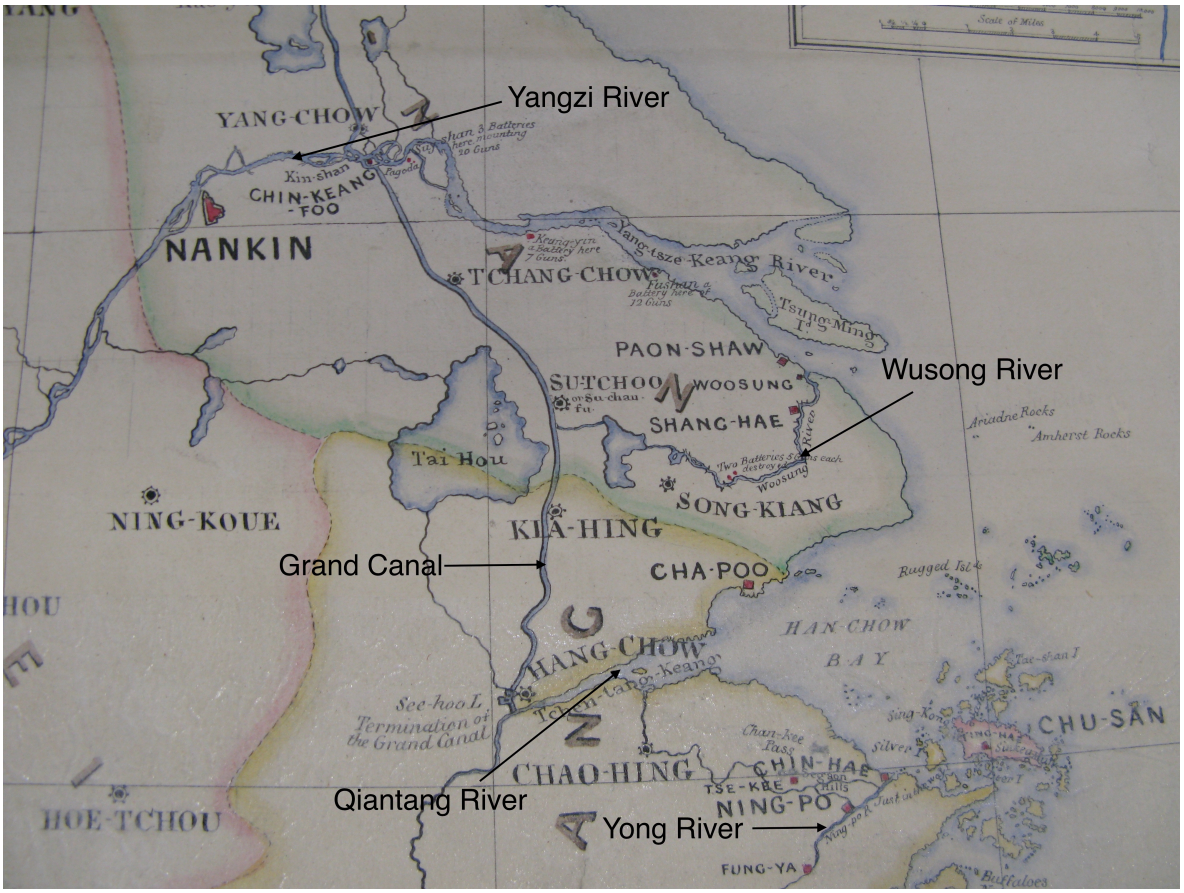
Map 3.4 Western Xiamen and Gulangyu (Extracted from Hebert's map, 1843[17])

In mid-1842, the British extended the scope of war in China. In May, the expedition attacked the walled town of Zhapu adjacent to Hangzhou Bay on the Qiantang River.[18]

[17] Ibid.

Entering the Yangzi River from the sea, they attacked the Qing fortifications at the entrance of the Wusong River and occupied the adjacent district city of Baoshan in Jiangsu province in June 1842. Shanghai district city, which was situated on the Huangpu River, was also taken. A huge portion of the British forces kept advancing up the Yangzi, attacking Zhenjiang prefectural city in July.[19] After the assault, a British detachment was stationed at the foot of Beigu Mountain. The British forces participating in the Yangzi campaign included eleven men-of-war, four troopships, ten steamers, two surveying ships, and forty-eight transports.[20] In late July, the British military arrived in Nanjing, Jiangsu's capital being 200 miles inland from the Yangzi River Mouth (see map 3.5). Without attacking Nanjing, Pottinger signed the Treaty of Nanjing with the Qing official delegates on HMS *Cornwallis* on August 29, 1842, which marked the end of the 1840–1842 China War.

[18] On the British attack against Zhapu, see Crossley, *Orphan Warriors*, 109–13; Stevens, "The Taking of Chapu."
[19] On the British assault against Zhenjiang, see Elliott, "Bannerman and Townsman."
[20] Fay, *The Opium War*, 351.



Map 3.5 Eastern Zhejiang and Jiangsu. Zhoushan (Chu-san), Zhenhai (Chin-hae), Ningbo (Ning-po), Cixi (Tse-kee), Fenghua (Fung-ya), Hangzhou (Hang-chow), Zhapu (Cha-poo), Wusong (Woosung), Baoshan (Paon-shaw), Shanghai (Shang-hae), Suzhou (Su-tchoo), Zhenjiang (Chin-keang-foo), Yangzhou (Yang-chow), and Nanjing (Nankin) are indicated on the map. They are the cities under British threat, attack, and/or occupation during the 1840–1842 China War. The Yong River (Ning-po River), Qiantang River (Tchen-tang-Keang), Wusong River (Woosung River), and Yangzi River (Yang-tse-Keang River), and the southern section of the Grand Canal are indicated on the map. (Extracted from Hebert's map, 1843)[21]

[21] Hebert, Map illustrative of the operation, WO 78/990/3/33.

Not all the British wartime possessions were returned to the Qing government immediately after the conclusion of peace. The Treaty of Nanjing stipulated that Britain would keep Hong Kong in perpetuity. Britain also occupied Gulangyu and Zhoushan temporarily to ensure that the Qing government fulfilled the treaty obligations. British rule in Gulangyu ended in March 1845, British rule in Zhoushan ended in June 1846, and British rule in Hong Kong, excepting the 1941–1945 Japanese occupation, ended as late as 1997.[22] These three islands constituted the British "insular frontier" in China in the 1840s.

Neither did the British forces leave China immediately and completely after the making of peace. The last British naval vessel quitted the Yangzi River as late as early October 1842. Meanwhile, until the same month, a British naval squadron had still been stationed at the foot of Zhaobao Mountain, which commanded the entrance of the Yong River opposite Zhenhai city. The *North Star* steamer had also stayed at the Wusong River Mouth until early November 1842. After the war, some of the expeditionary force remained in British-occupied Zhoushan, Gulangyu, and Hong Kong. They belonged to the China Station of the British Royal Navy.[23]

How did the British Expedition rule the occupied regions? These regions, as the foregoing brief account of the British fighting and occupation shows, were chiefly islands and maritime and riverine towns and cities. Generally speaking, the British occupying soldiers were planted in the wartime possessions and their environs, patrolling inside the walled cities and at strategic insular positions. Meanwhile, the British naval craft berthed in harbors and patrolled in the adjacent waters. British rule in the conquered territories took

[22] Davis to Kiyeng, Mar. 3, 1845, FO 682/1978/4; Munn, "The Chusan Episode," 102. On British rule in Zhoushan, see Munn, "The Chusan Episode"; D'arcy-Brown, *Chusan*. There has been no detailed study on British rule in Gulangyu in 1841–45.
[23] Zhang, *Fuyi riji*, 99; Memorial by Liu Yunke, Oct. 25, 1842 (date of vermilion remarks), ZDLD, *Dang'an*, vol. 6, 332; Memorial by Kiyeng, Nov. 26, 1842, ZYJY, *Buyi*, 22.

various forms. There was no government in some of the British wartime possessions. In Gulangyu, for example, a naval officer took charge of the occupation. Regarding the possessions where British government of some forms was established, the British administration on Chuanbi Island consisted of a governor only, whereas the British government of Zhoushan comprised, in February 1842, a military governor, military magistrate, interpreter, and harbormaster, who was simultaneously the marine magistrate.[24] Officials in these wartime governments were mainly the expedition's military and naval officers and Western interpreters of the Chinese language in the British camp. The proclamations by the British Expedition authorities in both English and Chinese announced to or circulated among the Chinese people constituted British ruling policies in the conquered regions in wartime. The British Expedition relied on not only military coercion but also local Chinese support to maintain social order in the wartime possessions. British rule in the occupied regions will be examined in further details in Chapters 5 and 6.

In short, during the China War in 1840–1842, the regions under British threat, attack, and occupation mostly included islands and littoral towns and cities in Guangdong, Fujian, Zhejiang, and Jiangsu provinces. These regions, together with the regions under British blockade (see the next section), constituted the British wartime frontier in China. This British frontier regime partly but not entirely overlapped with the sea frontier of the Qing Empire in southeast China. This is because the British forces not only advanced along the coast and the lower reaches of rivers, but also sailed up the Yangzi River and arrived as far as Nanjing, 200 miles from the river mouth. The wartime clashes of the British and Qing empires will be further discussed in Part III.

[24] *Chinese Repository*, vol. 11, no. 2, Feb. 1842, 115.

Naval Blockade

Another indication of the rise of British power in China in 1840–1842 is the efforts of the British Expedition to stop water communication across China, which resembled the Qing government's sea ban and port blockade examined in the last chapter. The British Expedition authorities adopted this strategy to counter the Qing's anti-British measures, to restrain Qing naval forces, and to interrupt Chinese commerce and south-north transportation of supplies, especially official grain, thereby forcing the "Tartar rulers" to negotiate peace. The expedition blockaded China's coast and waterways as well as the Grand Canal, which traversed China from Zhejiang's capital Hangzhou to Jiangsu, to Shandong province, to Zhili province, and finally to Beijing.[25] The first British blockade of China's waters following the expedition's arrival was imposed in the Pearl River Mouth in mid-1840. In September 1842, shortly after the signing of the peace treaty, the British wartime blockade was totally lifted.[26]

During the war, the British naval forces at one time or another blockaded the entrances of several main river systems in southeast China. They included Guangdong's Pearl River Mouth; Fujian's Xiamen waters at the Jiulong River entrance and provincial

[25] The impact of the British blockade of the Grand Canal on the Qing state's grain transportation, however, should not be overestimated. The blockade proved too late to achieve the aim of cutting off the grain transportation from south to north because all northbound grain vessels had crossed the Yangzi River on June 26, 1842, three weeks before the British imposition of the injunction. Nevertheless, the British blockade of the Grand Canal did affect the return of the official grain vessels, which were forced to make detours. See Bernard, *The Nemesis*, 339–40; Yuan Taoyu, "Renyin wenjian jilüe," in Zhongguo shixuehui, *Yapian zhanzheng*, vol. 3, 107. On the Qing's grain tribute system, see Hinton, *The Grain Tribute System*; Li and Jiang, *Qingdai caoyun*; Ni, *Qingdai caoliang*.

[26] Pottinger to Kiyeng, Sept. 25, 1842, FO 682/1975/121; Pottinger to Aberdeen, Oct. 18, 1842, FO 17/58, 105a–06; Pottinger to Kiyeng, Ilibu (Yilibu), and Niu, Sept. 24, 1842, FO 17/58, 154–54a. Before the British naval commander-in-chief announced the blockade of the Pearl River and Guangzhou port upon the advent of the China Expedition in late June 1840, the British imposed a limited blockade of the delta and Guangzhou in January 1840 in revenge for the strong anti-British measures of the Qing authorities in Guangdong. See *Canton Press*, Jan. 11, 18, and 25, 1840; Lubbock, *The Opium Clippers*, 172–74; Hughes to O'Farrall, June 9, 1840, Smith, Office public notice, Jan. 8, 1840, Commander at Chuanbi to Elliot, Jan. 13, 1840, ADM 1/5496.

city of Fuzhou commanding the Min River (see figure 3.1); Zhejiang's Zhaobao Mountain commanding the Yong River and Zhapu at the Qiantang River entrance; and Jiangsu's Wusong Mouth at the southern entrance to the Yangzi River. The British naval forces also blockaded Ningbo and Shanghai cities, which lay on the Yong River and Huangpu River respectively. Moreover, the British Expedition blocked the Yangzi River; entrances to the Grand Canal's northern and southern trunks adjacent to Zhenjiang and Jinshan Island; Guazhou and Yizheng ports at the entrances to the Grand Canal's northern sub-branches; and some Grand Canal sub-branches (see map 3.6). Cross-strait shipping between Taiwan and Fujian was also interrupted.[27] Beyond southeast China, in August 1840, when a British squadron carrying Plenipotentiaries George Elliot and Charles Elliot arrived at the entrance of Zhili province's Bai River, all Chinese vessels laden with provisions were detained at the embouchure.[28]

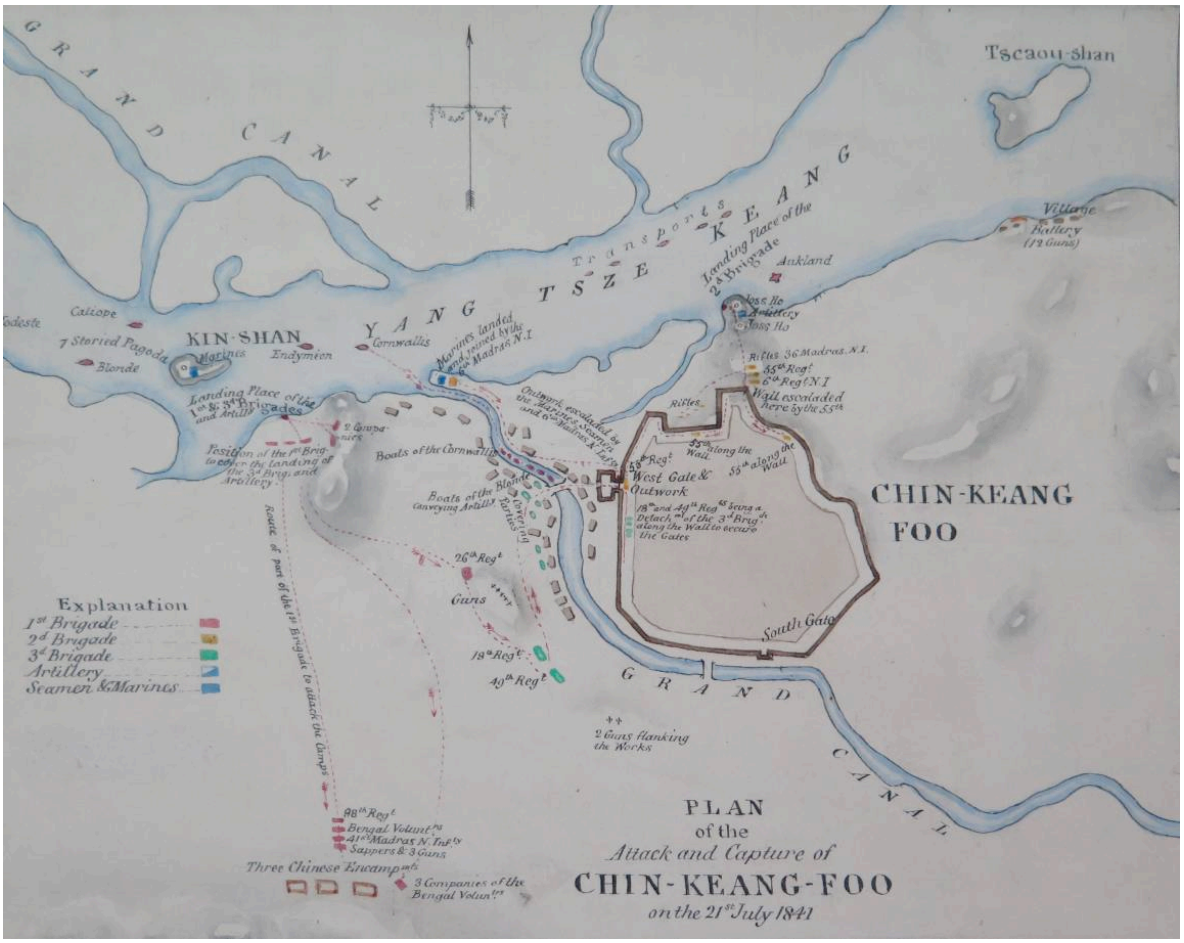
[27] *Canton Press*, Nov. 20, 1841; *Canton Register*, Aug. 4, 1840; Pottinger to Parker, Oct. 18, 1841, FO 17/54, 124; Memorial by Liu Yunke and Liu Hong'ao, Aug. 11, 1844, DCJHZZ, 04-01-01-0815-019.
[28] Bingham, *Narrative*, vol. 1, 219.



Figure 3.1 Wide entrance from the sea to the Min River leading to Fuzhou city. The river entrance was subject to British blockade, though only partially effective, in 1841–1842. (Cree's watercolor, 1844)[29]

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[29] Cree, Journals, vol. 8, 1844.



Map 3.6 The walled city of Zhenjiang (Chin-keang Foo), Jinshan (Kin-shan) Island, and the neighboring Grand Canal and Yangzi (Yang Tsze Keang) waters. These waters fell into vigorous British blockade in mid-1842. (Extracted from Hebert's map, 1843)[30]

To disrupt water communication in China, the British Expedition stationed detachments of ships of war, armed boats, and transports in the waters and ports subject to blockade. The blockading forces patrolled in the obstructed sections of the coastal waters, rivers, creeks, and Grand Canal branches and sub-branches against any unauthorized ingress and egress. They intercepted, inspected, detained, attacked, and destroyed Qing

[30] Hebert, Map illustrative of the operation, WO 78/990/3/33.

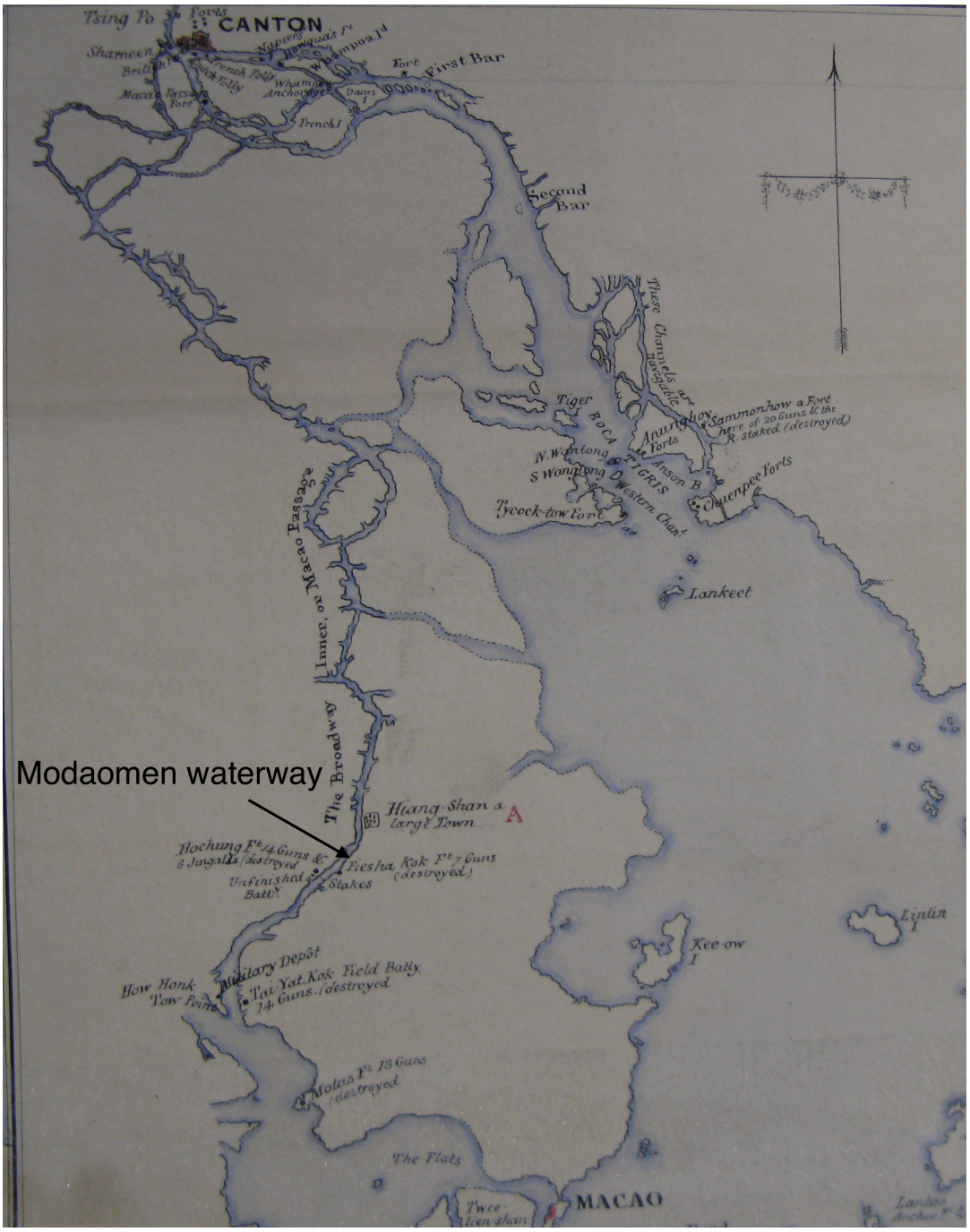
government craft (see figure 3.2), vessels laden with Qing official supplies and licensed commodities such as stones, copper, and salt, and also Chinese merchant, fishing, and pirate vessels. On one occasion, the British even blocked up a Grand Canal sub-branch with a bridge of "native junks."[31]



Figure 3.2 Two-masted "mandarins fast boat" propelled by numerous oars. This Qing official craft was captured by a pinnace of HMS *Wellesley* in March 1841, during the second British campaign in the Pearl River Delta. It was probably a "fast crab" (*kuaixie* 快蟹), "scorpion boat" (*wugong ting* 蜈蚣艇), "scrambling dragon" (*palong* 扒龍), or "fast boat," which were commonly used by not only Qing naval forces but also Chinese people engaged in clandestine trade. (Cree's watercolor, 1841)[32]

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[31] Bingham, *Narrative*, vol. 1, 405–06, vol. 2, 222–30; Loch, *The Closing Events*, 88; Memorial by Yišan et al., Dec. 16, 1841, ZDLD, *Dang'an*, vol. 4, 424.
[32] Cree, Journals, vol. 5, 1841.



Map 3.7 Entrance of the Pearl River (right) and the Modaomen waterway (the Broadway, Inner Passage, or Macao Passage). Macao, Guangzhou city (Canton), and Humen (Boca Tigris) are shown on the map. (Drawn by Hebert, 1843)[33]

[33] Hebert, Map illustrative of the operation, WO 78/990/3/33.

Generally speaking, the enforcement of the British blockade of China's coast and waterways in 1840–1842 varied according to the size and vigor of the British blockading units, the status of Qing-British relations, and British diplomatic and military concerns. In Guangdong, although the expedition's naval commander-in-chief ordered on June 28, 1840 to blockade the Pearl River and Guangzhou port "by all its entrances," for the first four weeks the blockade was only enforced in Humen, one of the several entrances to the Pearl River. It was after the arrival of HMS *Nimrod* in late July 1840 that the blockade was effectively extended to the Modaomen waterway, the entrance of which was adjacent to Macao (see map 3.7 above).[34] In August 1840, Lin Zexu reported to the throne that as many as fourteen seagoing vessels laden with salt had been taken by the British.[35]

After conquering Zhoushan Island in early July 1840, the British expeditionary force strove to blockade the waters adjoining Zhenhai, Ningbo, and Zhapu as well as the Yangzi River Mouth.[36] Later, having been treated well by the Qing provincial authorities in Zhili and Zhejiang, the joint-plenipotentiary George Elliot intended to stop seizing Chinese vessels off Ningbo around mid-September. However, in retaliation for the Qing abduction of Peter Anstruther of the Madras Artillery on September 16, the British Expedition detained upward of thirty "junks" in the eastern Zhejiang waters (see figure 3.3). They, as well as some other Chinese craft, were finally released upon the truce in mid-October 1840.

[34] Bremer's journal, Entry on June 22, 1840, ADM 50/262, 9147; *Canton Press*, June 27, July 25, and Aug. 1, 1840; Wu, "Qingdai Guangzhou zhi Aomen," 8.
[35] Memorial by Lin Zexu et al., Aug. 16, 1840, ZDLD, *Dang'an*, vol. 2, 279.
[36] Bingham, *Narrative*, vol. 1, 299; *Canton Register*, Sept. 22, 1840; Crossley, *Orphan Warriors*, 103–04; Jocelyn, *Six Months*, 73; George Elliot and Charles Elliot to Palmerston, Nov. 6, 1840, PRO 30/12/36/5, 130; Memorial by Wu'ergong'e, July 11, 1840, ZDLD, *Dang'an*, vol. 2, 160; Memorial by Wuergong'e and Zhu Tingbiao, Aug. 13, 1840, ZDLD, *Dang'an*, vol. 2, 267; Memorial by Song Qiyuan, Sept. 1, 1840, ZDLD, *Dang'an*, vol. 2, 311.

The British blockade of the waters in eastern Zhejiang and Shanghai were subsequently withdrawn in early November.[37]



Figure 3.3 Chinese merchant vessels apprehended by the British forces and brought to Zhoushan Island in September 1840 subsequent to the Qing capture of Anstruther (Cree's watercolor, 1840)[38]

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In mid-1842, the British Expedition authorities carried out a vigorous blockade of China's waters in order to force the Qing government to surrender. Immediately before the July attack on Zhenjiang, the British forces obstructed different entrances to the Grand Canal's northern and southern arteries adjoining Zhenjiang and Jinshan (see map 3.6, page

[37] Letter by Elliot, Sept. 15, 1840, FO 17/49, 81; *Gengzi xinchou haijun*, 197–99; Strachan, Diary of a residence on board the ship "Auckland" in Chusan harbor, FO 17/49, 363–64a; *Canton Register*, Oct. 13, 1840; Elliot to Ilibu, Oct. 23, 1840, FO 17/50, 44, 45; Elliot to Ilibu, Nov. 3, 1840, FO 17/50, 61a; Ilibu to Elliot, Oct. 14, 1840, PRO 30/12/36/5, 163–64; Elliot to Palmerston, Nov. 6, 1840, PRO 30/12/36/5, 130.
[38] Cree, Journals, vol. 4, 1840.

128). As many as seven hundred Chinese craft were intercepted in a matter of days. To prevent the craft's escape, the iron steamer *Nemesis* intimated them by shooting its Congreve rockets across their bows.[39] On one occasion, the expedition fired at a rice-laden craft that attempted to cross the Yangzi, thereby wounding a Chinese crewmember on board.[40]

Quite a number of contemporary Westerners doubted whether the British blockade was effective enough to achieve its aims. They questioned the ability of the small blockading squadrons to accomplish their tasks on the long China coast, at the wide river mouths, and in the intricate and numberless river channels.[41] While Henry Pottinger, plenipotentiary since mid-1841, preferred a total blockade, the blockade in his times was only a partial one in practice.[42] The British restrictions on Chinese seafaring activities did not extend to Chinese merchant vessels arriving in Zhoushan, Hong Kong, and Gulangyu (see Chapter 5 for the British free trade policy in wartime), those trading between Fujian and the British Straits Settlements in Southeast Asia, and those with certificates issued by British merchants stating that the cargoes on board were British property.[43] After the second British taking of Zhoushan in early October 1841, the naval commander-in-chief stipulated that the directive of stopping water communication in China did not extend to "private junks freighted with ordinary produce." Local fishing craft in Guangdong entering and leaving ports in daytime were also exempt from the injunction.[44]

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[39] Bernard, *The Nemesis*, 358, 361; Bingham, *Narrative*, vol. 2, 343.
[40] Zhu Shiyun, "Caojian riji," Zhongguo Shixuehui, *Yapian zhanzheng*, vol. 3, 79.
[41] *Canton Press*, July 11 and Sept. 26, 1840; *Chinese Repository*, vol. 9, no. 5, Sept. 1840, 326; Strachan, Diary, FO 17/49, 184.
[42] Pottinger to Parker, Oct. 18, 1841, FO 17/54, 124.
[43] *Canton Press*, Nov. 20 and Dec. 18, 1841; *Friend of China*, Mar. 17, 1842; Proclamation by Pottinger, Feb. 16, 1842, FO 682/1975/1b; Parker to the respective captains, 1841, FO 17/54, 130a–31; Proclamation by the British, 1839, FO 931/16 iv.
[44] Parker to the respective captains, 1841, FO 17/54, 130–31.

Notwithstanding the limitations of the British blockade of China's coast and waterways in 1840–1842, it was certainly carried out extensively in the war-affected regions and their neighboring waters. The littoral regions under British blockade constituted part of the British wartime frontier regime in China, as the British Expedition imposed their own rule in the blockaded areas (see Chapter 5). Moreover, even though the British task forces designated to carry out the embargo were moderate in size, they had an enormous impact, both deep and extensive, on navigation in regions under British threat, attack, and/or occupation, and beyond. The next section will focus on the impact of the military and naval activities of the British Expedition on Chinese waterborne trade and transportation to illustrate how the 1840–1842 British invasion upset the existing socioeconomic order in southeast China.

The British Destabilization of the Chinese Socioeconomic Order

Water Transportation

Water transportation was, and is still, central to the socioeconomic lives of many Chinese people in areas along the seaboard, rivers, and canals across southeast China. Local craft conveyed people, supplies, and commodities on waterways, and between the mainland and outlying islands. In late imperial China, water transportation was crucial to the circulation of news and information across the coastal, riverine, and canal regions.[45] While many Chinese locals living along the coast and waterways kept their own craft for transportation, local governments, elites, traders, and private individuals ran ferry service with regular or

[45] In late imperial China water communication was also crucial to the political, economic, social and cultural development and transformation of many cities and regions. See Elvin, "Market Towns and Waterways"; Fu, *Zhongguo yunhe*; Chen, *Zhongguo Dayunhe*, 461–76, 495–519; Sun, "City, State."

flexible routes that connected islands and main cities, regional towns, and rural areas on the mainland.[46] The British Expedition to China in 1840–1842, however, greatly disrupted water transportation in the coastal and waterway regions directly affected by the war. To show the intensity of the expedition's destabilizing impact on Chinese socioeconomic lives, this section will delve into wartime water transportation in three localities, namely eastern Zhejiang, Guangdong's Pearl River Delta, and regions along the Yangzi River and Grand Canal branches and sub-branches in Jiangsu province.

- Eastern Zhejiang

Since the Qing state rescinded the coastal depopulation after suppressing the Zheng regime in the late seventeenth century, water transportation served to link socioeconomically the Zhoushan group of islands and Ningbo prefecture (*fu* 府) on the opposite mainland in eastern Zhejiang.[47] Local craft carried passengers, commodities, and necessities of life on canals traversing Dinghai city on Zhoushan Island, the largest island in the archipelago. Local craft also sailed along the canals that linked Dinghai city and its harbor (*daotou* 道頭); along canals, sluices, creeks, and downhill streams in the Zhoushan group of islands; and in pools and reservoirs in the countryside (see map 3.8). Local people traveled around the Zhoushan Archipelago and the mainland by craft both to export produce from the islands and to import goods from Zhenhai and Ningbo adjacent to the Yong (see figures 3.4, 3.5, and 3.6).[48]

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46 For the general history of water transportation in southeast China in the Qing, see Lin et al., *Fujian hangyun shi*; Qiu et al., *Jiangsu hangyun shi*; Tong et al., *Zhejiang hangyun shi*; Ye et al., *Guangdong hangyun shi*.
47 Wang, *Dinghai xiangtu*, ch.16: *jiaotong*, section 1, 10a–11.
48 Chen et al., *Dinghai tingzhi*, vo1. 24, 4–7.



Figure 3.4 Zhoushan Archipelago. In late imperial times, water transportation was a necessary means of communication between the islands. (Cree's watercolor, 1840)[49]

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Figure 3.5 Punt conveying passengers along a creek on Zhoushan Island (Engraving by Thomas Allom, 1840s)[50]

[49] Cree, Journals, vol. 4, 1840.



Figure 3.6 Canal inside Dinghai city (Cree's watercolor, 1840)[51]

© National Maritime Museum, Greenwich, London

[50] Allom, *China*, vol. 3, 53.
[51] Cree, Journals, vol. 4, 1840.



Map 3.8 The walled city of Dinghai and its neighboring areas. As this map shows, canals flow across Dinghai city, link the city and the Dinghai harbor to the south of the island, and traverse the country. (Extracted from the map of Zhoushan by Thomas de Havilland and E. W. Sargent, 1843)[52]

The two British assaults on Zhoushan Island in July 1840 and late September–early October 1841 disrupted water conveyance on the island and in the Zhoushan Archipelago at

[52] De Havilland and Sargent, China: Zhoushan Archipelago, MR 1/151/3.

large. At the beginning of the two British occupation periods, water transportation came to a complete halt in Dinghai city. The Chinese locals who fled Dinghai because of the British attacks included those who used to travel around the city by boats via canals to do their jobs. As a result, no one in the city sailed boats to collect discarded animal and vegetable matter and human waste stored in great jars.[53] The city's abandoned canals, moreover, were choked up with disgusting smells. Water communication in Dinghai during the two British occupations improved only when British rule in Zhoushan had become secure.[54]

Outside Dinghai city, the British occupying forces were suspicious of the association of local craft in the archipelago with the Qing authorities. After the British Expedition conquered Zhoushan Island, Zhenhai district city, and Ningbo prefectural capital in late 1841, the Qing authorities prepared for a counteroffensive in eastern Zhejiang. Zheng Dingchen, son of a Qing regional commander (*zongbing* 總兵) who died during the second fall of Zhoushan, hid in the archipelago's countryside to recruit water-militiamen and organize fire attacks against the enemy. In early 1842, the British forces were busy destroying numerous "fire boats," i.e. boats dedicated to anti-British fire attacks in Zhoushan, and burning hostile hamlets in the archipelago. Immediately after the abortive Qing surprise against Zhoushan Island on April 15, 1842, the *Nemesis* and *Phlegethon* steamers were sent through all the adjacent islands to annihilate the fire boats. In one village, the British discovered a number of local craft "half filled with combustible materials." The "whole village was put into an uproar when the crew of the *Nemesis* began to set fire to them," the villagers appealing to the British to save their own craft. As the British worried that the local people might be pressed into the Qing service again, only one

[53] D'Arcy-Brown, *Chusan*, 72.
[54] *Canton Press*, Nov. 12, 1842.

"poor old woman" was allowed to retain her craft. All the other craft were set on fire. These local craft were presumably essential for these villagers to sail around the archipelago. Their livelihoods, thought William Bernard, the author of the narrative of the *Nemesis*'s wartime activities, probably depended on these craft.[55] Most likely their destruction greatly disturbed water transportation in the village concerned and also the villagers' livelihoods.

- The Pearl River Delta

Under the Canton System, Westerners passing up the Pearl River to the Guangzhou Factories were often intrigued by the bustling river scene of Chinese people oaring, crying, and burning firecrackers in local craft of various colors and sizes, which were intermingled with international shipping, Western and Asian vessels alike.[56] The Pearl River Estuary was dotted with local craft, many being passage boats as small as around 10 feet long without any roof or covered by moveable bamboo canvases. Usually manned by females, these sampans dominated the delta's creeks and channels (see figure 3.7). The estuary was also littered with "lob-lob boats," as contemporary Westerners called them, and "pleasure-boats" or "flower boats" (*huating* 花艇*, huafang* 畫舫, *or zidongting* 紫洞艇). Based at Huangpu (Whampoa) Island, where the Western merchant fleet anchored, lob-bob boats, most being sampans, were essentially floating brothels chiefly for foreign sailors. Sailing along the creeks in the Pearl River Estuary, the flower boats, or "floating palaces" as a Westerner admired them, were waterborne brothels or entertainment houses with elaborate

[55] Bernard, *The Nemesis*, 302–05; *Canton Press*, Sept. 3, 1842; Memorial by Ijing et al., Apr. 21, 1842, ZDLD et al., *Yapian zhanzheng zai Zhoushan*, 333–36.
[56] Charles T. Downing made a most vivid and detailed firsthand description of the bustling scene of the Pearl River before the 1839–1842 Qing-British hostilities. See Downing, *The Fan-Qui*. For water transportation in the Pearl River Estuary under the Canton System, see van Dyke, *The Canton Trade*; Cheng, "Shuishangren."

cabins and ornaments mainly for the prominent and rich Chinese.[57] According to a firsthand description by a British officer of the lively scene of the Pearl River before the last British campaign in Guangdong,

> The river is a noble one, and the population of the waters, the cast crowd of boats of every size and fanciful form, —some highly carved and ornamented, and containing suites of highly decorated apartments, some moored side by side in streets, others moving to and fro, —presented a singular and most striking and characteristic scene.[58]



Figure 3.7 "Canton river boat," i.e. roofless sampan, conveying passengers in the Pearl River Delta. Such sampans were very common in the delta's channels in Qing times. (Cree's watercolor, 1841)[59]

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While the British forces did not necessarily scare away local passage craft (see figure 6.1 in Chapter 6, page 254), the advance of the British forces in the last Guangdong campaign in May 1841 brought about a temporary yet total cessation of water

[57] Fortune, *Two Visits*, 121; Van Dyke, "Floating Brothels."
[58] Armine, *Memoirs and Letters*, 178.
[59] Cree, Journals, vol. 5, 1841.

transportation in the Pearl River's channels. As Bernard concluded, the "noble river, usually so busy with the hum of men, and, as it were, alive with innumerable boats of every shape and fashion, and that active, busy, almost countless population . . . all now were dull, and almost still with a portentous dreariness."[60] Chinese craft of all kinds were absent from the Pearl River during the May 1841 campaign probably because boaters and owners of "lob-lob boats" and pleasure boats were afraid of having their craft appropriated by the British forces to transport troops and provisions upriver.[61] The Chinese craft conscripted for the campaign were numerous and various. The naval forces pressed into service an immense flotilla of Chinese "fast boats," "accommodation boats," "cargo boats," lorchas (sailing vessels with a Chinese rig on a European-style hull), and sampans to convey more than 2,000 troops and stores up the shallow and narrow channels of the Pearl River to Guangzhou city in May 1841 (see figure 3.8).[62] The British advance up the Pearl River and indiscriminate appropriation of Chinese craft in May 1841, therefore, greatly disrupted the rhythm of the socioeconomic lives of the Chinese people who lived and/or worked on the river and in its adjacent regions.

[60] Bernard, *The Nemesis*, 164–65.
[61] Ouchterlony, *The Chinese War*, 141.
[62] MacKenzie, *Narrative of the Second Campaign in China*, 128; Lubbock, *The Opium Clippers*, 221; Ouchterlony, *The Chinese War*, 141.



Figure 3.8 The British Expedition traveling up the Pearl River for the May 1841 Guangdong campaign. The numerous single-cabin craft in the drawing are probably boats that the British Expedition appropriated from Chinese boaters or merchants. They were commonly used to transport cargoes of tea along the river. (Cree's watercolor, 1841)[63]

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While May 1841 marked the end of the Qing-British fight in Guangdong, the British intercepted Chinese passage craft in the Pearl River Delta from late 1841 to early 1842 as a revenge on the Qing authorities for reviving defense in the province. In this new round of the British interception, government-run and private ferries (*duchuan* 渡船) operating in the delta region were seriously affected. In Qing times, the local administration and Chinese residents operated regular ferry service across the estuary, which covered

[63] Cree, Journals, vol. 5, 1841.

Guangzhou city and the districts of Xin'an, Panyu, Xiangshan, Nanhai, and Shunde.[64] Around December 1841, the Xin'an magistrate lamented that as the British had recently caught most of the local craft, there was then only one ferry traveling between Guangzhou city and Xin'an. He intended to go to Guangzhou by this ferry for some official affairs, but it was also subject to British seizure. In order to rush back to the district capital of Nantou to deal with matters concerning the sudden arrival of a British squadron in Xin'an, he was obliged to take a land route back to Xin'an via Dongguan. This detour caused him some delay.[65]

Regarding privately run ferry service, the British authorities in Hong Kong were accused of detaining in early 1842 a ferry (*du* 渡) laden with cargoes, clothes, and 1,200 taels (1,600 Spanish dollars) and originating in Changzhou, an island 20 miles to the southwest of Hong Kong Island (see map 6.1, page 239). The ferry's owner Tang Yaze asked for help from Lu Jing, alias Loo Acqui, who, as stated in the last chapter, was labeled as Dan and was a comprador procuring provisions for the British forces in Hong Kong. Lu helped Tang, and the British finally released the ferry.[66] The British seizure of Chinese craft in the Pearl River Delta continued at least until April 1842.[67]

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[64] Rui et al., *Guangzhou fuzhi*, vol. 68, 14–16, 19–20, 30–32, 38; *Qingdai Guangdong dang'an lu, duchuan*. For an introduction to water transportation in Qing Guangdong prior to the Opium War, see Ye, *Guangdong hangyun shi*, 166–95.

[65] There are different Chinese accounts of the sudden arrival of the British squadron in Xin'an in mid-December 1841. The Xin'an magistrate Peng Bangmu officially reported that the British squadron went to Xin'an for squeezing money and attacking and dismantling the isolated fort of Nanshan, 8 miles from Nantou. According to a Chinese unofficial narrative of the British wartime activities in Guangdong, however, the British squadron pursued a passage craft that used to sail between Changzhou Island and Xin'an but was recently taken by pirates. When the British squadron and the pirate-controlled passage boat approached Nanshan Fort, the Qing soldiery thought that the British squadron intended to rob the boat and thus fired at the squadron. The enraged British force in turn attacked and destroyed Nanshan Fort. See Petition from the magistrate of Xin'an, Dec. 23, 1841, FO 931/51; "Yingyi ru Yue," Zhongguo Shixuehui, *Yapian zhanzheng*, vol. 3, 22. There is no British account of the incident.

[66] Rui et al., *Guangzhou fuzhi*, vol. 68, 8; "Yingyi ru Yue," Zhongguo Shixuehui, *Yapian zhanzheng*, vol. 3, 22. For a brief introduction to the history of Changzhou, see Choi, "Reinforcing Ethnicity."

[67] *Friend of China*, Apr. 7, 1842.

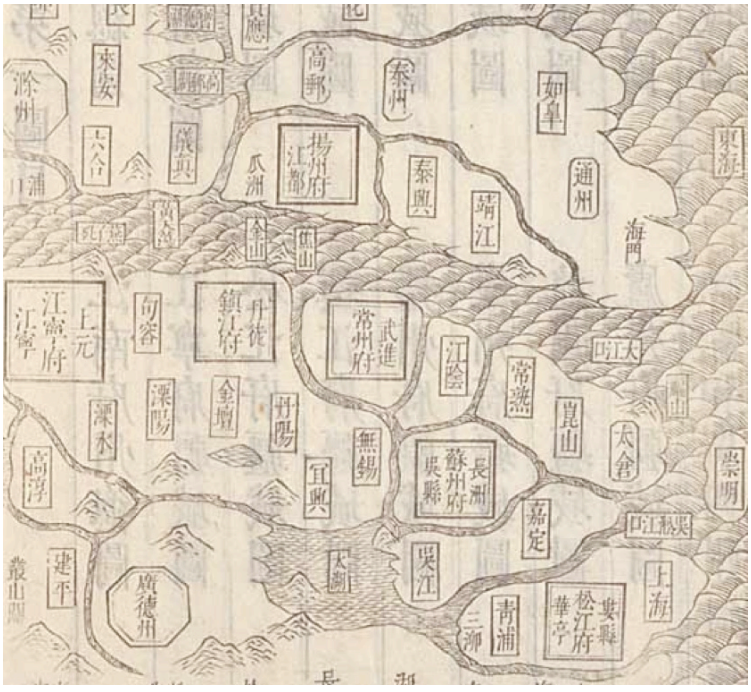
- Jiangsu's Yangzi and Canal Regions

In the late imperial era, water transportation was central to the Chinese economy and society of regions along the Yangzi River. People crossed the wide and turbulent "Great River" (*dajiang* 大江) at crossings by local craft. They traveled on water across the Yangzi region, the surrounding territories intersected with waterways, and areas along the Great Canal and its branches and sub-branches. Farming produce and other commodities were distributed across the localities by waterways. Water communication also facilitated the exchange of information and news within the Yangzi and canal regions and beyond. To deliver letters, official couriers under the Qing's postal system (*youyi* 郵驛) and unofficial messengers (*zhuanzu* 專足) often had to cross the Yangzi and take river channels, creeks, and canals.[68]

The British assault on Zhenjiang in July 1842 and the concomitant British blockade of the adjoining waters greatly disrupted water transportation on the Yangzi River and the nearby waterways in Jiangsu. On July 19, two days before the British attack, the expedition's military and naval commanders-in-chief proclaimed in Chinese that Chinese craft of all sizes on the Yangzi and also channels within the prefectures of Zhenjiang, Yangzhou, and Jiangning—where Nanjing city was located—were prohibited from crossing the river, or they would be subject to British capture or fire (see map 3.9). The order was carried out vigorously, the British forces shooting at and seizing craft that tried to break the order.[69] Consequently, passage craft were inadequate for conveying those who intended to cross the river, as very few dared to operate cross-river service. The travel of

[68] On the Qing's postal system, see Liu and Zhao, *Zhongguo gudai youyi*, 505–87. On water transportation in regions along the Yangzi and the Grand Canal in the Qing, see Matsūra, *Qingdai neihe*, 169–201, 334–38.
[69] Proclamation by Bremer and Gough, July 19, 1842, FO 682/1975/14; Zhu, "Caojian," Zhongguo Shixuehui, *Yapian zhanzheng*, vol. 3, 67.

Zhang Xi in mid-1842 illustrates the interruption of water transportation in Jiangsu owing to the British blockade. Zhang was a servant of Ilibu (Yilibu), one of the senior Qing officials responsible for negotiating peace with the British in the final phase of the war. Traveling from Shandong province to assist his master in the negotiation, Zhang arrived in Yangzhou in late July. He intended to travel southward to Zhenjiang by crossing the river at Guazhou, but there was then no passage craft available. Staying in Yangzhou for five days, he eventually took a detour and crossed the river at Chuanshan'guan in a craft acquired by the Qing military authorities.[70]



Map 3.9 Regions along the Yangzi River in Jiangsu (Extracted from the "Complete map of the geography of the entire Jiangsu and Anhui provinces" [*Jiangnan quansheng xingshi zongtu* 江南全省形勢總圖] in the 1736 gazetteer of Jiangnan [*Jiangnan tongzhi*])[71]

[70] Zhang, *Fuyi*, 28–29. On Zhang's roles in the Opium War, see Têng, *Chang Hsi*.
[71] Yin et al., *Jiangnan tongzhi*, vol. 1, 2–3.

The British river and canal blockade also impeded communication between regions south of the Yangzi River and regions to its north, which brought about many delays in dispatching war reports by local Qing officials to Beijing. On July 20, 1842, i.e. the eve of the British assault on Zhenjiang, Ilibu and the Jiangsu governor wrote a memorial in Suzhou. Instead of taking the usual route of crossing the Yangzi at Zhenjiang and Guazhou, the Qing postal staff sent the memorial to the imperial capital by making a detour: he traveled to Danyang and Jurong districts before crossing the river near Nanjing (see map 3.9 above).[72] In addition to the Qing Empire's internal communication, the British advance hindered unofficial communication. When the Yangzi campaign took place in mid-1842, the senior central official Weng Xincun was in his native district of Changshu (see map 3.9 above). His family in Beijing instructed a private messenger to deliver him a letter. Seeing that the river crossing at Zhenjiang was blockaded, the messenger took a long diversion and crossed the Yangzi in Anqing, the provincial capital of Anhui more than 200 miles upriver from Zhenjiang.[73]

Nevertheless, the British advance in mid-1842 did not result in a total cessation of water transportation in Jiangsu's Yangzi region and its neighboring areas intersected with waterways. On the contrary, the British threat stimulated certain forms of water conveyance in the localities because of the panic among the Chinese populace of the imminent British arrival. In mid-1842, after the British Expedition stroke Zhapu as well as the Yangzi River Mouth and "entered the river from the sea," "the Jiangnan region greatly shook (*Jiangnan dazhen* 江南大震)." Many local Chinese had never thought that the British naval craft were

[72] Deposition by Niu Jian, submitted on Dec. 24, 1842, ZDLD, *Dang'an*, vol. 5, 652; Memorial by Kiyeng et al., Dec. 26, 1842, ZDLD, *Dang'an*, vol. 5, 665.
[73] Weng, *Weng Xincun riji*, vol. 2, 542. Today the provincial capital of Anhui is Hefei.

able to advance up the wide and turbulent Yangzi.[74] Terror spread across the regions along the river and its adjacent waterways approached or attacked by the British forces. In Jiangsu, these war-stricken and panic-ridden areas included the districts of Baoshan, Shanghai, Jingjiang, Jiangyin, Changshu, Zhaowen, Dantu, Danyang, and Yizheng, the independent department (*zhili zhou* 直隸州) of Tongzhou, and Zhenjiang, Yangzhou, and Jiangning prefectures (see map 3.9, page 146).

Many people in the Jiangnan region took local craft to flee to safer places. Subsequent to the British Expedition's assault on the Wusong Mouth and its arrival in Shanghai city in June 1842, a great alarm prevailed in Tongzhou departmental city and its surrounding country areas. On July 2 Liu Changhua, a scholar-official then in Tongzhou city, hired two "three-cabin craft" (*sancangchuan* 三艙船) to travel inland with his family then living in the countryside. Probably taking creeks and canals, they arrived on July 5 at Zhishui, which lay in the north of Tongzhou department. As Liu's mother was worried about the safety of their relatives remaining at the family's native place, on August 7 Liu hired a large three-cabin craft again to travel back to Tongzhou with his family.[75] In mid-1842, many fleeing craft like Liu's three-cabin craft hurried across waterways in Jiangsu's Yangzi region. The refugees' surging demand for passage craft led to their shortage and the rise of fares.[76] With the British forces passing by Jiangyin district on July 10, 1842, many people fled Dantu district, south of Zhenjiang city (see map 3.9, page 146). Hiring a craft in

[74] Loch, *The Closing Events*, 69; Weng, *Weng Xincun*, vol. 2, 538. As Kathryn Bernhardt defines, "During the Qing the term 'Jiangnan' ('south of the river') referred to the three prefectures of Changzhou, Suzhou, and Songjiang and the department of Taicang in southern Jiangsu and the three prefectures of Jiaxing, Huzhou, and Hangzhou in northern Zhejiang." See *Rents, Taxes, and Peasant Resistance*, 3.
[75] Liu Changhua, "Yapian zhanzheng shiliao," Zhongguo Shixuehui, *Yapian zhanzheng*, vol. 3, 157, 161.
[76] Fa Zhirui, "Jingkou fencheng lu," Zhongguo Shixuehui, *Yapian zhanzheng*, vol. 3, 60; "Rukou ji," Zhongguo Shixuehui, *Yapian zhanzheng*, vol. 3, 332.

Dantu was then dozens of times more expensive than usual.[77] The stimulation of water transportation in the Jiangnan region owing to the British threat, thus, best illustrates how the British forces destabilized the socioeconomic order of the war-stricken regions during the China War in 1840–1842.

While the impact of the British advance and blockade on water transportation was deep in regions directly affected by the war, the British influence on trade in Chinese craft extended far beyond. The following section will examine the wide impact of the activities of the British Expedition on Chinese waterborne trade across the war-affected areas and beyond within China, and China's maritime trade with other East Asian regions and Southeast Asia in Chinese craft.

Waterborne Trade

In late imperial times up to the time of the Opium War, coastal trade in China and maritime trade between the Mainland, outlying islands, and overseas regions run by Chinese merchants were principally conducted in Chinese- or Asian-style sailing vessels, or "junks" as historians have usually called them. During that period, Chinese merchants, based in China and also in Southeast Asia, held a dominant position in the Sino-Southeast Asian "junk trade."[78] Maritime trade between China and other East Asian states as well as Southeast Asia was also conducted through the latter two's tribute missions, but in the early

[77] Zhu, "Caojian," Zhongguo Shixuehui, *Yapian zhanzheng*, vol. 3, 75.
[78] Bao (Blussé), *Badaweiya*; Chen, *Zhongguo fanchuan*, 221–65; Chin, "The Junk Trade"; Viraphol, *Tribute and Profit*, 160–79. In the late imperial times, maritime trade between China and Southeast Asia did not only involve the Chinese. In the eighteenth century and the first half of the nineteenth century, Chinese vessels trading between Guangzhou and Southeast Asia consigned space in the holds to European merchants, who also provided capital to Chinese merchant-shippers in Guangzhou. See van Dyke, *The Canton Trade*, 143–60; Wang, *China and the Chinese Overseas*. Moreover, many of the trading vessels engaged in the China-Southeast Asia trade were built in Southeast Asia and were of Southeast Asian style. Concerning the crew, while Chinese merchantmen leaving China for Southeast Asia were mainly Chinese-manned, many sailors on merchant vessels from Southeast Asia to China were non-Chinese. See Chen, *Zhongguo fanchuan*, 135–220.

nineteenth century the "tribute trade" was generally irregular and infrequent and its trading amount insignificant.[79] As for riverine trade in Chinese craft, while a great part of it was conducted in sailing vessels, craft without sails were also employed.

Similar to China's local water transportation, Chinese maritime and river trade had its own established patterns. Chinese merchant vessels took regular routes. In the early nineteenth century, their sea-trading routes (or coastal trading routes, as Chinese merchantmen sailed alongshore whenever possible) covered the whole seaboard from northeast China to Guangdong and also Hainan, Taiwan, Japan, Korea, the Ryukyu Islands, and Southeast Asia (see figures 3.9 and 3.10).[80] There were also numerous river routes in China, the most popular ones including the route of the Yangzi River traversing from Jiangsu to Sichuan province (see figure 3.11); the route of the Pearl River and its western branch West River linking Guangdong and Guangxi; and the Yong River route in eastern Zhejiang. Canals often extended river routes to farther cities and rural territories. In Jiangsu, for example, Chinese merchant craft took Grand Canal branches and sub-branches across regions north and south of the Yangzi.[81]

In addition to regular routes, Chinese merchantmen took regular anchorages. When their trading season was over, they anchored at ports where they originated or arrived. During their voyages, they often berthed at ports along the trading routes temporarily for

[79] Hamashita, *China, East Asia and the Global Economy*; Binxia (Hamashita), *Jindai Zhongguo*.
[80] Sea routes taken by Chinese merchantmen in East Asia and Southeast Asia in the Selden Map of China, which was produced in the Ming period and is housed by the University of Oxford's Bodleian Libraries, indicate that Chinese seagoing merchant junks took regular routes in late imperial times. On the map, see Batchelor, *The Selden Map*; Brook, *Mr Selden's Map*. On coastal, riverine, and canal trading routes within southeast China and maritime trading routes between China, other East Asian countries, and Southeast Asia in the late imperial era, see Huang, "The Chinese Maritime Customs; Lin, *Fujian hangyun shi*; Qiu, *Jiangsu hangyun shi*; Tong, *Zhejiang hangyun shi*; Ye, *Guangdong hangyun shi*.
[81] Chen, *Zhongguo Dayunhe*, 455–76.

provisions or repairs, or both. Trading craft laden with different kinds of goods and hailing from and sailing to different places had different trading seasons.

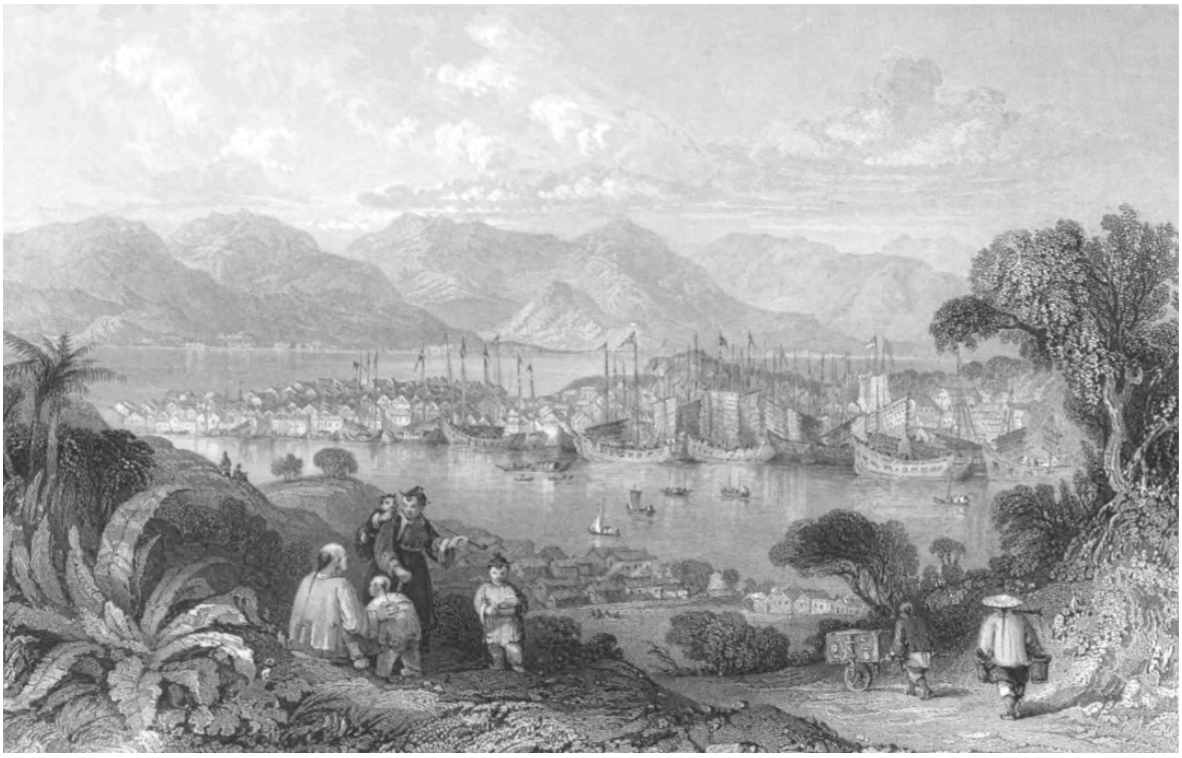


Figure 3.9 Xiamen port in the mid-nineteenth century, viewed from Gulangyu Island. Many enormous merchant vessels with square bamboo sails anchor in the harbor. They were probably engaged in long-distance maritime trade. In the mid-nineteenth century, Xiamen was one of the main ports for Chinese seagoing vessels trading within China and between China and Southeast Asia. (Allom's engraving, mid-19th century)[82]

[82] Allom, *China*, vol. 4, 39. For the development of maritime trade in Xiamen in the Qing period by the time of the Opium War, see Chen "Qingdai zhongye Xiamen"; Ng, "The South Fukienese Junk Trade."



Figure 3.10 Numerous Chinese craft anchor next to Shanghai city on the Huangpu River. The drawing is dated 1844, two years after the Opium War and one year after its opening as a treaty port. A foreign missionary traveling to Shanghai without the Qing's official permission observed in the mid-1830s: "the vicinity of Shang-hae [Shanghai] was marked by the forest of junks, which lay off the city, and which, according to the testimony of an officer of [the Qing] customs, amounted to upward of a thousand in number."[83] By the 1840s, Shanghai had still been one of the major ports for Chinese merchant craft in coastal trade and trade along the Yangzi River. (Cree's watercolor, 1844)[84]

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[83] Medhurst, *China*, 451.
[84] Cree, Journals, vol. 8, 1844. On the development of Shanghai from a major interregional port in China before the Opium War to an international trading port in the war's aftermath, see Johnson, *Shanghai*.



Figure 3.11 "Cotton junks" on the wide and turbulent Yangzi River (Cree's watercolor, 1844)[85]

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During the China War in 1840–1842, the activities of the British Expedition greatly disrupted the trading patterns of many Chinese merchant craft. The advance routes of the British forces corresponded to many of the watery routes taken by Chinese merchantmen. Many of the cities, islands, and waters that the expedition approached, blockaded, attacked, and/or occupied lay within the coastal or riverine shipping routes, or both. Most of the main trading ports in southeast China, moreover, lay within the insular, coastal, and river regions under British threat or attack, or next to the blockaded waters. These ports included Guangzhou, Xiamen, Fuzhou, Ningbo, Dinghai, Zhapu, Shanghai, and Zhenjiang. Under

[85] Ibid.

the British blockade, many Chinese merchant craft along the coast strove to escape British capture by changing their routes or anchorages, or both. For example, on Zhoushan Island, where many Chinese craft in the trade along the coast from Guangdong to Shandong had stopped since the lift of the sea ban in the late seventeenth century, a huge number of Chinese merchant craft vacated the Dinghai harbor in the very night before the British attack on the island in early July 1840. They probably fled to the neighboring islands in the Zhoushan Archipelago or the mainland in eastern Zhejiang.[86]

The case of the Pearl River Delta in 1840 is a good example to show the deep impact of the British blockade on Chinese waterborne trade in one particular region. The estuary was the first region subject to British blockade after the arrival of the China Expedition. Under the blockade, two craft laden with salt in the estuary endeavored to get rid of the British blockading squadron. They ran on shore and were broken into pieces, their crews being only fortunate enough to save themselves.[87] On another occasion, a steersman (*duogong* 舵工) called Sheng Quanfu was shot dead and a sailor named Du Yafa was wounded during the chase. In August 1840 the British, Commissioner Lin Zexu reported to the throne, had taken as many as fourteen salt-laden seagoing vessels.[88]

The "Taiwan transportation" (*Tai yun* 台運) of the Qing state indicates the impact of the British penetration in 1840–1842 on maritime trade between the mainland and its outlying islands.[89] As an established practice since the late seventeenth century, the Qing

[86] *Chinese Repository*, vol. 10, no. 9, Sept. 1841, 482–83; Jocelyn, *Six Months*, 53; Thom to Davis, Jan. 10, 1846, FO 17/109, 320.
[87] *Canton Press*, July 11, 1840.
[88] Memorial by Lin Zexu et al., Aug. 16, 1840, ZDLD, *Dang'an*, vol. 2, 279.
[89] On *Tai yun*, see Chen, *Wensu lu*, 113–14; Huang, *Yapian zhanzheng qian*, 195–204; Xu, *Qingdai Taiwan*, 31–41; Yao, *Zhongfutang xuanji*, vol. 1, 37–39. On the general history of trade between Taiwan and Fujian's coast from the fall of the Zheng regime and concomitant abolishment of the sea ban in the 1680s to the time

Fujian authorities required Chinese trading vessels to transport (*peiyun* 配運) military grains from Taiwan to Xiamen, Fuzhou, Quanzhou, as well as the Penghu Islands in Fujian, and to Nan'ao Island on the Fujian-Guangdong border. As the British presence in the Fujian waters led to the decrease in the number of Chinese vessels in the cross-strait trade, the Qing authorities decided in 1841 that only half of the previously fixed quota of grains was to be transported from Taiwan to the mainland by civilian trading craft, another half to be procured on the mainland (*zhese* 折色). Trade between Taiwan and the mainland slackened so seriously during and after the war that the change of policy was still in effect in 1844.[90]

The British advance in 1840–1842 disrupted Chinese waterborne trade beyond the regions where the expeditionary force arrived. The Yangzi campaign, for example, adversely affected rice trade along the river in the central provinces of Hunan and Hubei. In the Qing period, many merchant craft originating in Jiangsu and Zhejiang shipped rice from Hunan to Hubei's Hankou town for sale. Due to the British navigation up the Yangzi in mid-1842, very few Jiangsu and Zhejiang merchant vessels went to Hunan to procure rice. Knowing that the British forces blockaded the Yangzi, those merchants who had already bought rice from Hunan sold their product in Hankou at a low price in order to sell out the shipment as soon as possible, thereby suffering from a great loss.[91]

The impact of the war on the Qing collection of customs duties best illustrates the ripple effect of the British invasion on Chinese waterborne trade. In addition to the maritime customs (*haiguan*) and internal customs (*queguan*) along the coast and waterways

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of the Opium War, see Chen, "Qingdai zhongye"; Huang, *Yapian zhanzheng qian*, 180–92; Ng, *Trade and Society*, 95–117.

[90] Memorial by Liu Yunke and Liu Hong'ao, Aug. 11, 1844, DCJHZZ, 04-01-01-0815-019.

[91] Memorial by Wu Qijun, Sept. 26, 1842, ZDLD, *Dang'an*, vol. 6, 231.

in Guangdong, Fujian, Zhejiang, and Jiangsu, the Qing maritime customs in Zhili's Tianjin, northeast China's Shanhaiguan, and the internal customs along the rivers in Anhui and Jiangxi provinces collected fewer duties in 1840–1842 than the pre-war years (see Chapter 5 for more details on the maritime and internal customs).[92] Take the Jiujiang and Gan internal customs along the waterways in Jiangxi as an example. The British Expedition's advance on eastern Zhejiang, Jiangsu's Jiangnan regions, and also the Guangdong coast propelled many of the Chinese merchant craft passing by or destined for Jiangxi to changing their sea and river trading route. As a result, in the financial year of 1840–1841, the Jiujiang customs collected $59,300 (44,469 taels) less, whereas there was a decrease of $12,300 (9,278 taels) as tariffs collected by the Gan customs.[93] Among the reasons for the decrease in tariffs that will be examined in detail in Chapter 5, one is the disruption of Chinese maritime and river trade in southeast China. Chinese merchant vessels in interprovincial or interregional trade often changed their coastal or river routes when the war spread to one particular region, which brought about the fall of customs dues at many ports along the coast and waterways not directly stricken by the war.

Chinese waterborne trade between China and Japan was also affected during the China War and in the years that followed. Since the early eighteenth century, the Japanese authorities had limited the number of Chinese merchantmen trading with Nagasaki, the only port in Japan open for foreign trade. They issued a certain number of trading licenses to Chinese vessels, which were to be distributed by the Qing customs authorities in Zhejiang and Jiangsu. The licensed Chinese merchant-shippers were obliged to procure a

[92] Deng, *Qingdai qianqi*, 396; Ni, *Qingchao Jia Dao*, 49, 71, 94, 97, 122–23; Ni, "Yapian zhanzheng yu Daoguang," 49–55; Memorial by Jiang Fanzheng, July 17, 1843, ZYJY, *Buyi*, 54; Memorial by Kalasha'er, June 19, 1846, ZYJY, *Buyi*, 145.
[93] Memorial by Jiang Fanzheng, July 17, 1843, ZYJY, *Buyi*, 54; *Qingchao Jia Dao*, 94, 96–97.

certain amount of copper from Japan on behalf of the Qing government.[94] In October 1841, after the second British occupation of Zhoushan, HMS *Columbine* captured a "gigantic junk" near the Rugged Isles, i.e. Xiaoyushan Island and its neighboring isles to the northwest of Zhoushan Island. Estimated to be over 500 tons and laden with copper and silks, the vessel was supposed to come from Japan. Proved to be the property of a private individual, it was released after the conclusion of peace.[95]

During the China War, the British forces twice blockaded Zhapu, the only port in China open for trade with Japan from the mid-eighteen to the mid-nineteenth century.[96] Wang Yuanzhen was the sole "official merchant" (*guanshang* 官商) in the coastal town who procured copper from Japan for the Qing government from 1841 to 1860. The British attack on Zhapu in May 1842 resulted in the burning of his two seagoing vessels, three "big barges" (*dabochuan* 大駁船), and copper-bureau (*tongju* 銅局). Wang's financial situation was so grave that he had to acquire a loan from the Japanese authorities to buy new vessels and resume his business after the war.[97]

Furthermore, the British fighting with the Qing badly affected Chinese maritime trade between China and Southeast Asia. It probably led to a drop in the number of trading vessels sailing from Siam to China in 1840–1842.[98] A British merchant in Southeast Asia recorded in mid-1842 that "the junks from Siam to China have amounted to 50 or 60

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[94] Liu, "Qingdai de Zhapu"; Zhao, *The Qing Opening*, 137–52.
[95] Cunynghame, *An Aide-de-Camp's Recollections*, 58–59.
[96] Crossley, *Orphan Warriors*, 103–04. For the development of Zhapu and its roles in maritime trade between China and Japan, see Liu, "Qingdai de Zhapu." For the two decades prior to the Opium War, the annual number of Chinese sailing vessels departing from Zhapu for Japan ranged from nine to five. In the twentieth year and twenty-second year of the Daoguang reign, when the British blockaded and attacked Zhapu, the number dropped to four. Whether the decrease was related to the British invasion remains a matter of conjecture. For the figures of Chinese merchant vessels trading between Zhapu and Japan, see Liu, "Qingdai de Zhapu," 219–23.
[97] Liu, "Qingdai de Zhapu," 206, 218.
[98] On Chinese maritime trade between China and Siam in the Qing period, see Viraphol, *Tribute and Profit*.

annually but from hear[ing] of the English ships of war, the number has been considerably diminished during the last year or two."[99] One probable reason for the fall of wartime China's maritime trade with Siam was the fear among Chinese merchants of possible losses that the war might inflict upon them. Some Chinese merchant-shippers engaged in the trade did suffer from the British invasion. In August 1840, around Zhoushan, the *Queen* steamer captured "a large junk of about 850 tons laden with hides, horns, rice and ground nests" that originated in Guangdong and traded between northern China and Siam (see figure 3.12).[100]



Figure 3.12 "A Prise of the Queen steamer's." The red bow of the captured merchantman indicates that it originated in Guangdong. (Cree's watercolor, 1840)[101]

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[99] *Friend of China*, July 21, 1842.
[100] Cree, Journals, vol. 4, 1840, 91.
[101] Ibid.

Last but not least, the Opium War disturbed trade between Vietnam (Annam) and China in Chinese vessels. In the last British campaign in Guangdong in May 1841, the Qing's war craft and dockyard outside Guangzhou city were almost totally destroyed. To construct large war vessels, the local Qing authorities attempted to procure wood from Qinzhou prefecture, which bordered Annam in western Guangdong. Normally the wood was imported from Annam in Chinese vessels, but wood merchants refused to go to sea because of the war.[102]

The British invasion of China in 1840–1842, thus, had a wide and deep impact on trade in Chinese craft within China and beyond in wartime. The impact was not only short-term. Before the Opium War, there had already been signs pointing to the fact that Chinese maritime trade reopened in 1684 after the fall of the Zheng regime started to decline in the second half of the eighteenth century. These signs included the depression in seaports such as Xiamen, the drop in the number of merchant guilds handling coastal and foreign trade in Chinese merchantmen, and the decrease in the number, capacity, and "operational efficiencies" of Chinese sailing vessels.[103] The British invasion in 1840–1842 triggered the decline of Chinese maritime trade. Many merchant guilds in coastal cities were hard-hit by the war, and the number of Chinese merchant vessels in coastal and international trade further decreased. The situation was particularly serious in Xiamen in the 1840s. In the 1840s, the amount of duties collected by the Fuijan maritime customs in Xiamen never went back to the pre-war level.[104] In the late Qing period, internal rebellions, the Western

[102] Memorial by Yišan et al., Mar. 28, 1842, ZDLD, *Dang'an*, vol. 5, 114.
[103] Van Dyke, "Operational Efficiencies"; Chen, "Qingdai zhongye." Kent Deng has perceptively noticed that the decline of Chinese maritime trade starting from the mid-eighteenth century constituted part of the trend of the long-term decline of shipping in China from the Song to the nineteenth century. See "Why Shipping 'Declined,'" 207–21.
[104] Memorial by Baochang, Mar. 10, 1844, *Daoguang chao Junjichu Hanwen lufu zouzhe* (hereafter cited as DCJHLZ), 03-3167-006; Memorial by Baochang, Apr. 2, 1844, ZYJY, *Buyi*, 76–77; Memorial by Bichang,

introduction of steam navigation into China, the competition from Western merchant vessels, and also natural disasters such as typhoons led to a further decline of maritime trade, and also river trade, in Chinese craft within China and beyond.[105]

Admittedly, existing sources—qualitative and quantitative alike—about the voyages of Chinese trading craft in wartime are too piecemeal for one to understand the overall changes of their routes and anchorages and conclude the overall impact of the war on Chinese waterborne trade during the China War and its aftermath. Regarding the statistics kept by the Qing customs authorities, the decrease of duties collected by the maritime and internal customs from Chinese merchantmen was not only due to the change of the latter's trading routes, but also the partial or complete closure of the customs stations and substations (see Chapter 5). What's more, the statistical figures of the customs dues are far from detailed and complete. The statistics, for example, indicate nothing about the origins and destinations of the Chinese trading craft subject to Qing taxation. From the figures it is impossible to judge whether the decrease was due to a drop in trade volume or changes of the Chinese merchant craft's trading routes, or both. Furthermore, partly because the Qing customs administration itself usually had to pay for the deficiency in customs duties whatever the reasons behind the deficiency, the statistical figures kept by Qing customs officials fail to indicate the long-term impact of the China War on Chinese waterborne trade in China and beyond.

The impact of the activities of the British Expedition on the trade was certainly not universal. The British detention or seizure of Chinese merchant craft in 1840–1842 did not

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May 2, 1844, ZYJY, *Buyi*, 82–83; Memorial by Jingmu, Apr. 23, 1845, ZYJY, *Buyi*, 106; Memorial by Liu Yunke and Liu Hong'ao, Mar. 30, 1845, DCJHZZ, 04-01-01-0820-040.

[105] Memorial by Sun Shanbao, May 6, 1844, ZYJY, *Buyi*, 84; Memorial by Dongchun, July 7, 1853, ZYJY, *Buyi*, 317; Reinchardt, "Navigating Imperialism."

always result in disrupting Chinese maritime and river trade. The British military and naval operations did not always take place in the trading seasons of Chinese merchant craft. As mentioned earlier, the British attacking force expropriated numerous Chinese craft for transporting up the Pearl River in mid- and late May 1841, when Chinese merchant craft shipping cargoes downriver from inland provinces to Guangzhou port had already finished their trade in the year. The British expropriation of Chinese craft in the Pearl River Estuary in May 1841, thus, did not adversely affect trade along the Pearl River and its branches. The British naval forces, moreover, did not necessarily scare away Chinese merchantmen. Chinese waterborne trade was not always interrupted when the British forces and Chinese merchant vessels met. The 1839–1842 Qing-British hostilities, as Chapter 6 will show, even boosted Chinese "junk trade" in tea and opium between China and Singapore.

Despite the limitation of the surviving sources on the activities of Chinese merchantmen in 1840–1842 and the uneven impact of the British advance and blockade of China's waters on Chinese littoral trade, the impact, as this section has shown, was certainly extensive and often lasting in the areas under British threat, attack, and occupations, and spread to many regions not stricken by the war. This illustrates how the British Expedition upset the socioeconomic order of vast maritime and waterway regions in southeast China, and beyond, during the war and in its aftermath.

Conclusion

The chapter has shown how the British Expedition penetrated deeply into a huge section of the seaboard and its neighboring islands, waters, and land regions in southeast China, thereby bringing about the emergence of a British imperial frontier in China during the

China War. That the British threat, advance, blockade, and occupation contributed to upsetting the Chinese socioeconomic order in the war-affected regions and beyond has been illustrated by the fact that the British Expedition caused a deep impact on water transportation in regions directly affected by the war, and an extensive effect on Chinese waterborne trade in China and beyond. The rise of British power in 1840–1842, thus, destabilized the Chinese socioeconomic order of vast littoral regions, which characterized the water borders in southeast China during the Opium War. The next chapter will delve into another salient feature of southeast China's water borders during the Qing-British War and in its aftermath: an absence of any militarily ascendant power on water.

Chapter 4:

"We Have Not the Means of Protecting Native Boats": The Opium War and the Balance of Power on Water

Some firing of guns being observed to windward, between a trading junk and a small pirate boat [near Hong Kong]*, the 'Phlegethon' steamer was sent in pursuit. The Ladrones had succeeded in boarding the junk, which was from Manilla, laden with sugar, and had wounded two or three of the crew, and commenced the work of plunder; but, observing the approach of the steamer, they hurried again into the boat and pulled for the shore, and succeeded in escaping to the hills. The boat was captured by the 'Phlegethon.'*

Samuel B. Ellis of the Royal Marines, August 22, 1841[1]

Introduction

This chapter will continue to trace the formation of water borders in vast maritime and river regions in southeast China during the Opium War. It will focus on how the rise of British military and naval power in 1840–1842 upset the equilibrium of power on water in Guangdong, Fujian, Zhejiang, and Jiangsu provinces. After the decline of the south China piracy leagues in 1810, the Qing's naval power constituted a fairly effective deterrent to large-scale waterborne banditry in the early nineteenth century. There was also a balance of power between Qing forces, Western opium vessels, Chinese armed clandestine traders, Chinese pirate groups, and fishing and merchant craft before the inception of the anti-opium campaign on the Qing Empire's sea frontier in the late 1830s.

The balance of power on water, however, began to change since the Qing's anti-opium campaign on the coast in the late 1830s, when the campaign sparked off the rise of

[1] Ellis, *Memoirs*, 229.

Chinese banditry on water. After the beginning of the Qing-British hostilities in March 1839 and before the advent of the British Expedition in mid-1840, Qing naval forces in Guangdong had already been weakened by a number of skirmishes with the small British squadron in the province. The British Expedition's arrival, the Qing forces' occupation with the expeditionary force, and the Qing's defeat after defeat in 1840–1842 dealt a fatal blow to the pre-war equilibrium of power in southeast China's waters.

The slackening of the Qing military brought about the upsurge in Chinese piracy across vast sections of southeast China's littorals during the war, and in the years that followed. The Opium War brought about what the thesis calls the "fourth waves" of piracy in late imperial China, which started in the late 1830s and lasted for the following decades in the late Qing. Similar to piracy in other late imperial times, many pirates were formerly poor fishers and sailors, closely connected to clandestine trade, and/or associated with the local Qing authorities or foreigners. They shifted occupations between land and water in times of political transition and social upheaval.

Taking up part of the jobs of Qing naval forces, the British Expedition played a significant role in patrolling on water, suppressing sea and river banditry, and escorting Chinese merchant craft during the China War in 1840–1842. The British forces, however, did not dominate China's waters during the war and in its aftermath. On the one hand, the Qing forces did not totally collapse in wartime; rather, they still constituted a significant deterrent to Chinese waterborne raiding during the war and in the following years in the 1840s. On some occasions, the Qing authorities were even associated with Chinese raiding forces on water to fight against the British. On the other hand, the scattered British forces did not, and were not able to, totally fill in the power vacuum on water left by the Qing.

The Opium War thus resulted in an absence of a hegemonic military power on water, one major characteristic of the water borders in southeast China during the war.

Before 1839

By the early nineteenth century, Qing "water forces" (*shuishi* 水師), most of which belonged to the Green Standards (*lüying* 綠營) and some the Eight Banners (*baqi* 八旗), had played an important part in maintaining order along China's coast and waterways. Before their Westernization in the late nineteenth century, the naval forces were divided into outer-water forces, inner-river forces, and forces responsible for matters both on land and water.[2] Each of the naval battalions (*ying* 營) was designated to oversee one clearly demarcated region and deal with crimes and delinquencies in the locality.

In peacetime, Qing naval battalions were chiefly responsible for patrolling against illicit trade, the transportation of restricted and prohibited items, and sea and riverine banditry. With the waters in a province divided into different sections (*lu* 路) and subsections (*duan* 段), the battalions were required to patrol their respective division regularly and periodically. Though varying in different provinces, the time of naval patrol largely corresponded to fishing and waterborne-trading seasons, when robbery on water tended to be more frequent. The naval battalions belonging to different sections or subsections, moreover, jointly patrolled (*huishao* 會哨) the sea that straddled provincial boundaries or sections within a province, for example the waters of Nan'ao Island on the

[2] Report by Lai Enjue, Jan. 23, 1845, *Daoguang chao xingke tiben*, 02-01-02-2739-026. For the Westernization of Qing naval forces in the late nineteenth century, see Rawlinson, *China's Struggle for Naval Development*.

Guangdong-Fujian border.[3] Batteries and military stations (*xun* 汛) dotted all over the littoral regions of the Qing Empire also functioned as deterrents to Chinese clandestine traffic and piracy. In addition to patrolling the waters, the Qing cruisers convoyed Chinese civilian craft along China's coast and waterways. The Qing authorities, it should be noted, often employed private merchant and fishing vessels to supplement their own naval power and perform the aforementioned duties on water. The duties of the Qing's inner-water and outer-water naval forces indicate that both the inner- and outer-water regions on the empire's sea frontier were subject to a certain degree of Qing naval control (see Chapter 2 for the Qing official divide of waters into inner and outer). The outer-water regions were far from being totally "nonstate."

By the early nineteenth century, many, if not most, duties of Qing naval forces had already been formalities, and many regulations on the naval duties had even been dead letters. Since as early as the late seventeenth century, the Qing's naval weakness had been notorious.[4] Despite the limitations of Qing naval power, and even though petty banditry on water was incessant throughout the Qing period, the Qing naval armadas across the empire were able to deter large-scale sea and river banditry during the time between the fall of the South China pirate leagues in the nineteenth century's first decade and the inception of the anti-opium campaign on the sea frontier in the late 1830s.[5]

In the 1820s and the first half of the 1830s, the balance of power on water in southeast China reflected itself in the collaboration between Qing naval forces and opium traders—Chinese and Western alike—along the coast and in the river mouths from

[3] Luo, *Lüying bingzhi*, 270–72; Wang, *Qingdai qianqi*, 60–88.
[4] Memorial by Liu Yunke, Apr. 21, 1845, DCJHZZ, 04-01-01-0820-068; Wang, *Qingdai qianqi*, 60–88.
[5] On piracy in China between the 1810s and 1830s, see Antony, "Sea Bandits," 2.

Guangdong to Jiangsu.[6] It also reflected itself in the power equilibrium between Western armed opium clippers, Western opium receiving vessels in the outer waters, Chinese waterborne bandit forces, and Chinese merchant and fishing craft. On the one hand, in the early and mid-1830s, many of the Chinese people who transported opium on water also robbed opium-laden craft and other merchant vessels or detained their cargoes for ransom. This indicates the ad-hoc or regular shifting of occupations among many Chinese littoral people in late imperial times, which will be further discussed later in the current chapter and in Chapter 6. On the other hand, many Chinese craft regarded foreign merchantmen as an effective preventive or convoying force against Chinese raiding on water.[7] Concerning British naval power, in the four decades prior to the commencement of the Qing imperial commissioner Lin Zexu's anti-opium crusade in Guangdong, British naval power in China were usually limited to at most one ship of war in the Pearl River Delta.[8]

The balance of power on water in southeast China, however, began to change in the second half of the 1830s, when the Beijing court and the local Qing authorities started to vigorously enforce the prohibition of the opium traffic. During the time many naval officers and soldiers were punished for participating in the opium transportation. Many Chinese opium dealers were apprehended. Many of the Chinese littoral people who lost jobs in the clandestine trade resorted to waterborne marauding. One "troublesome legacy of Commissioner Lin," to use Joyce A. Madancy's term, was the upset of the equilibrium of power on water due to his vigorous anti-opium movement commencing in March 1839.[9] In a December 1839 issue of the *Canton Press*, the newspaper editor attributed the rise of

[6] Waley, *The Opium War*, 18–19.
[7] Antony, "Sea Bandits," 26; Memorial by Cheng Zuluo, Apr. 8, 1844, ZDLD et al., *Yapian zhanzheng zai Zhoushan*, 10–11; Guan, *Chouhai chuji*, vol. 2, 26, 28.
[8] Fox, *British Admirals*, 29–34.
[9] Madancy, *The Troublesome Legacy*.

robbery on land and banditry along Guangdong's rivers to Lin's drastic measures: "This increase of daring crime among the Chinese can only be attributed to the measures of the Imperial Commissioner, who, by his indiscriminating measures against the Opium trade, has ruined a great part of the legal traffick, and the people formerly engaged in it, must now seek a livelihood by robbery."[10] Another indication of the changing balance of power on water prior to the arrival of the British expeditionary force in mid-1840 is the frequent clashes between Qing naval forces and armed Western opium vessels in Guangdong and Fujian.[11]

1839–1842: A New Equilibrium

During the 1839–1842 Qing-British hostilities, British naval forces dealt a severe blow to the pre-1839 balance of power on water in southeast China. Before the advance of the British Expedition in Guangdong, Qing naval forces and coastal fortifications in the province had already suffered from considerable losses in a number of armed conflicts with the British squadron. In September 1839, close to the Jiulong peninsula, the British cutter *Louisa* and the small schooner *Pearl* were engaged in a skirmish with three Qing "man of war junks," which were driven on shore and abandoned. A fort in Jiulong was also silenced. In another scuffle near Chuanbi Island in early November 1839, HMS *Volage* and *Hyacinth* blew up one Qing war craft, sank three, and disabled many others. The Qing batteries in Jiulong were destroyed in another armed conflict at Guanchong (Kwun Chung) in November 1839. In the battle at Guanzha in August 1840 (see Chapter 3), when the China Expedition had already arrived but Commissioner Lin still took charge of Guangdong, the

[10] *Canton Press*, Dec. 7, 1839.
[11] Mao, "Yapian zhanzheng shiqi," 14; Memorial by Deng Tingzhen and Wu Wenrong, June 12, 1840, ZDLD, *Dang'an*, vol. 2, 126.

eight fighting Qing "warjunks" previously anchored opposite Macao were "so much injured by shot that they will probably never float again."[12]

The advance of the British Expedition to China in 1840–1842 brought about the collapse of the pre-1839 equilibrium of power in southeast China's littorals. To resist against the British, the local Qing authorities concentrated their soldiers and naval craft previously distributed across the littoral regions in strategic positions within the inner waters, inner rivers, and inner ports, thereby loosening the Qing's naval grip, which was already weak, on areas within the outer waters. Catastrophic for the Qing military in southeast China, the British expeditionary force routed Qing soldiers stationed in forts and battalions in the maritime and river regions, blew up batteries planted along the coast and waterways, and dispersed, disabled, or even destroyed Qing naval vessels, gunboats, and craft dedicated to fire surprise across the areas under British threat or attack. The three British campaigns in Guangdong in the first half of 1841 resulted in the annihilation of Qing war vessels in the Pearl River Delta, as well as numerous conscripted merchant and fishing craft, boats and rafts prepared for fire attack, fortifications, cannons, and military stores.[13] Taking charge of the anti-British war in Guangdong in 1841–1842, the Manchu "Rebel-Quelling Generalissimo" (*jingni jiangjun* 靖逆將軍) Yišan (Yishan) plainly admitted in his memorial to the throne that after the British offensives, "cannons and ships were all burnt and destroyed, whereas the remaining naval cruisers were only sufficient for patrol but not defense."[14]

North of Guangdong, in Xiamen, Fujian province, it was reported that in the August 1840 conflict (see Chapter 3), the British blockading force of HMS *Alligator* and the

[12] *Canton Press*, Sept. 21, 1839, Nov. 9, 1839, Nov. 16, 1839, Jan. 25, 1840, Aug. 22, 1840.
[13] Cree, Journals, vol. 5, 1841, 9, 14; Lovell, *The Opium War*, 133.
[14] Memorial by Yišan et al., ZDLD, *Dang'an*, vol. 4, 42.

Braemar transport sank sixteen or seventeen Qing "war junks," probably the whole Qing regular and auxiliary fleet defending the island and its neighboring land regions and waters.[15] One year later, in the British assault on Xiamen in August 1841, when the Fujian naval commander (*shuishi tidu* 水師提督) had departed with a substantial fleet to combat piracy, the British captured and burnt twenty-six war craft that mounted 128 guns in total and "were nearly ready for sea, but were deserted by their crews." A dockyard was also destroyed.[16]

In eastern Zhejiang, in their first attack on Zhoushan, the British Expedition silenced eleven Qing war vessels that lay before the Dinghai harbor and "formed a line in front of the merchant-junks to protect the shore." The British invading forces finally seized some thirty Qing craft. This was so great a naval loss for the Qing authorities in the eastern Zhejiang waters that they had to recruit civilian craft to be cruising forces after the recovery of Zhoushan in February 1841. Virtually no Qing war craft participated in the second defense of the island in September 1841.[17] In Jiangsu, during their advance up the Huangpu River in June 1842, the British naval forces encountered fourteen "war junks" and five Qing craft propelled by wooden paddle wheels. Eventually only two of the war craft escaped, the rest being captured or set on fire. The British naval forces also destroyed a number of "war junks" near Shanghai.[18] As in Guangdong, during their advance in Fujian, Zhejiang, and Jiangsu, the British Expedition routed the Qing soldiery operating batteries

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[15] *Canton Press*, Sept. 19, 1840; Mao, "Yapian zhanzheng shiqi," 21.
[16] Bernard, *The Nemesis*, 228; *Canton Press*, Sept. 25, 1841, Feb. 5, 1842; Cree, Journals, vol. 5, 1841, 73; Memorial by Yan Botao, Aug. 28, 1841, ZDLD, *Dang'an*, vol. 4, 30–32; Memorial by Yan Botao, Sept. 6, 1841, ZDLD, *Dang'an*, vol. 4, 47–48. "The on dit," a Western observer wrote, "was, that he [the Fujian naval commander] was anchored safely in the Straits of Que moy [Jinmen], within hearing of the cannonade." See Forbes, *Five Years in China*, 231–32.
[17] *Canton Press*, Aug. 1, 1840; *Canton Register*, Aug. 4, 1840; *Chinese Repository*, vol. 10, no. 8, Aug. 1841, 482–83; Jocelyn, *Six Months*, 48; Mao, *Tianchao*, 351.
[18] Bernard, *The Nemesis*, 326–27; *Canton Press*, July 30, 1842.

and fortifications along the coast and waterways. They also silenced or blew up all the threatening batteries and fortifications.

Suffering from the huge wartime casualties and the post-war financial strain, Qing naval forces in southeast China never fully recovered in the aftermath of the Opium War.[19] As late as December 1848, the Fujian and Zhejiang governor-general memorialized that the naval vessels to be constructed to compensate for the loss in wartime had not yet been completed.[20] Being unable to acquire adequate reconstruction fees from the treasury, the local Qing authorities often had to look to, if not pressure, Chinese merchants to donate for rebuilding craft for naval use, and also owners of civilian vessels to help perform naval tasks. In Jiangsu, according to the official quota, there were nine outer-water naval battalions and fifty-eight war craft called *daguchuan* 大舸船. Before 1839, they were deployed to patrol the sea in shifts. Although the flotilla may have already been dilapidated before the China War, the war saw its disrepair and dwindling. When the war ended, not a single *daguchuan* was in the dockyard. Twelve naval vessels were then constructed to fill the pre-war quota, half designated to patrol the sea. This naval force, however, was so small that twenty civilian craft had to be recruited to help perform the job. Moreover, thirty-four naval craft were additionally built upon the donations from Shanghai merchants.[21] The increasing social unrest and political-social upheavals across the Qing Empire from the late 1840s to the 1860s and also the Arrow War in 1856–60 once again occupied and further weakened the Qing armadas along the coast and waterways of southeast China.[22]

[19] On the Qing state's financial difficulties during and after the Opium War, see Zhou, "1840–1849 nian."
[20] Memorial by Liu Yunke, Dec. 7, 1848, DCJHZZ, 04-01-01-0826-073.
[21] Memorial by Li Xingyuan and Lu Jianying, Aug. 9, 1848, DCJHZZ, 04-01-01-0826-054.
[22] Hurd, *The Arrow War*; Kim, "The Red Turban"; Yen, *The Taiping*.

Piracy during the Opium War and in Its Aftermath

As discussed earlier, Qing war craft and cruisers, as well as Qing forts and soldiers in stations spreading across China's littoral regions, traditionally served as restrictive forces against piracy. The engagement of the Qing land and water forces in defending strategic positions and fighting against the British and the resultant shrinking of the forces, therefore, contributed to unleashing waterborne banditry across southeast China in 1839–1842. While there had already been an upsurge in piracy in Guangdong and Fujian before the advent of the British Expedition, their arrival in China and their restraint on the Qing forces exacerbated the situation.[23] Many British Expedition officers and Western observers detailed the prevalence of piracy across China during the war, which took place in the sea and waterways as well as littoral regions (see figure 4.1). A witnessing British military officer wrote that after the fall of Xiamen to the British in 1841, the city on the island was "at all times much infested by native robbers, who come in boats, and attack the inhabitants at night. These daring marauders paid repeated visits to the city, even while it was in possession of our troops, and gutted the temples and public establishments of much valuable property."[24] Many Chinese contemporaries living in regions along the coast and waterways also witnessed and recorded incidents of piracy in wartime.[25] The Western and unofficial contemporary Chinese accounts point to the fact that in southeast China, waterborne banditry was not limited to one particular region but spread across the maritime and river regions during the Opium War and in its aftermath.

[23] *Canton Press*, Nov. 23, 1839.
[24] McPherson, *Two Years*, 206.
[25] For example, see "Yingyi ru Yue," Zhongguo shixuehui, *Yapian zhanzheng*, vol. 3, 22; "Yihuan beichang," Zhongguo shixuehui, *Yapian zhanzheng*, vol. 3, 140–41.



Figure 4.1 Jishuimen (Cap Sing Mun) in the Pearl River Delta, which Cree named "Pirate Harbour." "[W]e," Cree wrote in April 1841, "passed the entrance of Pirate Harbour and saw a large junk that had been attacked the night by Ladrones but they were driven off. These fellows have become very daring since the war."[26] Jishuimen was one of the notorious pirate bases in South China in the nineteenth century.[27] (Cree's sketch, 1841)[28]
© National Maritime Museum, Greenwich, London

Qing official records also indicate the upsurge in sea and river robbery during and after the 1839–1842 anti-British hostilities. Repeating in their wartime and post-war memorials that the rise of piracy in mid-nineteenth-century China originated in the time that "the barbarian atmosphere was unquiet" (*yifen bujing* 夷氛不靖), local Qing officials

[26] Cree, Journals, vol. 5, 1841, 19.
[27] Lung, "Britain and the Suppression," 156–57.
[28] Cree, Journals, vol. 5, 1841.

made numerous reports to the throne on trials of captured Chinese waterborne bandits.[29] Frequently criticizing the proliferation of raiders on water during and after the war in memorials as well as proclamations to the Chinese populace, the Qing provincial authorities often attributed the rise of piracy to the British slackening of their own forces, and also to the failure of Qing forces of patrolling the waters due to their occupation in defending strategic positions against the British.[30]

During the war, Chinese waterborne marauders were so daring that they targeted not only Chinese people but also Westerners, who included the highest authorities of the China Expedition. After a great typhoon on July 21, 1841, the British joint plenipotentiaries Charles Elliot and Gordon Bremer, who was simultaneously the naval commander-in-chief, took the cutter *Louisa* to travel from Macao to Hong Kong. The *Louisa* having been wrecked, Elliot and Bremer, and some other officers and crew, stayed on an island near Macao overnight. In the morning,

> Soon after daylight they discovered two Chinamen. . . . After some hesitation and difficulty, a bargain was at length made to convey Captain Elliot for 1000 dollars to Macao, in a fishing-boat; but, shortly afterwards, another party of Chinese fishermen, coming up from a neighboring village [and who "flocked to the Island in great numbers" as the *Canton Press* reported], commenced robbing all the shipwrecked people, stripping them of their clothes, and, among other things, getting possession of a star of the Hanoverian Guelphic Order [owned by Bremer].

Finally a Chinese people who "called himself a comprador" stepped in, conveyed Elliot and Bremer in a Chinese boat to Macao two days after the typhoon, and received a reward of

[29] For example, see Memorial by Liu Yunke and Guan Yuqun, Dec. 19, 1843, *Ming Qing gongcang Taiwan*, vol. 168, 262; Memorial by Liu Yunke and Liang Baochang, Mar. 23, 1848, DCJHZZ, 04-01-01-0825-076.
[30] *Canton Press*, Nov. 23, 1839; Proclamation to Lin Zexu and Deng Tingzhen, Jan. 5, 1840, *Chouban yiwu shimo*, vol. 9, 7a–7b; Memorial by Liu Yunke, Nov. 29, 1841, ZDLD, *Dang'an*, vol. 4, 379; Memorial by Yiliang and Liu Hong'ao, Jan. 13, 1843, DCJHZZ, 04-01-01-0804-006; Memorial by Qi Gong, Apr. 12, 1843, DCJHZZ, 04-01-01-0813-044; Memorial by Liu Yunke, Apr. 21, 1845, DCJHZZ, 04-01-01-0820-068; Memorial by Liu Yunke, Dec. 7, 1848, DCJHZZ, 04-01-01-0826-073.

$3,000. As the *Canton Register* commented, "had not the man who brought their excellencies back to Macao in his boat interfered in their behalf and protection, the English expedition in China would probably have been deprived of both its civil and military heads."[31]

Piracy during the Opium War and in its aftermath resembled piracy in other late imperial times. The first aspect of the resemblance concerns the diverse socioeconomic backgrounds and activities of the Chinese pirates. The Qing authorities claimed that before and during the war, many Chinese civilian craft were engaged in both banditry and the opium traffic. In October 1841, on the Jiulong side of the Hong Kong harbor, when a heavily armed Chinese craft that had taken a "salt junk" saw the long boat of the British transport *Futty Salam* coming toward her, the pirate craft immediately "ran up an opium smuggler's flag."[32] As in the preceding centuries, Chinese pirates established associations (*tang* 堂) and leagues among themselves, participated in clandestine waterborne trade, and established protection networks in the waters of southeast China in the mid-nineteenth century.[33]

Corresponding to many other Chinese pirates in late imperial times, many waterborne raiders during the 1839–1842 Qing-British hostilities, and in the following years in the mid-nineteenth century, were fishers and sailors on board Chinese merchant and fishing craft, who often claimed to be impoverished or suffer from poor catch in their trials by the local Qing administration. In 1841, Chen Gaocheng and twenty-six others sailed two craft to catch fish in the sea in Guangdong. In May, their craft were blown to the waters of southeastern Guangdong. There Chen, seeing that the "fishing season was not

[31] Bernard, *The Nemesis*, 214–16; C*anton Press*, July 24, 1841; *Canton Register*, July 27, 1841.
[32] *Canton Press*, Nov. 13, 1841.
[33] Lung, "Britain and the Suppression."

good" (*yuxun buwang* 魚汛不旺), invited some fellow fishers to commit coastal banditry.[34] Moreover, similar to the South China pirates collaborating with Vietnam's Tay Son regime in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth century, many Chinese pirates in 1839–1842 purportedly helped the British to fight the war and took advantage of their cooperation with the British. They were accused of being "Han evildoers" by many local Qing officials, who often regarded pirates, smugglers, Han evildoers, fishers, and the Dan as the same group of people.[35]

As the local Qing authorities admitted, their anti-British measures of closing and blockading ports and the sea ban (see Chapter 2) drove into piracy many Chinese coastal and riverine people who made their livings on water. Nevertheless, not all the pirates in wartime made their livings on water before resorting to waterborne raiding. The local Qing authorities contended that many disbanded township militiamen became waterborne bandits after the war.[36] Moreover, and paradoxically, river and sea bandits were recruited into the Qing's local water militia.[37] As in other times in late imperial China, during the 1839–1842 Qing-British hostilities many Chinese littoral people acted across land regions and waters to pursue their own socioeconomic activities and expand their socioeconomic networks according to the changing political, military, and socioeconomic circumstances. This will be further discussed in Chapter 6.

Though greatly restrained and weakened by the British invading forces, the Qing naval forces were still capable, to some degree, of deterring and quelling crimes on water in

[34] Memorial by Qi Gong and Cheng Yuecai, Apr. 12, 1843, DCJHZZ, 04-01-01-0813-041. On the socioeconomic backgrounds of Chinese pirates in late imperial China, see Antony, *Like Froth*; Murray, *Pirates*.
[35] Murray, *Pirates*; Wang, *White Lotus Rebels*, 81–109, 209–29; Memorial by Yišan et al., ZDLD, *Dang'an*, vol. 4, 42; Memorial by Yišan et al., Nov. 4, 1841, ZDLD, *Dang'an*, vol. 4, 304–05; Memorial by Lü Xianji, July 2, 1842, ZDLD, *Dang'an*, vol. 5, 529.
[36] Memorial by Qi Gong, Apr. 12, 1843, DCJHZZ, 04-01-01-0813-044.
[37] Li, *Li Xingyuan*, 372

wartime. In addition to surprising the British, water militiamen locally recruited by the Qing government (see Chapter 2) took part in capturing pirates on the Qing Empire's sea frontier during the Qing-British hostilities.[38] In mid-1841, during the fishing season in eastern Zhejiang, when the Qing government temporarily recovered Zhoushan, Qing naval officers led water militiamen to patrol the eastern Zhejiang waters, capturing numerous pirates and their craft.[39] On one occasion in early July 1841, three piratical craft and eighty sea bandits, along with 1,400 *jin* 斤 of opium, were seized.[40] In Guangdong, in a robbery in the Pearl River Delta in 1842, "the crews from a flotilla consisting of four large boats, landed in the villages of Bongkong and Syheu, about 3 or 4 miles below Whampoa, and there openly attacked the pawnbroker's shops." After the incident, the Qing soldiery and police in Guangdong managed to capture some of the pirates, from whom the local magistrate was "in full possession of all particulars which may probably lead to the apprehension of some of the parties, and possibly to the recovery of the property."[41] Moreover, as in pre-war times, the Qing authorities recruited merchant and fishing craft into cruising forces during and after the 1839–1842 hostilities.

The above examples point to the fact that although wartime Chinese piracy was too serious for the weakening Qing naval forces to totally eradicate, the Qing forces were able to perform some of their conventional tasks against pirates while fighting against the British. After the war, although the pre-war weaknesses of Qing naval forces persisted and the slackening Qing naval power was unable to completely "tame" the sea frontier, the

[38] For example, see Wu Wenrong, Nov. 12, 1840, DCJHZZ, 04-01-01-0790-015; Memorial by Qi Gong and Cheng Yuecai, June 3, 1843, DCJHZZ, 04-01-01-0813-034.
[39] Memorial by Liu Yunke, June 29, 1841, ZDLD, *Dang'an*, vol. 3, 519; Memorial by Liu Yunke, Aug. 12, 1841, ZDLD et al., *Yapian zhanzheng zai Zhoushan*, 269.
[40] Memorial by Lin Zexu, Aug. 7, 1840, Ningbo shi shehuikexuejie lianhehui dang'anguan and ZDLD, *Zhejiang Yapian zhanzheng*, vol. 1, 486.
[41] *Canton Press*, Mar. 5, 1842.

partial recovery of Qing naval power, and frequent reports on seizure of pirates in the post-war period, suggest that as far as the equilibrium of power on water is concerned, the Qing naval forces did not totally give way to the surging sea and river banditry in the 1840s.[42]

In addition to preserving a degree of competence at piracy suppression, the Qing government even retained some control over marauders on water throughout the anti-opium campaign and the anti-British war in 1839–1842. During that time, while the Qing authorities denounced many waterborne bandits as "inner evildoers" on the empire's sea frontier (see Chapter 2), some contemporary Westerners accused the Qing authorities of collaborating with those who robbed opium-laden craft, Western and Chinese alike, and other Western vessels.[43] After the piratical attack on the opium vessel *Hellas* in May 1840 near Nan'ao Island, a number of Qing officers, the *Canton Press* reported, "arrived in Canton [Guangzhou], claiming rewards and promotion for having fought and destroyed an Opium vessel."[44] On this the newspaper editor surmised:

> [T]hose who attacked the *Hellas* were real pirates, but that they had made an agreement with the [Qing] naval officers that, in consideration of their attacking the foreign vessel, the whole of the plunder, or part, should be theirs, whilst the mandarin's accounts to their government, or *their* [original emphasis] prowess in sinking the ship should remain uncontradicted, thus giving to the Pirates the risk and prospective profit, whilst the naval heroes hoped easily to reap the laurels.[45]

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[42] After the Opium War, the local Qing authorities memorialized that they received less reports on piracy, and they attributed this to the anti-piracy efforts of the recovering Qing naval forces. See Memorial by Liu Yunke, Apr. 21, 1845, DCJHZZ, 04-01-01-0820-068; Memorial by Liu Yunke, Dec. 7, 1848, DCJHZZ, 04-01-01-0826-073. Although the Qing forces partly recovered in the post-war period, their ability to subdue banditry on water in the 1840s should not be overestimated. The decrease in the number of reported cases of piracy during that time may have had something to do with the scarcity of Qing naval forces, their dread of pirates, the collaboration between Qing naval forces and Chinese pirates, and the extension of protection networks maintained by pirates.

[43] *Chinese Repository*, vol. 8, no. 11, Mar. 1840, 598, vol. 9, no. 2, June 1840, 106–07; Memorial by Qi Gong, Apr. 12, 1843, DCJHZZ, 04-01-01-0813-044; Memorial by Yišan et al., Jan. 2, 1842, ZDLD, *Dang'an*, vol. 4, 499; Memorial by Lü Xianji, July 2, 1842, ZDLD, *Dang'an*, vol. 5, 529.

[44] *Canton Press*, May 30 and June 20, 1840. On the attack against the *Hellas*, see Lubbock, *The Opium Clipper*, 180–82.

[45] *Canton Press*, June 20, 1840.

Some local Qing officials allegedly recruited Chinese waterborne robbers to fight against foreign opium smugglers and the British Expedition.[46] In 1842, some British vessels, probably laden with opium, anchored in Nan'ao and Quanzhou in eastern Guangdong. It was believed that "the mandarins have engaged the services of a noted pirate, who is to command 35 war junks, the crew of which beyond their regular number are to be strengthened by about 1000 soldiers, wherewith to attack the English vessels."[47] It was also thought that the Qing authorities granted to some Chinese vessels licenses to carry arms during the war. The British authorities in Hong Kong criticized some local Qing officials in Guangdong for distributing arms to pirate vessels, suspecting that "the pirates had been given sanction by the Chinese government to molest British trade."[48]

In fact, no concrete evidence indicates any real anti-British collaboration between the Qing authorities and Chinese pirates. Nevertheless, some Qing officials did plan to recruit waterborne raiders to annihilate the British.[49] After the British attacked Xiamen and occupied Gulangyu in 1841, the Qing leaders in Fujian contacted some sea robbers and intended to draw their support for surprising the British at night. The plan did not materialize because the pirates concerned, after estimating their own strength, were not confident of succeeding in the proposed attack, and because the Fujian authorities were worried that the congregation of pirates would lead to the rise of villainous activities in

[46] Memorial by Yišan et al., Nov. 4, 1841, ZDLD, *Dang'an*, vol. 4, 304–05; Memorial by Ijing, Jan. 1, 1842, ZDLD, *Dang'an*, vol. 4, 591–93; Memorial by Lü Xianji, July 2, 1842, ZDLD, *Dang'an*, vol. 5, 529; "Yingyi ru Yue," Zhongguo shixuehui, *Yapian zhanzheng*, vol. 3.
[47] *Canton Press*, Apr. 23, 1842. For another alleged case in which the Qing authorities manipulated pirates to attack the British, see *Friend of China*, Apr. 28, 1842.
[48] Davis, *China*, vol. 1, 153–54; Lung, "Britain and the Suppression," 97.
[49] In "Heishuidang kang-Ying jiwen" (Hearsays about the anti-British activities of the Black Water Society) written in the Republican period, Zhuang Jingzhong (Qiuwoshanren) gave an account of how the Qing authorities recruited members of the Black Water Society, a pirate group in Zhejiang, to fight against the British who occupied eastern Zhejiang. The existence of the Black Water Society and the validity of the story, however, have still been open to debate. See Ji, "Heishuidang kang-Ying"; Lin, "Qiuwoshanren"; Qiuwoshanren, "Heishuidang kang-Ying jiwen."

local society.[50] This example best illustrates the power equilibrium between Qing forces, the British Expedition, and Chinese pirates in southeast China during the Opium War. It also indicates the dilemma of the Qing state to deal with both the "inner evildoers" and "outer barbarians" on the empire's sea frontier at the same time, which has been discussed in Chapter 2.

The Qing regular and auxiliary forces may have even committed some pirate-like assaults against the "barbarian craft" in the outer waters. In the incident of the atrocious attack on the *Black Joke* of Jardine, Matheson & Co. in August 1839, "three Chinese boats" robbed the passage schooner on her way from Macao to Hong Kong. Many passengers were cruelly murdered. The surviving tindal, reported the *Canton Press*, "most positively affirms that the boats were in every respect like mandarin boats, and having, as he guessed, about 300 men on board." Moreover, a "mandarin-cap" was left behind on the *Black Joke*. The incident hastened the departure of the British from Macao.[51] Were the attacking force "mandarin boats," the *Black Joke* incident would indicate the ability of the Qing state to exert over control some of the outer-water regions during their hostilities against the British in 1839–1842.[52]

The Rise of British Naval Power in China and Its Limitations

Notwithstanding the real or imaginary association between the Qing authorities and Chinese waterborne bandits, the British Expedition certainly weakened Qing naval forces

[50] Memorial by Yiliang and Liu Hong'ao, Apr. 4, 1842, ZDLD, *Dang'an*, vol. 5, 147. Su Tingyu, a temporarily retired central official, also intended to employ at a handsome reward the sea bandits led by a Chen in the waters of Fujian's Tong'an district to capture the "barbarian craft" anchoring at Gulangyu. He may have proposed this to the provincial authorities. See Li, *Li Xingyuan*, vol. 1, 403–04.
[51] *Canton Press*, Aug. 31, 1839.
[52] Contemporary Westerners, however, sometimes mistook the craft directed by the Qing authorities or laden with water militiamen as pirate craft. For example, see Xia, *Zhong-Xi jishi*, vol. 5, 1–2. This has something to do with the inability of Westerners to distinguish between different kinds of Chinese craft.

across southeast China in battle after battle and thus the latter's capability to curb piracy. In the meantime, advancing along the coast and rivers of southeast China and occupying vast littoral regions (see Chapter 3), the British expeditionary force took over some of the tasks performed by the Qing forces to combat piracy. During the China War in 1840–1842, the British naval forces patrolled the waters neighboring the occupied regions; pursued, captured, dispersed, and scared away marauders on water; and rescued Chinese islanders, fishers, and those on board Chinese fishing and merchant craft from piratical attacks. On Hong Kong Island, the British authorities proclaimed to encourage Chinese merchants to report sea banditry to the British officials, and promise to reward the informants and arrest the culprits accordingly.[53] The British Expedition sometimes cut off the queues of captured pirates before setting them free. The British administrations in the insular possessions of Hong Kong and Zhoushan tried many pirates arrested in southeast China's littorals during the war and in its aftermath in the 1840s.[54]

In wartime, the British forces engaged in subduing piracy included steamers, ships of wars, transports, and their boats. They carried out the job in various littoral regions subject to British naval control in Guangdong, Fujian, Zhejiang, and Jiangsu provinces. In Zhejiang's Zhoushan Archipelago, whose waters and neighboring coast were swarming with pirates, the corvette *Pylades* dispersed, took, and burnt pirate craft throughout the British occupation of Zhoushan Island.[55] In Fujian, as the Qing authorities conceded, the British squadron stationed in and patrolling the Gulangyu and Xiamen waters after the

[53] Proclamation by Elliot, June 7, 1841, FO 931/20.
[54] *Chinese Repository*, vol. 8, no. 11, Mar. 1840, 598.
[55] *Chinese Repository*, vol. 10, no. 5, May 1841, 252–53; Cunynghame, *An Aide-de-camp's Recollections*, 54; Elliot to Ilibu, Oct. 23, 1840, FO 17/50, 46a; Fox, *British Admirals*, 89; *Friend of China*, Mar. 30, 1843.

British assault in August 1841 played a significant part in checking waterborne robbery.[56] A correspondent of the *Canton Register* vividly described one dramatic pursuit of Chinese pirates by the squadron:

> On sunday, the 3rd inst. [October 3, 1841], the pinnace of the Druid [a HMS] had rather a dashing affair. About 7 a. m. four large ladrone boats were seen firing at a junk under sail, two or three miles distant; the pinnace, commanded by mr Need, mate, was immediately sent in shore; h.m.'s brig Algerine also got under weight; after the pinnace had chased for a considerable distance and was gaining on the ladrones the latter ran into a small creek in one of the six islands which are between Chappel island and the anchorage; the pinnace followed, but on entering the creek grounded on a rock, and while in the act of getting off, the ladrones came out in three boats with large guns on board; the pinnace immediately opened and kept up a well-directed fire, which obliged the ladrones to retreat; they then ran two of their boats on the beach, and one stuck on a rock; after they had had many killed, they look to the water; some were drowned, and those who did escape fell into the hands of the fishermen who were waiting on the beach with bamboos.[57]

On the Yangzi River, immediately before the British struck Zhenjiang in July 1842, "bands of river robbers" off Jinshan Island (see map 3.6, page 128) emptied Chinese craft abandoned by their crews and floating down the river. The British boarded those at anchor, turned the plunderers out, and conveyed the craft to a creek under British protection. Numerous and their types various, the rescued craft were loaded with salt, "oil, varnish, dried fish, samshu [a Chinese spirit], oil-cake, dried sea-weed . . . sugar, lime, bales of common nankin cloth, besides wares and furniture of various description." The salt-laden vessels had a "solitary mast of 90 feet and upwards," "frequently a single spar."[58]

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[56] Memorial by Duwanhūwa (Duanhua), Jan. 19, 1842, Fujian shifandaxue lishixi and Fujian difangshi yanjiushi, *Yapian zhanzheng zai Min Tai*, 142; Memorial by Liu Hong'ao, May 2, 1843, ZDLD, *Dang'an*, vol. 7, 125–26.
[57] *Canton Register*, Oct. 19, 1841.
[58] Loch, *The Closing Events*, 98–100.

The tasks for maintaining peace on water that the Qing naval forces failed to fully perform and the British expeditionary force undertook in wartime included attacking and routing pirates, patrolling the sea and rivers, and also convoying Chinese craft. Having received a report from some Chinese locals that piracy obstructed the upcoast navigation of grain-laden vessels from Shipu of Xiangshan district, Zhejiang, the expedition's naval commander-in-chief sent a ship of war to escort all the trading vessels safely to Ningbo.[59] In many cases, the British Expedition acted against piracy upon the request of Chinese people on land or on board merchantmen. "We," Plenipotentiary Charles Elliot reported to London two weeks after the 1840 taking of Zhoushan, "had lately at the request of certain peaceable islanders in the neighbourhood of Chusan, driven away a band of native pirates, who had ravaged their dwellings, and injured the people. [O]n board one native merchant vessel off Ningbo we had found many of the crew cruelly mutilated by these ruffians."[60]

After the war, British naval forces continued to play a significant role in maintaining order along the coast and rivers in southeast China. Although, according to the peace settlement, no British ship was allowed to pass beyond the north of the Yangzi River or arrive in Taiwan, one British naval cruiser was allowed to stay in each of the five treaty ports under the 1843 Supplementary Treaty of Humenzhai. Since early 1844, a dozen or so British naval vessels were assigned to the China Station of the British Navy, whose headquarters was set up in Hong Kong.[61] Moreover, holding Gulangyu until 1845, Zhoushan until 1846, and Hong Kong throughout the mid-nineteenth century and beyond,

[59] Memoranda, 1842, FO 17/57, 323–23a; Memoranda, 1842, Sasaki, *Ahen sensō*, 215–16.
[60] Elliot to Palmerston, July 9, 1840, FO 17/38, 75a–76. For other examples of the British suppression of piracy upon the appeal from the Chinese during the Opium War, see Proclamation to Yiliang and Liu Hong'ao, Mar. 10, 1843, ZDLD, *Dang'an*, vol. 7, 54; Memorial by Liu Hong'ao, June 4, 1843, ZYJY, *Buyi*, 48.
[61] Graham, *The China Station*, 260–61, 267; Ilibu, Kiyeng, Niu to Pottinger, Sept. 1, 1842, FO 682/1975/79. The Royal Navy's China Station was separated from the East Indies Station in 1844.

the British forces and administrations in the three insular possessions guarded their coast against raiders from the sea. They also patrolled and combated banditry in the waters adjoining the three islands. In 1847, the British consular authorities in China established the Admiralty Court in Hong Kong, which was responsible for the trial of pirates captured in the coastal waters who targeted the British.[62]

Despite their rise in strength, formidableness in the eyes of Chinese pirates, and wartime promise to curb piracy, the British naval forces did not dominate China's coast and waterways during the China War and in the years that followed.[63] Although the British Expedition authorities realized that the slackening of the Qing military resulted in the proliferation of crimes and social instability throughout China, they did not foresee that they would be obliged to take up the heavy responsibility of maintaining order on water across the vast regions directly and indirectly affected by the war. They were reluctant to be solely engaged in the anti-piracy tasks. Once the first truce was concluded in October 1840, the expedition authorities, then in Zhoushan, expressed to the Qing authorities in Zhejiang their willingness to cooperate to suppress piracy in the Wenzhou waters. The Qing authorities, however, rejected the offer.[64] After the war and until the early 1850s, the British naval forces refused to protect coastal trade that only involved Chinese people, arguing that such protection fell beyond the scope of their responsibility and that it was extremely difficult for them to distinguish between small-time pirates and bona fide traders.[65]

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[62] Norton-Kyshe, *The History*, vol. 1, 174.
[63] In the above case of the encounter between the *Futty Salam*'s long boat and the heavily armed Chinese pirate craft, although only three British officers and some lascars were on the transport's boat, the British party boarded the pirate craft with no difficulty before the pirates "had time sufficiently to recover from their panic to fire a shot." The editor of the *Canton Press* was surprised of the fact that the pirates allowed themselves to be taken by so small a British taskforce. See *Canton Press*, Nov. 13, 1841.
[64] *Gengzi xinchou haijun*, 206; Elliot to Ilibu, Oct. 23, 1840, FO 17/50, 46a–47; Ilibu to Elliot, Oct. 26, 1840, FO 17/50, 50a–52.
[65] Munn, *Anglo-China*, 72.

Moreover, the British diplomacy with the Qing mattered. Generally speaking, until 1847, the British diplomatic authorities in China had imposed considerable restraints on the activities of the British Navy in China, lest they affected the amicable Qing-British relations in the years following the 1842 conclusion of peace.[66]

Not only the will, the scattered British forces also lacked the means to undertake the challenging task of eradicating pirates in southeast China, who infested the coast and waterways in wartime and in the decades that followed. "[O]n the sea, we have not the means of protecting native boats from the Pirates," a Western observer plainly conceded in May 1842.[67] After the war, the British naval forces in China, though taking spasmodic actions against pirates, proved to be insufficient to function as an effective anti-pirate and convoy force along the long and turtuous coast in the 1840s. The British suppression of piracy was also constrained by the International Law, under which the British Navy was not allowed to capture pirates within 3 miles from the China coast and on China's rivers, regions that were subject to Qing jurisdiction. The High Court of Hong Kong, moreover, had no authority of dealing with cases of piracy that occurred beyond the boundaries of the waters neighboring Hong Kong.[68] Although the British naval forces often broke the International Law and unilaterally attacked and arrested pirates in the waters and regions under Qing jurisdiction, which invited protests from the local Qing authorities, after the Qing-British War the British authorities in China often passed to the local Qing administration Chinese pirates who robbed Chinese people in areas within Qing judicial control.[69]

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[66] Graham, *The China Station*.
[67] *Friend of China*, June 16, 1842.
[68] Munn, *Anglo-China*, 102.
[69] Ibid.

Conclusion

The 1839–1842 Qing-British hostilities upset the pre-1839 balance of power in southeast China by slackening Qing naval forces and Qing control over the sea frontier, which unleashed waterborne banditry across a huge section of the littoral regions. The diverse socioeconomic backgrounds of Chinese waterborne bandits and their collaboration with the local Qing authorities and foreign power during the war and in its aftermath indicate the resemblance of piracy during that time and piracy in other late imperial times. Despite the weakening of Qing naval power in wartime, the association between the local Qing authorities and Chinese pirates on some occasions suggests the partial ability of the Qing state to control its sea frontier.

Meanwhile, the British Expedition's campaigns across southeast China in 1840–1842 witnessed the rise of British naval power in the maritime and river regions. They took up some of the anti-piracy tasks that the Qing government failed to perform. The weakening of Qing naval power, the surge in Chinese piracy, and the rise of British naval power, however, did not result in the domination of either the Chinese pirate or British forces in southeast China's waters, but merely an absence of any militarily hegemonic power in the vast war-affected littoral regions in southeast China that the thesis conceptualizes as water borders. In the water-border regions, both the Qing state and the British authorities and forces sought to impose their own rule over the Chinese, which led to clashes between them. A best example of such competing and overlapping Qing and British control over the Chinese littoral population is the Qing and British endeavors to regulate Chinese merchant craft and their trade during the Opium War. This will be subject of the next chapter.

PART III: OVERLAPS AND INTERSTICES OF EMPIRES

Chapter 5:

Ransom, License, and Customs: Qing and British Control over Chinese Merchant Craft and Waterborne Trade

Captain [Charles] *Elliot and* [John] *Morrison . . . returned* [to Zhoushan Island] *leaving part of the squadron to blockade Ningpo and part to blockade Shanghae. The Chinese, however, were beforehand with them, for they sent an immense number of junks to choke up the mouth of the river* [i.e. the Yong]*; so it is now an amusing struggle whether the Chinese shall more effectually keep the British out, or the British shall block the Chinese in.*

Canton Register, September 1, 1840

Introduction

In addition to the Qing Empire's sea frontier, a destabilized Chinese socioeconomic order, and an absence of any militarily hegemonic power on water, one striking feature of southeast China's water borders during the Opium War, on which Part III (Chapters 5 and 6) will center, is the emergence of overlaps and interstices of the Qing and British empires. By looking at Qing and British rule over Chinese merchant craft and their trade, this chapter will examine how the Qing and the British competed for imposing control over Chinese people in the littoral regions during the war. The next chapter will revolve around the socioeconomic activities of the Chinese people in fissures of Qing rule and the newly formed interstices of the Qing and British empires.

To regulate Chinese trading craft and their activities, the Qing authorities employed the age-long measures for "calming" the sea frontier detailed in Chapter 2, namely the *baojia* and *aojia* systems, mutual pledge system, ship registration, and the recruitment of

Chinese merchantmen and their crew. Added to these conventional controlling mechanisms was the Qing's "traditional" maritime customs—vis-à-vis the maritime customs established in the treaty ports north of Guangzhou after the Opium War—and internal customs along the coast and waterways. Registering Chinese merchant vessels, granting them licenses, inspecting cargoes and crews on board, and levying duties from the ship owners and merchant-shippers, the Qing maritime and internal customs played an important part in preempting and eliminating banditry and clandestine trade on water, thereby both restricting and protecting Chinese merchantmen and their trade. The chapter will base the discussions on the rich scholarship, mainly in the Mainland and Taiwan, on the Qing maritime and internal customs.[1]

The Qing-British armed conflicts and the concomitant change of the balance of power on water in 1839–1842 (see Chapters 3 and 4), however, resulted in the slackening of Qing control over Chinese merchant craft and their trade. This is exemplified by the loosening control over the merchantmen and their trade by the Qing customs stations, many of which only partly functioned or even closed due to the British threat, blockade, attack, and occupation.

While Qing control over Chinese merchant craft and their trade loosened, the British Expedition swept vast maritime and riverine areas in southeast China, restrained or expelled the Qing civil, military, and customs administrations, and established control over Chinese trading craft and their trade in the blockaded waters and occupied territories. The harsh side of British rule over Chinese waterborne trade during the China War, which resembled British rule over "indigenous" people in other "imperial wars" in the early

[1] One of the most representative works in English on the Qing maritime customs is Hans van de Ven's *Breaking with the Past: The Maritime Customs Service and the Global Origins of Modernity in China* (2014).

modern and modern periods, expressed itself in the British demand for ransoms and the "prize-agent system," under which many of the captured trading craft and cargoes were put on public sale. In regions subject to British naval blockade and occupation, the expedition issued passports to Chinese merchant craft that had paid the required ransoms, traded in British-occupied ports, or traded with the British settlements in Southeast Asia.

Based on the naval blockade and passport system, the British Expedition, in eastern Zhejiang and beyond, imposed taxation on Chinese merchant-shippers. While the British wartime tariffs were lower than the Qing customs duties, the former was not levied from every Chinese merchantman. To promote *both* Western and Chinese maritime trade, the expedition authorities established free ports, formal or *de facto*, in the insular possessions of Hong Kong, Zhoushan, and Gulangyu, exempting Chinese trading vessels from tariffs. Compared to Qing rule over Chinese merchant craft and their trade, British rule over the merchantmen and their waterborne trade was also both restrictive and protective in nature. This indicates the similarities between the Qing Empire and the British wartime frontier regime in China in terms of their rule over the Chinese littoral population on the water borders.

The simultaneous endeavors of the Qing and the British Expedition authorities to establish or strengthen control over Chinese merchantmen and their trade inevitably brought about clashes between them. In some cases, the Qing customs administration was expelled from regions under British occupation or blockade; in other cases, Qing control, though weakened, remained locally present. In the eyes of the Qing rulers, the free ports established by the British Expedition were nothing but illicit ports where Chinese merchantmen evaded tariffs due to the Qing customs.

Significantly, many war-affected regions in southeast China fell into both Qing and British control. The regions under Qing and British blockade, for example, as the chapter's epitaph shows, sometimes overlapped. The local Qing administration and the British expeditionary force occasionally exacted duties from the same trading craft. The overlapping or conflicting Qing and British control over Chinese waterborne trade, however, did not necessarily cause Chinese merchantmen to fall into the nets of both of their control, or even just either of them. Many Chinese trading craft remained outside both Qing and British control during the war and its aftermath in the mid-nineteenth century. Many Chinese merchant craft escaped taxation, blockade, and registration, Qing and British alike. They took advantage of the emergence of the interstices of the Qing and British empires. The 1840–1842 Qing-British War thus brought about the overlapping of the British and Qing empires, which contributed to the rise of waterborne trade that was clandestine in the eyes of both the Qing and British Expedition authorities during and after the war.

Qing Control over Chinese Waterborne Trade

Between Restriction and Protection

Since the sea ban was lifted in the late seventeenth century, the Qing authorities, out of financial and security concerns, strove to regulate the activities of Chinese merchant vessels to eradicate illicit trade and robbery on water. In Qing times, many vessels registered as fishing ships were actually merchant craft, and vice versa. Many of them switched between fishery and trade. (Generally speaking, those registered as fishing vessels were smaller than

seagoing merchant vessels.[2]) Although the Qing regulations on Chinese trading vessels and those on fishing craft were not entirely the same, they were often mutually applicable.[3] Chinese merchant craft were subject to the conventional measures adopted by the Qing authorities for controlling the empire's sea frontier, namely the pledging system; the registration of ships, ship owners, and people on board; the enlistment of merchant vessels and sailors into the water-militia; the self-surveillance and mutual responsibility systems of *baojia* and *aojia*; and naval patrol (see Chapters 2 and 4). These regulative measures can also be regarded as the Qing government's protection for Chinese waterborne trade against potential threats on water, such as piracy.

The convoying service provided by the Qing naval forces indicates the double-edged nature of the Qing policy toward Chinese maritime and riverine trade. While Qing official escorting cruisers were usually available for Chinese merchantmen to hire, in most cases it was the Qing civil or naval administration that took the initiative to carry out the convoy. The Qing naval forces guarding different sections of waters were usually obliged to travel with the merchant craft within their sphere of control. For example, it was reported that on August 5, 1839, more than four months into Commissioner Lin's anti-opium campaign, some Qing naval personnel convoyed six Chinese merchantmen from Huangpu to Humen after the authorities in Guangzhou city inspected the vessels and labeled their cargoes. The Humen naval administration then examined the craft in question, updated their labels, and assigned a naval officer to guard the craft until they reached the waters under the sway of the Dapeng battalion. In addition to checking the vessels and changing the labels, the Dapeng authorities arranged a cruiser as well as some naval officers and soldiers

[2] Chen, "Qingdai zhongye," 79.
[3] Yang, "Pinhai"; Yang, "Government Registration."

to convoy the merchantmen to the Pinghai battalion.[4] Such convoying service served not only to protect Chinese merchant vessels from pirate attacks, but also to preempt their participation in clandestine trade and robbery on water.

Maritime and Internal Customs

Geographically speaking, the Qing customs can be roughly divided into four categories: customs barriers (*ka* 卡 or *guan* 關) on the Qing Empire's inland borders, internal customs (*queguan*) on overland routes within the empire, internal customs along the coast and waterways, and maritime customs (*haiguan*). The latter two constituted part and parcel of the Qing management of Chinese waterborne trade within the empire and overseas trade.[5] Upon its complete withdrawal of the sea ban, stabilization of the maritime frontier in southeast China, and legalization of maritime trade in the first half of the 1680s, the Qing state set up four maritime customs in the mid-1680s, in Guangdong, Fujian, Zhejiang, and Jiangsu provinces.[6] The maritime customs headquarters, substations, and checkpoints spread on the empire's sea frontier in southeast China, dotting the seaboard, its adjacent islands, the main rivers' lower reaches, and, in Jiangsu, some Grand Canal sections. Apart from Western trade with China, the maritime customs were responsible for managing

[4] Deng to Lin, Dec. 15, 1839, FO 931/4. It was reported that during the gales, one of the merchant craft, with one officer and one solider on board, was blown to as far as Jiangsu's Wusong mouth on September 27, 1839, more than one and a half months after its departure from the Pearl River Delta.

[5] This categorization is based on the classifications by the historians Ni Yuping and Qi Meiqin, although they have failed to consider internal customs along the China coast and in the hinterland. See Ni, *Qingchao Jia Dao*, 12; Qi, *Qingdai queguan*, 337. The thesis adopts the historian Huang Guosheng's translation of *queguan* as "internal customs." See Huang, "The Chinese Maritime Customs." While Qi and Ni have considered the "traditional" maritime customs (vis-à-vis the "modern" maritime customs established after the Opium War) as one kind of *queguan* (see *Qingdai queguan*, 8, 11, 201; Ni, *Qingchao Jia Dao*, 133), the thesis, following the Qing official usage, differentiates the pre-1842 maritime customs from the internal customs. *Queguan* can also be called "tax-customs" (*chaoguan* 鈔關, *shuiguan* 稅關, or *shuiju* 稅局). See Deng, *Qingdai qianqi*, 1.

[6] Gang, *The Qing Opening*, 79–98; Huang, *Yapian zhanzheng qian*, 16–23; Ni, *Qingchao Jia Dao*, 103.

Chinese maritime trade and also a substantial part of Chinese river-borne trade.[7] Cotton from eastern Zhejiang's river regions of Shaoxing and Yuyao districts, for example, was exported by sea through the maritime customs port in Zhenhai.[8] Many of the far-flung internal customs also dealt with Chinese coastal trade and Chinese trade along China's waterways. The internal customs houses responsible for Chinese river and canal trade were usually located at water transportation hubs.[9]

How did the Qing maritime and internal customs manage Chinese waterborne trade? The stations, substations, and checkpoints of the customs can roughly be classified into those that issued exit permits or registered craft, and those that collected tariffs.[10] Generally speaking, three types of duties were levied from Chinese merchant-shippers and ship owners at the maritime and internal customs tollhouses along the coast and waterways. They were cargo tax (*huoshui* 貨稅), ship tax (*chuanchao*, *chuanliao* 船料, or *liangtoushui* 梁頭稅), and various kinds of formalized (*guigong* 歸公) or ad-hoc additional taxes and surcharges, for example tael melting fees (*huohao* 火耗). In a modern sense, the cargo tax can be classified into import, export, and transit duties. The ship tax was levied according to the length and width (*liangtou* 梁頭) of the trading vessels. The principles and guidelines

[7] While Western merchant vessels were allowed to trade not only in Guangdong but also in Fujian and Zhejiang before 1757, Western trade with China was chiefly limited to Guangzhou from 1757 to the eve of the Opium War. This, however, does not mean that Western merchantmen were all prohibited from trading beyond Guangzhou during that period. The Qing regulations dated the late eighteenth century clearly stipulated that the "outer barbarians" were still allowed to trade in Xiamen. In 1783, a Spanish merchant vessel from Manila arrived in Xiamen and traded with the Chinese. A similar occasion took place in 1809. Moreover, many Europeans traded with Guangzhou and Xiamen via Singapore. See Huang, *Yapian zhanzheng qian*, 159–65, 168, 176; Huang and Xie, "Qingdai Min haiguan."

[8] Huang, "The Chinese Maritime Customs," 182.

[9] Some of the Qing maritime customs were closely associated with the internal customs. As Huang has argued, "the Shanghai customs played an important role in regulating the relationship between maritime trade and the internal trade centered on the Yangzi and Grand Canal networks, managed and policed by the internal inland customs. The two customs systems were carefully differentiated and separated, and the interface between the two was closely monitored." See Huang, "The Chinese Maritime Customs," 174.

[10] Huang, "The Chinese Maritime Customs"; Huang, *Yapian zhanzheng qian*, 125–27; Qi, *Qingdai queguan*, 141–46; Van de Ven, *Breaking with the Past*, 51–60.

on the categorization of taxable cargos, measurement of merchantmen's dimension, rates of cargo and ship taxes, and also the multifarious regular and irregular additional taxes and fees varied in different maritime customs. The customs rates were in accordance with either the regulations announced by the central government (*buban zeli* 部頒則例) or the locality's practice (*xianxing zeli* 先行則例).[11]

The Qing customs were not the only bureaucratic organization that supervised Chinese waterborne trade. They went hand in hand with the local civil and military authorities to regulate Chinese merchant craft and their activities. The merchantman's owner was required to apply for a ship license (*chuanzhao* 船照; see figure 5.1) from both the customs and, as discussed in Chapter 2, the local administration.[12] In many cases, local civil authorities were responsible for registering craft and collecting customs duties. While keeping cruisers themselves, the customs authorities found it necessary to cooperate with local naval forces to enforce the customs regulations and suppress smuggling and piracy.[13]

[11] Deng, *Qingdai qianqi*, 147–166, 200–07, 231; Huang, *Yapian zhanzheng qian*, 21–95, 125–258, 313–33, 353–79; Qi, *Qingdai queguan*, 141–46, 199–266.
[12] Chen, "Shuilu jian"; Liu, "Qing zhengfu," 338; Memorial by Na'erjing'e, Apr. 9, 1842, ZDLD, *Dang'an*, vol. 5, 166.
[13] Huang, *Yapian zhanzheng qian*, 126–27, 392.

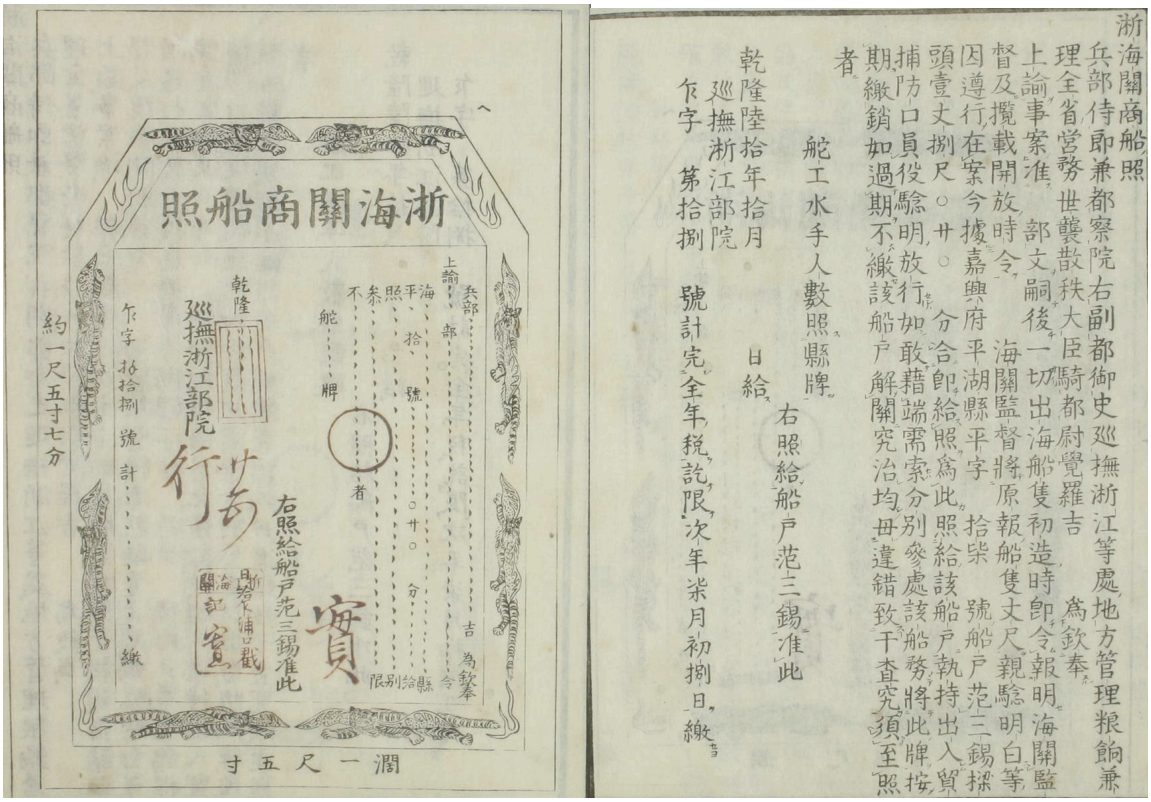


Figure 5.1 Ship license issued in 1795 by the Zhejiang maritime customs in Zhapu to the owner of a Chinese merchantman originating in the province's Pinghu district (From Tadahide Nakagawa's *Shinzoku kibun* [Records of Qing customs])[14]

The administration of the Qing maritime and internal customs demonstrates the inseparability of the customs system with the local civil and military administrations, the Imperial Households Department (*Neiwufu* 內務府) of the central government, and the Eight Banners (*baqi*) system. In the early nineteenth century, circuit intendants (*daotai* 道台) operated the maritime customs in Zhejiang and Jiangsu. In Fujian, the Fuzhou General of the Eight Banners oversaw the customs affairs. Guangdong was the only province where a superintendency (*jiandu* 監督) was set up to manage the maritime customs, but the

[14] Nakagawa, *Shinzoku kibun*, vol. 10, *kiryo kōri*, 14–15.

superintendent "was heavily dependent on provincial civil and military officials who shared many of the customs administrative duties."[15] Many internal customs were subject to the control of the local civil administration and/or officials, both Manchu and Chinese, designated by the Imperial Households Department or other central departments.[16]

In addition to local civil and military authorities, Chinese merchants, settled and sojourning alike, helped the Qing customs regulate Chinese trading vessels. Upon the merchantman's arrival at its destined port, the Chinese merchant-shipper on board had to obtain security from a guild merchant or broker (*yahang* 牙行), often with the same origin as the craft's, who then sent the vessel's register and his pledge to the customs.[17] In December 1839, a trading vessel originating in Guangdong's Chaozhou prefecture arrived at Whampoa port. The Fuzhou-Chaozhou guild (*Fu-Chaohang* 福潮行) sent to the Guangdong maritime customs the ship register and the pledge of its owner Cai Daxing. According to the customs records,

> Cai Daxing's vessel is 4 *zhang* 丈 and 8 *chi* 尺 long, *liangtou* 1 *zhang* and 5 *chi* long. [It has] fourteen compartments, 7 *chi* deep, fourteen sailors, ten cabins of beans [from Xiamen], eighty-eight pieces of licorice and asarum sieboldii etc., seventy-three packs of melon seeds, one piece of deer sinew, twenty-three pieces of bamboos and cattle sinews, and so on.[18]

Authorized by the state or not, guild merchants often paid dues to the Qing customs authorities on the merchant-shippers' behalf.[19] They procured (*choumai* 抽買) from the

[15] Huang, "The Chinese Maritime Customs," 174.
[16] Deng, *Qingdai qianqi*, 237–59; Huang, *Yapian zhanzheng qian*, 49–52; Qi, *Qingdai queguan*, 16–105, 110–40.
[17] Chen, "Qingdai zhongye Xiamen," 88–93; Memorial by Niu Jian and Liang Zhangju, Nov. 28, 1841, ZDLD, *Dang'an*, vol. 4, 373.
[18] Yu to Lin, Dec. 21, 1839, FO 931/9; Yu to Lin, Dec. 22, 1839, FO 931/11.
[19] Deng, *Qingdai qianqi*, 396–97; Qi, *Qingdai queguan*, 315–16.

merchant-shippers specific products, for example lead, on behalf of the Qing government.[20] Sometimes the managers of native-place associations (*huiguan* 會館) also helped inspect merchantmen from the same native place.[21] The assistance of merchants bound to different ports in overseeing the activities of Chinese trading craft echoed the Qing efforts, as examined in Chapter 2, to put the Dan and fishers and their craft under the control of Chinese community leaders who settled on land.

While scholars have paid much attention to the regulative, restrictive, and intervening nature of the Qing customs, the historians Huang Guosheng and Zhao Gang argue for the flexible, accommodating, and protective nature of the maritime customs and its contribution to the expansion of Chinese waterborne trade across China and beyond. Huang has recognized that "the Qing leadership established [customs] branch or satellite stations at or near emerging ports to accommodate local and sojourning traders." The frequent changes in the location of customs stations and checkpoints and the founding of new ones corresponded to changes in geography and trading patterns.[22] The establishment of the maritime customs signified the Qing central government's efforts to "first created uniform but flexible procedures for inspecting and taxing ships and cargoes to minimize irregular exactions and to curtail disruptive regulatory interference in the conduct of trade."[23] Huang further argues:

> This institutional framework [of the four maritime customs] contributed significantly to the unprecedented growth of domestic trade and shipping on the coast and the continued expansion of Chinese overseas trade in East and Southeast Asia. It also

[20] Memorial by Liu Yunke and Liu Hong'ao, Mar. 30, 1845, DCJHZZ, 04-01-01-0820-040.
[21] Memorial by Niu Jian and Liang Zhangju, Nov. 28, 1841, ZDLD, *Dang'an*, vol. 4, 373; Memorial by Yišan et al., June 5, 1842, ZDLD, *Dang'an*, vol. 5, 585.
[22] Huang, "The Chinese Maritime Customs," 175–76; Huang, *Yapian zhanzheng qian*, 136–37, 187.
[23] Huang, "The Chinese Maritime Customs," 171.

> stimulated the development of China's coastal commodity economy, in particular, the emergence of long-distance trade linkages integrating the northern and southern sectors of the coastal economy, as well as commercial ties between the coast and the interior regional economies via riverine and caravan transport routes.[24]

Zhao Gang argues further that the pro-foreign trade attitude held by the Manchu rulers in the seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries were due to their favorable experience with their trade with Korea and the Ming in northeastern Asia in the early and mid-seventeenth century.[25] This highlights the linkage between inland trade on the northeastern borders and overseas trade on the maritime frontier of the Qing Empire.

Regardless of the relations between the Qing maritime customs and Chinese waterborne trade, the establishment and development of the maritime customs and internal customs along the coast and waterways was associated with the extension of Qing control over the empire. For the Qing state, one primary concern behind running the maritime customs was the security of the empire's sea frontier. "The customs organization," as Huang argues, "enabled the Qing leadership to extend its vertical reach into the commercial communities of the major coastal ports."[26] The Qing authorities established new customs stations in "illicit ports" to fight against customs evasion and clandestine trade, thereby adapting the customs system to the changing trading patterns and establishing effective control over Chinese merchant craft.[27] The central government's customs policy, for example its appointment of customs officials and endeavors to regularize customs rules,

[24] Ibid., 170.
[25] Zhao, *The Qing Opening*, 57–78.
[26] Huang, "The Chinese Maritime Customs," 169.
[27] Chen, "Qingdai zhongye"; Huang, *Yapian zhanzheng qian*, 187–92.

reflects the extension of administrative rule from the Qing imperial center to the provincial customs, and the concomitant tensions between them.[28]

The Opium War and the Slackening Qing Control over Chinese Merchantmen

By the early nineteenth century, there had already been a number of indications of the loosening of Qing control over Chinese waterborne trade. By the late eighteenth century, the Qing regulations on the merchantmen' size and crew number had already been slackened.[29] The corrupt practices of local civil, military, and customs officials also impaired the effectiveness of the aforementioned measures for regulating Chinese waterborne trade. Moreover, in the early nineteenth century, the Qing maritime customs and internal customs in littoral regions largely failed to relocate old customs stations and set up new ones according to the shifting trade patterns. Meanwhile, the Qing central government failed to reform the fixed customs rates, which were usually low, thereby leading to the prevalence of extra-legal practice in the localities. The evasion of customs dues because of local corrupt practice had been prevalent by the early nineteenth century.[30]

Despite the Qing government' endeavors to tighten control over Chinese merchant craft and their trade in 1839–1842 on the sea frontier (see Chapter 2 for the controlling measures), Qing control over them actually loosened during the Qing-British War. As discussed earlier in the chapter and in Chapter 4, the Qing's naval power partially functioned as a deterrent to illicit Chinese trade on water, and the local Qing authorities were responsible for regulating Chinese merchant-shippers and their craft. The British expeditionary force, however, paralyzed the Qing naval forces and expelled the local

[28] Huang, "The Chinese Maritime Customs," 171; Van de Ven, *Breaking with the Past*, 51–60.
[29] Liu, "Qing zhengfu," 351–55.
[30] Ibid., 234, 425.

authorities from the regions under British attack and/or occupation, thereby breaking the close linkage and the equilibrium of power between the Qing military and civil authorities on the one hand, and Chinese merchantmen on the other.

Significantly, the Qing-British War brought about the loosening of Qing customs control over Chinese merchant craft and their trade. In 1840–1842, many Qing maritime and internal customs partially or completely stopped functioning. The local Qing authorities shut down many customs stations as a constituent part of the port closure and blockade as well as the sea ban (see Chapter 2) against the British Expedition arriving in mid-1840. Threatened or alarmed by the British advance, blockade, attack, and occupation, the Qing authorities were forced to partially or totally cease the operation of many tollhouses and checkpoints of the maritime customs and the internal customs along the coast and waterways. In many cases, the Qing authorities responsible for running the customs were even expelled from the regions under British attack or occupation.

Given that the Qing state relied heavily on the customs to regulate Chinese merchant vessels and their trade, the disarray of the customs stations best indicates the slackening of Qing control over Chinese merchant craft and their activities. The great extent of the slackening control in wartime can be shown in the geographical scope of the affected maritime customs stations, substations, and checkpoints. Due to the British invasion, the headquarters of the Fujian, Zhejiang, and Jiangsu maritime customs, in Xiamen, Ningbo city, and Shanghai city respectively, were closed at one time or another. The affected Qing customs tollhouses and checkpoints in regions under British threat, blockade, and occupation spread across southeast China. In Guangdong, they included those in the Pearl River Estuary, the largest situated at Humen and Macao. In Fujian, the

affected maritime customs stations and substations included those on Xiamen and Gulangyu Islands and in Fuzhou city and its neighboring areas. In Zhejiang, they were located in Ningbo prefecture (including Zhenhai and Dinghai districts) and Shaoxing, Taizhou, and Wenzhou prefectures. In Jiangsu, the affected maritime customs stations and branches lay in Suzhou, Songjiang, and Changzhou prefectures, Taicang and Tongzhou independent departments, and Haimen subprefecture (*ting* 廳). Concerning the internal customs along rivers and canals, the British military activities in Zhejiang and Jiangsu to different degrees disturbed the customs houses and checkpoints in Jiangning prefecture, where Nanjing city was located, and in the prefectures of Hangzhou, Suzhou, and Yangzhou.[31]

The case of the Zhejiang and Jiangsu maritime customs demonstrates the great impact of the 1840–1842 China War upon Qing customs control over Chinese waterborne trade. During the war, all the ports and maritime customs stations in Zhejiang were closed on July 5, 1840, the very day of the British taking of Zhoushan. It was reopened on November 15, following the first truce.[32] Meanwhile, all coastal ports and the whole customs in Jiangsu were shut down from July 14 to October 1, 1840.[33]

One year later, on September 25, 1841, six days before the second British taking of Zhoushan, all the stations and substations of the Zhejiang maritime customs were shut down again. On January 6, 1842, the Qing authorities, seeing that Zhapu, the second largest customs station, had still been free from British attack, reopened the customs port in Zhapu as well as those in Wenzhou and Taizhou prefectures. The customs in Jiangsu also

[31] Ni, *Qingchao Jia Dao*, 61–62, 71, 86, 98; Ni, "Yapian zhanzheng yu Daoguang."
[32] Memorial by Ilibu, Nov. 15, 1840, ZDLD, *Dang'an*, vol. 2, 538; Memorial by Liu Yunke, Jan. 14, 1841, DCJHZZ, 04-01-35-0379-038.
[33] Memorial by Yuqian and Shao Jiaming, Nov. 7, 1840, DCJHLZ, 03-3165-079; Memorial by Ilibu, Apr. 4, 1841, DCJHZZ, 04-01-35-0379-042.

reopened around the same time.[34] But Zhenhai, the largest customs port in Zhejiang, and the small ports in Ningbo and Shaoxing prefectures were still closed, as eastern Zhejiang had still been subject to British occupation or threat. Because of the British assault on Zhapu in May 1842 and the British threat and attack against Jiangsu's Yangzi and Grand Canal regions in mid-1842, the Zhapu customs and many tollhouses along the waterways under the Jiangsu maritime customs ceased to operate. The Zhejiang customs had not been totally reopened until November 10, 1842, more than two months after the conclusion of peace.[35]

Chapter 3 has briefly discussed the decrease in tariffs collected by the Qing maritime customs and internal customs houses in littoral regions across southeast China. This is a good indication of the dwindling Qing customs control over Chinese merchantmen and their trade in 1840–1842. Take Jiangsu as an example. As the British Expedition attacked eastern Zhejiang in late 1841, the Qing authorities, as stated above, blockaded and closed ports in the neighboring province of Jiangsu from late September 1841 to early January 1842. In mid-1842, the British Expedition commenced the Yangzi campaign in Jiangsu. From December 13, 1841 to December 12, 1842, the duties collected by the Jiangsu maritime customs amounted to only some $43,500, less than a half of the fixed quota of tariffs (about $99,500) in the previous financial year.[36] Moreover, as the British threatened Jiangsu's Yangzi regions and the provincial capital of Nanjing, the internal customs of Longjiang and Xixin stopped levying taxes for more than two months in 1842. This resulted in a loss of some $56,500 (42,351.677 taels) as customs duties in the first

[34] Proclamation to Ijing, Jan. 8, 1842, ZDLD, *Dang'an*, vol. 4, 512.
[35] Memorial by Liu Yunke, Dec. 28, 1841, ZDLD, *Dang'an*, vol. 4, 456–58; Memorial by Liu Yunke, Dec. 1, 1842, DCJHLZ, 03-3166-021; Memorial by Sun Shanbao, Apr. 14, 1843, ZYJY, *Buyi*, 43.
[36] Memorial by Sun Shanbao, Apr. 14, 1843, ZYJY, *Buyi*, 43.

sixty-seven days of the financial year of 1842–1843.[37] The war also directly or indirectly affected the collection of taxes at the internal customs of Huai'an, Suqian, Yangzhou, Hushu, and Fengyang in Jiangsu.[38] The sharp fall in the amount of tariffs, the third largest source of the Qing's state income, was probably one major reason that compelled the Qing central government and imperial commissioners to conclude a hasty peace with the British in 1842.[39]

The impact of the Qing-British War on Chinese guild merchants or brokers taking part in regulating Chinese trading craft and merchant-shippers also indicates the weakening Qing control over Chinese waterborne trade. The British threat, attack, and occupation adversely affected guild merchants in various ports along the coast and waterways, thereby reducing their ability to assist the Qing authorities to collect customs from and regulate Chinese merchantmen.[40] In Xiamen, one of the principal ports in Chinese maritime trade along the China coast and between China and Southeast Asia, the general decline of maritime trade in Xiamen in the early nineteenth century, and in the 1830s in particular, caused a gradual decrease in the number of merchant guilds dealing with Chinese coastal and overseas trade from more than thirty in the mid-eighteenth century to only five on the eve of the war. The British attack on Xiamen in 1841 and the concomitant Qing closure of Xiamen port and Chinese plunder then ruined the five remaining guilds, which lost the function of regulating Chinese merchantmen. They were so hard-hit by the war as well as

[37] Memorial by Wuming'a, Aug. 29, 1843, ZYJY *Buyi*, 56.
[38] Memorial by Jingfu, Sept. 21, 1843, ZYJY *Buyi*, 63; Ni, *Qingchao Jia Dao*, 61–62, 71, 75, 79. On the internal customs in Jiangsu, see Ni, *Qingchao Jia Dao*, 37–88; Qi, *Qingdai queguan*, 39–52.
[39] The thesis develops this argument from Ni Yuping's, Qi Meiqin's, and Hans van de Ven's studies. See Ni, "Yapian zhanzheng yu Daoguang," 51; Qi, *Qingdai queguan*, 8; Van de Ven, *Breaking with the Past*, 55.
[40] In Jiangsu, for example, the superintendent of the internal customs of Longjiang and Xinxi attributed the loss of tariffs in wartime partly to the destruction of merchant guilds (*hangzhan* 行棧) in Zhenjiang and the inability of the guild merchants to help in the customs collection. See Memorial by Wuming'a, Aug. 29, 1843, ZYJY, *Buyi*, 56.

the decline of Chinese waterborne trade that all of them suffered post-war financial distress. The Jinhehe Guild run by Huang Yuanyin, resident in Gulangyu, was even closed. The Qing authorities were obliged to relieve their burden of financial contribution to the military to make sure that there were enough guild merchants who secured tariffs from and controlled the Chinese merchantmen. The decrease in customs collected in Fujian in the first year or two following the war is perhaps partly due to the guild merchants' loss of financial power and their loosening control over the Chinese merchantmen.[41]

In short, although the loosening of Qing control over Chinese waterborne trade began in the late eighteenth century, if not earlier, the Opium War triggered the process by weakening the Qing naval forces, local civil administrations, maritime customs and internal customs along the coast and waterways, and also Chinese merchant guilds. They were the main apparatuses on which the Qing state relied to regulate Chinese maritime and river trade.

The Opium War, moreover, is a turning point in the development of Chinese waterborne trade in modern China in the sense that it marks the beginning of Western control over Chinese merchantmen and their trade in China. This control lasted for more than a century, until the establishment of Communist China in 1949. The following section will trace the beginning of this control, focusing on how the British Expedition established rule over Chinese merchant craft and their trade in 1840–1842.

[41] Chen, "Qingdai zhongye," 64; Memorial by Baochang, May 20, 1843, ZYJY, *Buyi*, 45; Memorial by Baochang, Apr. 2, 1844, ZYJY, *Buyi*, 76–77; Memorial by Liu Yunke, Apr. 25, 1844, ZYJY, *Buyi*, 78; Memorial by Bichang, May 2, 1844, ZYJY, *Buyi*, 82–83; Memorial by Jingmu, Apr. 23, 1845, ZYJY, *Buyi*, 106; Memorial by Baochang, Mar. 10, 1844, DCJHLZ, 03-3167-006; Memorial by Liu Yunke and Liu Hong'ao, Mar. 30, 1845, DCJHZZ, 04-01-01-0820-040; Ng, *Trade and Society*.

The British Expedition's Rule over Chinese Waterborne Trade

So far the thesis has shown that in 1840–1842, the British Expedition threatened, attacked, and occupied vast insular, coastal, and riverine areas in southeast China, and blockaded huge sections of China's coast and waterways. They adversely affected Chinese water transportation in war-stricken regions and interrupted Chinese waterborne trade across China and beyond, thereby triggering its decline. They also greatly weakened the Qing naval and land forces, and expelled the local Qing administrations from areas under their attack. Nevertheless, the rise of British power in southeast China in 1840–1842 was not totally destabilizing and destructive in nature. As Chapter 4 has shown, the British Expedition played an important part in combating piracy. Moreover, while the Qing-British War brought about a serious political-social upheaval in southeast China's littoral regions, the British Expedition, replacing the Qing authorities as ruler of the conquered areas, sought to establish some systematic control over the Chinese population in regions under their occupation and blockade. A best example is that they put Chinese trading craft under their rule, bringing order to Chinese maritime and riverine trade in the occupied and blockaded regions.

Ransom and the Prize-Agent System

In addition to acquiring from the Qing government twelve million dollars as war reparations for the cost of fighting under the Treaty of Nanjing, the British Expedition secured funds in wartime China to cover military expenses and award prizes to the army and navy in a number of ways. The British Expedition confiscated valuable or saleable property owned by the defeated or routed local Qing administrations. After the British

seizure of Zhenhai, "some copper ore was likewise found [in the city] and a tolerable addition to the prize fund was thus secured."[42] Other Qing assets in the attacked or occupied cities condemned by the British included sycee silver, copper coins, guns, and grains in official granaries, the last of which were to be sold to Chinese locals.[43] The British Expedition also obtained war funds by selling booty appropriated from Chinese plunderers.[44] "The booty," the *Canton Press* reported, "which at Zhenhai and Ningbo has fallen into the hands of the English, is very considerable, and a respectable amount of prize money will reward the exertions of the Army and Navy."[45]

The British Expedition also demanded ransoms from Chinese inhabitants in the threatened or conquered cities by blockading China's coast and rivers and stopping trade on water. In addition to the "Canton Ransom" of six million dollars from the Hong merchants—who traded with Western merchants under the Canton System—in Guangzhou city in May 1841, the British received ransoms from merchants and the rich in eastern Zhejiang (about $94,000), Shanghai ($500,000), Yangzhou ($500,000), and Nanjing ($600,000), the latter three being incorporated into the indemnity ($21,000,000) stipulated in the Treaty of Nanjing.[46] The payments were made for "redeeming the city" (*shucheng* 贖

[42] Bernard, *The Nemesis*, 260.
[43] Amount of the ransom of Ningbo, Nov. 11, 1843, FO 17/70, 228; Bernard, *The Nemesis*, 357; *Canton Press*, Nov. 20, 1841; Cree, Journals, vol. 5, 1841, 94; *Canton Register*, Nov. 2, 1841; Letter by Wang Xiling, *Zhejiang Yapian zhanzheng*, vol. 2, 294; Report by commissioner sent to Dinghai, *Zhejiang Yapian zhanzheng*, vol. 2, 295.
[44] Bernard, *The Nemesis*, 357; Proclamation by Pottinger, Parker, and Gough, 1841, Sasaki, *Ahen sensō*, 135–36.
[45] *Canton Press*, Nov. 20, 1841.
[46] Li, *Li Xingyuan*, vol. 1, 418; Fay, *The Opium War*, 297–98; Pottinger to Earl of Aberdeen, Feb. 1, 1842, FO 17/56, 15–16a; Memoranda, 1843, FO 17/70, 132; Morrison, Details of papers found in the pocket book of an old gentleman, Oct. 1841, FO 228/18, 39–39a; Proclamation by Pottinger, Parker, and Gough, Sasaki, *Ahen sensō*, Oct. 16, 1841, 136–37; Proclamation by Gough and Parker, May 7, 1842, Sasaki, *Ahen sensō*, 146–47; Parker and Gough to the Jiangsu authorities, July 5, 1842, Sasaki, *Ahen sensō*, 157; Proclamation by Gough and Parker in Yangzhou, August 1, 1842, Sasaki, *Ahen sensō*, 157; Niu to Parker and Gough: ransom for Nanjing, Sasaki, *Ahen sensō*, 175; Kiyeng, Ilibu, Niu to Pottinger, Aug. 14, 1842, Sasaki, *Ahen sensō*, 201; Kiyeng, Ilibu, Niu to Pottinger, Sept. 24, 1842, Sasaki, *Ahen sensō*, 223.

城) and also for resuming waterborne trade. Taking Ningbo in October 1841, the British forces forbade Chinese craft to trade in the lower reaches of the Yong River. After the Ningbo people started to pay the ransom, the British removed the blockade of the embouchure accordingly.[47] On the contrary, the inhabitants of Shanghai city were unsuccessful in appealing to the British Expedition for removing the blockade of the Wusong mouth for trade because they failed to make the required payment of one million dollars.[48]

Another significant source of the British "prize fund" was the property owned by Chinese private individuals, which included merchant craft and cargoes on board. Highlighting that the China War was fought against the Qing government but not Chinese people, the British Expedition authorities repeated their promise to protect the property and livelihoods of the Chinese in the occupied regions. Yet, the expedition authorities held "the idea of pressing the Chinese government . . . through the medium of the people."[49] With this idea in mind, and to secure war funds, the expedition acquired ransoms from the owners of captured property both on land and on water in the occupied and blockaded regions. In many cases, the British forces simply had the property confiscated.[50] As early as February 1840, when the expeditionary force was still being organized, the Earl of Auckland, the governor-general of India who oversaw the China War until February 1842,

[47] Proclamation by Gough, Parker, and Pottinger, Oct. 16, 1841, Sasaki, *Ahen sensō*, 136–37; Proclamation by Gough and Parker, May 7, 1842, Sasaki, *Ahen sensō*, 146.
[48] Proclamation by the British Expedition's military and naval authorities, Aug. 2, 1842, Sasaki, *Ahen sensō*, 175.
[49] Parker to Gough, Nov. 27, 1841, FO 17/54, 242a–43.
[50] On the British promise, see *Canton Press*, Aug. 8, 1840, Feb. 13, 1841, June 12, 1841, Feb. 26, 1842; *Canton Register*, Nov. 30, 1841; *Chinese Repository*, vol. 10, no. 9, Sept. 1841, 486; Elliot's proclamation to maritime provinces, June 7, 1841, FO 682/1974/65; Proclamation by Pottinger, Feb. 16, 1842, FO 682/1975/1b ; Proclamation by Elliot and Bremer, Feb. 1, 1841, ZDLD, *Dang'an*, vol. 3, 93–94; Proclamation by Elliot, July 7, 1840, FO 17/39, 37a; Proclamation by Pottinger, Parker, and Gough, Oct. 6, 1841, Sasaki, *Ahen sensō*, 135–36; Wei, *Yisou rukou*, 326.

discussed with the British Chief Justice in Calcutta the establishment of a "prize commission with a view to operations against China."[51] In April 1840, immediately before the expedition's arrival in China, "an Order in Council for the establishment of courts of admiralty in China for the adjudication of prizes, &c" was issued to the effect that to demand satisfaction and reparation from the Qing government, it was necessary that

> all vessels and goods belonging to the Emperor of China, or *his subjects* [original emphasis] should be detained and brought into port; and that, in the event of reparation and satisfaction being refused by the Chinese government, a court of Admiralty should be formed for the purpose of adjudging and condemning them as prizes.[52]

William Bernard, who wrote in 1844 on the voyages and services of the *Nemesis* steamer, claimed that the aforementioned order in council was acted upon for a very brief period and on a very limited scale only in 1840.[53] The existing records, however, suggest that in August 1840 and also in February 1841, the British naval forces captured quite a number of Chinese craft, chiefly trading vessels, as "prize junks" in the Pearl River Estuary.[54] Meanwhile, the expedition's military authorities set up their own prize management system. During the first occupation of Zhoushan from July 1840 to February 1841, William Caine of the 26th (Cameronians) Regiment, who later became the magistrate of Zhoushan and Hong Kong, and Thomas Stephens of the 49th (Hertfordshire) Regiment were appointed

[51] Hoe and Roebuck, *The Taking*, 164.
[52] Bernard, *The Nemesis*, 76–77.
[53] Bernard, *The Nemesis*, 76–77; Commissioners for the Trial of Chinese Pirates, 1840, ADM 5/36.
[54] *Canton Press*, Aug. 8, 1840; Ellis, *Memoirs*, 160–61. In 1840–1842, Qing ships of wars were also occasionally captured as prize junks. For example, see Bernard, *The Nemesis*, 217. As the British forces destroyed immobile and bulky Qing official possessions on the spot, they destroyed most of the captured Qing war craft and armaments during the war. See Parker to the respective captains, 1841, FO 17/54, 131.

military commissioners to collect and take care of the public property of Dinghai city on behalf of the Queen.[55]

The British system for managing the property and prizes taken from the Qing authorities and Chinese people evolved as the war went on. After the British Expedition was reinforced and the scope of war was enlarged in mid-1841, the expedition authorities appointed prize agents to manage the property seized in China. In October 1841, when Zhoushan was reoccupied, Pottinger found it requisite to make "arrangements for the receipt and safe keeping, through the agency of authorized and regularly appointed officers, of all detained or captured property."[56] With the consent of the military and naval commanders-in-chief, "prize agents," who received commissions for their jobs, were then selected among the expedition's military and naval officers. A Captain Campbell of the 55th (Westmoreland) Regiment was elected as prize agent on the part of the British Crown. A Captain and Paymaster Ware of the Hertfordshires and George Balfour of the Madras Artillery (who was the first British consul in Shanghai in 1843) represented the army, whereas Benjamin Chimmo, the naval commander-in-chief's secretary, was elected in the navy's behalf.[57] Under the prize-agent system,

> [A]ll individuals on shore, into whose hands property of any description may come, are required and expected, to hand it over to the said Public Agents; and that Her Majesty's Vessels may be authorized to detain and bring, for the same object, into any Port or Place that His Excellency the Admiral [the naval commander-in-chief] may designate, all Junks with either valuable or rich cargoes.[58]

[55] *Canton Register*, Dec. 15, 1840; D'Arcy-Brown, *Chusan*, 66.
[56] Pottinger to Parker and Gough, Oct. 6, 1841, FO 17/54, 116–16a; Auckland to the Plenipotentiaries on the coast of China, May 10, 1841, PRO 30/12/36/3, 35–36.
[57] Parker to the respective captains, 1841, FO 17/54, 130–30a.
[58] Pottinger to Gough and Parker, Oct. 6, 1841, FO 17/54, 117.

The prize agents also took care of the property abandoned by Chinese locals. In practice, the prize agents did not simply keep all the possessions that fell into the British hands.[59] In addition to the ransoms from Chinese inhabitants in the occupied cities, the prize agents managed the fees exacted from the owners of both the merchandise detained in land regions and Chinese merchantmen as well as their cargoes captured under naval blockade. The rate of the fees was 10 percent of the estimated value of the merchandize in store or the ship cargoes. In total, some $94,000 was collected as ransoms in eastern Zhejiang, about $24,000 the "ransom of various cargoes of merchandize and junks."[60] Chinese households and pawnshops in Ningbo and Zhenhai also contributed to the ransom money.[61] The prize agents even suggested exacting the Ningbo ransom of one million dollars by taking hostage some Ningbo merchants or prominent people when they came to discuss the ransom issue. The expedition authorities finally aborted the plan because of "its bearing the semblance of bad faith to invite men to a conference, and then seize them."[62]

The prize agents were also responsible for the public sale of many of the Chinese merchant craft and shipments seized by the British Expedition under naval blockade. In late 1841 and early 1842, when numerous Chinese trading craft went southward to the Pearl River Delta, HMS *Nimrod* actively seized those entering and leaving the river in the estuary, except those with "certificates from British merchants stating the goods on board to be British property."[63] It was reported that during that time the ship owner (*chuanhu* 船戶) Guo Kaiming and some others went to Guangzhou city to complain to the Qing authorities

[59] Memorandum, 1841, FO 17/54, 252a–53.
[60] Memorandum, 1842, FO 17/56, 24–25; Agents for the care and custody of property, Aug. 16, 1843, FO 17/69, 132; Amount of the ransom of Ningbo, Nov. 11, 1843, FO 17/70, 228; *Friend of China*, June 16, 1842.
[61] Amount of the ransom of Ningbo, Nov. 11, 1843, FO 17/70, 228; Letter by Wang Xiling, *Zhejiang Yapian zhanzheng*, vol. 2, 294–95; News about the sea frontier, 1841, *Zhejiang Yapian zhanzheng*, vol. 2, 296.
[62] Pottinger to Earl of Aberdeen, Feb. 1, 1842, FO 17/56, 15–16a.
[63] *Canton Press*, 27 Nov., Dec. 11, Dec. 18, and Dec. 25, 1841, Jan. 8, Jan. 22, and Jan. 29, 1842; "Yingyi ru Yue," Zhongguo shixuehui, *Yapian zhanzheng*, vol. 3, 21.

that the British forces captured as many as twenty-seven merchant craft in the waters around Hong Kong and pulled them to the island. Eventually only eleven of them were released, the remainders having already been ransomed by their owners or sold by the British.[64] Many of the intercepted craft and the cargoes on board were even condemned as "lawful prizes" and "brought to the hammer" in Hong Kong.[65] Although Pottinger ordered in Hong Kong in February 1842 that Chinese trading vessels should not be molested any more, the public sale of the "prize junks," and also their cargoes, still took place in Hong Kong as late as April 1842, after its free port status was established.[66]

The British carried out the "capture and public sale" policy vigorously in the Pearl River Delta in late 1841 and early 1842 as part of the expedition's total blockade of China's waters targeted at Qing official as well as Chinese civilian craft. The vigorous blockade, as stated in Chapter 3, was probably also a revenge on the Qing authorities for their reinforcement of defense in Guangdong.[67] Another probable reason for the strong implementation of the policy was the handsome profit from the public sale of the detained merchantmen and cargoes. In December 1841, a few Chinese trading vessels taken in and near Hong Kong were sold at about $6,000 or $7,000 in total.[68] During the war, the auctioneer of the British government in Hong Kong also sold the "prize junks" to cover the expenses of the nascent colony.[69]

The prize-agent system and British demand for ransoms, thus, reflected the high-handedness of the British Expedition's control over Chinese merchantmen and their trade.

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[64] Memorial by Yišan et al., Aug. 4, 1842, ZDLD, *Dang'an*, vol. 5, 811.
[65] *Canton Press*, Dec. 11, 1841, Jan. 22, 1842.
[66] *Friend of China*, Mar. 17, 1842, Apr. 7, 1842; Proclamation by Pottinger, Feb. 16, 1842, FO 682/1975/1b.
[67] *Canton Press*, Dec. 11, 1841, Jan. 8, 1842.
[68] *Canton Press*, Dec. 18 and 25, 1841, Jan. 1, 8, 15, and 22, 1842.
[69] *Friend of China*, Apr. 7, 1842.

The frequent capture of Chinese merchantmen in the blockaded regions, the exaction of ransoms from the detained craft and cargoes, and the public sale of them probably deepened the Chinese captains and sailors' fears of the expedition, which reinforced their determination to escape the British naval grip. Running away from the British blockading squadron, two "salt junks" in the Pearl River Delta region ran on shore in July 1840. They were broken into pieces, the crews being only fortunate enough to save themselves.[70] Many Chinese merchant craft, as Chapter 3 has examined, avoided the British forces by changing their routes or anchorages, or both. The British acquisition of ransoms and property owned by the Qing state or Chinese private individuals and the prize-agent system during the Opium War resemble British policies in other "imperial wars" with China, for example the acquisition of booty at the Yuanming Palace during the Arrow War and in the Forbidden City during the Eight Power Expedition.[71]

The Passport System, Taxation, and Free Trade

During the war, the British Expedition seized property from local Chinese people sometimes because the owners failed to provide a passport (*huzhao* 護照) proving that they had already paid the required fees or, as introduced below, taxes. The British Expedition issued passports, licenses, or certificates to Chinese people in the occupied and blockaded regions for different purposes. In British-occupied Ningbo and Zhenhai, the British magistrates granted passes to the Chinese inhabitants for transporting goods out of the city.[72] The two British wartime governments also issued "a certificate of the description and quantity of articles removed, with a rough estimate of their value" to the Chinese people

[70] *Canton Press*, July 11, 1840.
[71] Ringmar, *Liberal Barbarism*; Hevia, "Looting."
[72] *Canton Register*, Mar. 8, 1842.

who ransomed their property and to those who did not.[73] The urban Chinese population under British rule were obliged to obtain from the occupation authorities, sometimes after a contribution of money or provisions, a passport with such words as "Great Britain's passport" (*Daying huzhao* 大英護照).[74] The local people were required to post the passport, probably in both English and Chinese, on their house doors to express submission, to prove that no Qing agents were hiding inside, and to avoid molestation from the occupying soldiers, British and Indian ("native") alike. Along the coast and waterways, licenses were issued to fishing craft leaving or entering any ports to make sure that they carried neither weapons nor explosives.[75]

Another feature of British rule in China during the China War is that in the blockaded and occupied regions, the British collected from Chinese people taxes of different kinds, some of which were originally levied by the Qing authorities prior to the British arrival. Replying to the letter from the expedition's military commander-in-chief regarding the occupation of Ningbo, the Earl of Ellenborough, governor-general of India after Auckland, considered it "a legitimate measure of war, to compel the inhabitants of the country occupied by an enemy to pay toward the support of that army all the taxes due to the government."[76] In a proclamation to Chinese inhabitants in Zhoushan in July 1840, the British Expedition authorities stipulated that they were "liable to such taxes and impositions, as they were lawfully liable to under the dominion of the Emperor of China."[77] While fishing tax constituted a "miscellaneous tax" of the Qing state, the British reportedly

[73] Memorandum, 1841, FO 17/54, 252a–53.
[74] Su'an daoren, "Chuwei," Zhongguo shixuehui, *Yapian zhanzheng*, vol. 3, 45.
[75] "Yihuan beichang," Zhongguo shixuehui, *Yapian zhanzheng*, vol. 3, 132–33; Chen, "Hengshan xiangren," Zhongguo shixuehui, *Yapian zhanzheng*, vol. 4, 698; Proclamation by Pottinger, Parker, and Gough, Oct. 16, 1841, Sasaki, *Ahen sensō*, 136–37; Letter by Wang Xiling, *Zhejiang Yapian zhanzheng*, vol. 2, 294–95; News about the sea frontier, 1841, *Zhejiang Yapian zhanzheng*, vol. 2, 295.
[76] Ellenborough to Gough, Mar. 23, 1842, PRO 30/12/26/3.
[77] Public declaration by Elliot, 1840, FO 17/39, 37a.

demanded "a toll amounting to a very few hundreds" from "the poor affrighted fishermen" on the Yong River during the occupation of Ningbo.[78] The Qing authorities complained about the British exaction of surcharges (*lougui* 陋規) from ferries and "boats" (*xiaoting* 小艇) in the Pearl River Delta, even though local Qing officials probably used to do so.[79] Not all the duties collected by the soldiers in the British expeditionary force, however, were endorsed by the expedition authorities. The "black devils," i.e. Indian soldiers, were accused of extorting money from the Chinese people crossing the Yangzi River near Jiaoshan.[80]

With task forces blockading China's waters, the British Expedition issued passports or licenses to and collected duties from Chinese merchantmen. The expedition established control over Chinese craft and their trade as early as the beginning of the China War. After the first taking of Zhoushan in early July 1840, a British naval blockade was imposed in the waters of eastern Zhejiang and Jiangsu (see Chapter 3). With the Qing authorities adopting a policy of non-intercourse with Zhoushan, the expedition "declared, to balance matters, that no vessels except Chusan vessels with English passes, shall be permitted to enter the blockaded ports."[81] In mid-July, the Zhoushan governor George Burrell issued a proclamation in Chinese at the Qing's district office (*xianshu* 縣署), now the British government headquarters, that Chinese merchant and fishing craft sailing to and fro were

[78] *Friend of China*, June 16, 1842. During the Opium War, the local Qing authorities sometimes accused the British Expedition of exacting money from Chinese fishing craft. See Memorial by Liu Yunke, Dec. 25, 1840, ZDLD, *Dang'an*, vol. 2, 652; *Yifei fanjing*, vol. 5, 11.
[79] Memorial by Lü Xianji, July 2, 1842, ZDLD, *Dang'an*, vol. 5, 529.
[80] Zhu, "Caojian," Zhongguo shixuehui, *Yapian zhanzheng*, vol. 3, 83.
[81] *Canton Register*, Sept. 1, 1840.

required to apply for a license and pay taxes.[82] This marks the beginning of the British passport system and taxation on Chinese merchantmen during the China War.

Following the British Expedition's enlargement of the scope of war in late 1841, the British system of issuing passports to Chinese merchantmen, which largely depended on naval blockade, further developed. After the second seizure of Zhoushan in October 1841, the British naval authorities proposed a total blockade of the China coast (though it was only partial in practice). Under the blockade, "any Captain or Officer in command of Her Majesty's Ships, or those of the Indian Navy, who may examine such vessels [Chinese merchantmen] and allow them to pass, is to furnish the master of the Junk with a certificate that he has done so, or make an endorsement on the papers of the vessel to that effect." The certified merchant craft also received a flag, which was presumably to be hoisted at its bow. With the British passport, the merchant vessel was able to travel in the British blockaded waters without any harm.[83] The British passport system resembled the Qing regulations on Chinese craft, according to which Chinese merchantmen, as described above, were required to apply for passports from the customs and local civil authorities.

In the eastern Zhejiang regions under British rule from October 1841 to May 1842, the British Expedition developed a quite standardized taxation system to regulate Chinese waterborne trade. It was largely based on the naval blockade, and was closely associated with the passport system as well as the prize-agent system described above. The passport was issued to the merchant-shippers, owners, and captains of Chinese craft trading with the British Straits Settlements in Southeast Asia or arriving at the free ports in Hong Kong,

[82] "Yapian zhanzheng shiliao," Zhongguo shixuehui, *Yapian zhanzheng*, vol. 3, 146.
[83] Parker to the respective captains, 1841, FO 17/54, 130–31; Yuan, "Renyin wenjian," Zhongguo shixuehui, *Yapian zhanzheng*, vol. 3, 107.

Zhoushan, and Gulangyu (see the free port system below). It was also issued to those who had paid ransoms or taxes, or both, to the expedition's prize agents.[84]

The following case illustrates how British taxation worked in wartime eastern Zhejiang. In November 1841, before Zhoushan was declared a free port, the British occupying force captured Chinese merchantmen in the Zhoushan waters.[85] Two Chinese trading vessels reaching and detained in the Dinghai harbor were required to dispose of their cargoes on the spot and pay an ad valorem duty of 5 percent to the credit of the British public fund. In Pottinger's opinion, if the masters of the two vessels rejected the request,

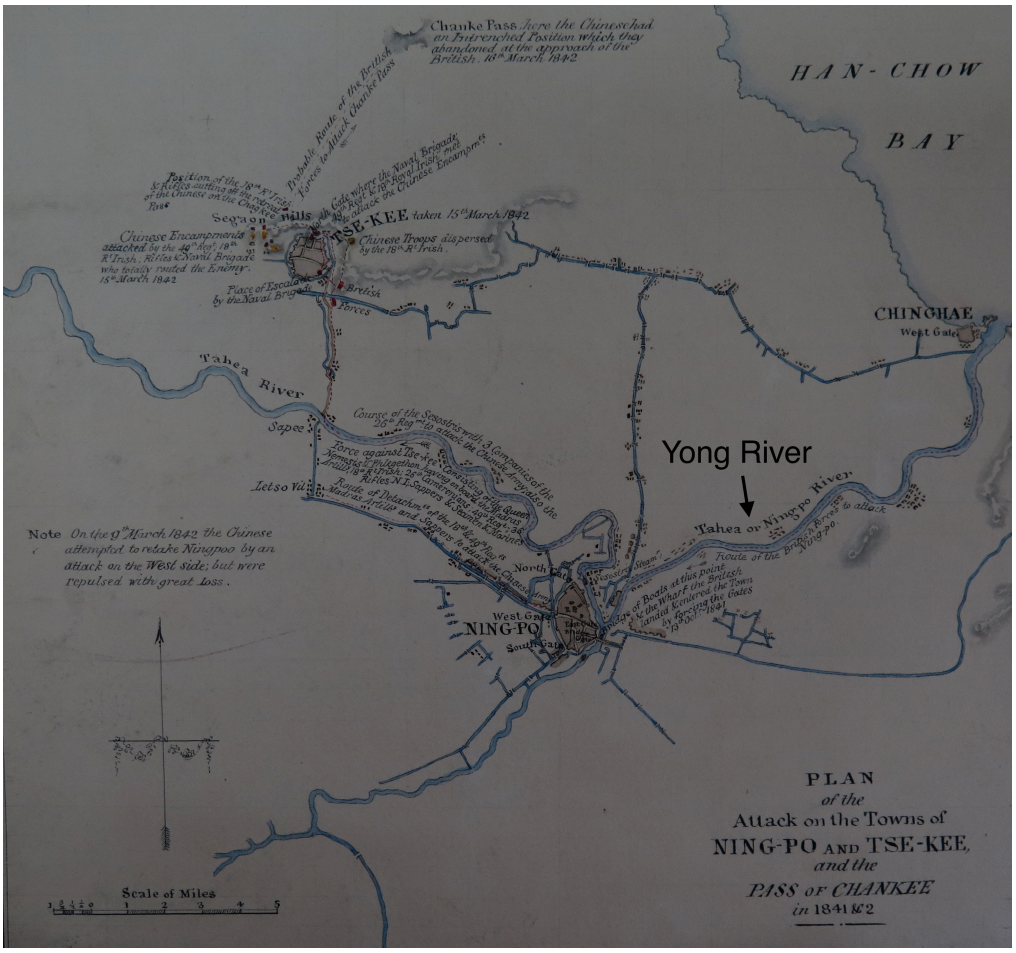
> authority should be given to the public agents [prize agents] to take out of them whatever may be worth removing, that they should then be allowed to proceed on their voyage, being previously furnished with a receipt, or paper, stating what has been removed, and also containing an intimation, that, henceforward, all Chinese trading junks, unless sailing under British passports, or bound to ports actually held by HM's [Her Majesty's] forces, would be similarly treated.

Complying with the British demands, the Chinese commanders finally sold their cargoes in Zhoushan and paid the prescribed duty for a passport issued by the expedition.[86]

When British rule in eastern Zhejiang became more established, the rates of duties on cargoes imported and exported by Chinese merchantmen in the locality became more fixed. Conquering Ningbo and Zhenhai cities in October 1841, the British forces set up the headquarters in Ningbo and occupied the two cities until May 1842. While Ningbo, as stated above, was the headquarters of the Qing's Zhejiang maritime customs, Zhenhai was the Qing's largest customs port in the province. Expelling the Qing customs authorities

[84] *Canton Press*, Jan. 29, 1842.
[85] Cree, Journals, vol. 5, 1841, 97.
[86] Pottinger to Parker, Nov. 23, 1841, FO 17/54, 215–16; Pottinger to Palmerston, Dec. 7, 1841, FO 17/54, 259.

from Ningbo and Zhenhai and holding firm control over the eastern Zhejiang coast as well as the Yong River's lower reaches, the British Expedition, in December 1841, imposed a unified taxation system on the owners of all cargoes on board Chinese vessels along the river and also on Chinese private property in the two cities (see map 5.1 and figure 5.2).



Map 5.1 Ningbo (Ning-po) and Zhenhai (Chinghae) cities and the lower reaches of the Yong River (Tehea or Ningpo River) under British control in October 1841–May 1842. During the occupation, Chinese merchant craft sailing along the river were required to pay import and export duties to the British Expedition. (Hebert's map, 1843)[87]

[87] Hebert, Map illustrative of the operation, WO 78/990/3/33.



Figure 5.2 "Ningpo river junks" on the Yong River in the mid-1840s. Craft of these kinds were probably subject to British taxation during the British occupation of eastern Zhejiang in October 1841–May 1842. (Cree's watercolor, 1844)[88]

© National Maritime Museum, Greenwich, London

According to the set of regulations on British taxation introduced in December 1841 and enforced in the eastern Zhejiang regions for around half a year, in addition to a ransom, i.e. 10 percent of the property's estimated value, a duty of 5 percent was to be imposed on all exports by sea. The duty on imports was set at 10 percent. The export duty on cargoes shipped to ports in British possessions within China and overseas British settlements were to be refunded upon the merchantmen's arrival at their destination. Once the cargo owners

[88] Cree, Journals, vol. 8, 1844.

paid the tax, their trading craft would be allowed to "pass on all the rivers, and canals, without any further demands."[89] Similar to the Qing's customs policy, Chinese smugglers were to be severely punished under the British system: If one attempted to remove his own property without making the required levy to the British, his property would be forfeited.[90] After the British troops evacuated Ningbo and Zhenhai in May 1842, a small British squadron probably still demanded duties from Chinese merchant craft at the entrance of the Yong River neighboring Zhenhai.[91]

The British Expedition also exacted taxes from Chinese trading craft beyond eastern Zhejiang, but the existing sources on the practice are scarce. The Qing authorities accused the British of extorting taxes from some Chinese craft loaded with sugar near Zhapu at the entrance of the Qiantang River.[92] In Fujian, the British allegedly forced the merchants in Xiamen to install flags on their craft and imposed taxes on Chinese trading craft in late 1841 and early 1842.[93] Although Gulangyu was declared a *de facto* free port in February 1842, at one point the British naval squadron stationed on the island may have also collected cargo taxes from Chinese merchantmen.[94] In Jiangsu, the British naval forces levied taxes from Chinese vessels laden with grains at the Wusong mouth in mid-1842. A British steamer anchoring at the embouchure purportedly exacted $50 each from ten trading

[89] Memorandum by Gough, Parker, and Pottinger, 1841, FO 17/56, 24–25.
[90] On the strict regulations on clandestine trade imposed by the Qing customs, see Huang, *Yapian zhanzheng qian*, 333–34.
[91] *Yifei fanjing*, vol. 5, 11.
[92] Memorial by Ijing, Aug. 23, 1842, ZDLD, *Dang'an*, vol. 6, 118.
[93] Li, *Li Xingyuan*, vol. 1, 314, 319, 333.
[94] Kiyeng et al. to Pottinger, Sept. 1, 1842, FO 682/1975/79; Pottinger to Kiyeng et al., Sept. 3, 1842, FO 682/1975/80.

craft, after which each of them was issued a license and flag. The British Expedition ceased levying taxes on Chinese merchants in maritime or river trade in September 1842.[95]

William Bernard thought that the British import duty of 10 percent of the estimated value of all the cargoes transported up the Yong River was "little else than the collection of the [Qing] imperial revenues, which the Chinese were always liable to pay."[96] A careful comparison between the British wartime taxation and the Qing customs taxation suggests that his statement was basically correct. There were, as introduced before, three kinds of dues levied by the Qing customs: cargo tax, ship tax, and additional taxes and surcharges. The cargo tax included both import and export duties. Admittedly, the rate of the British import duty was higher than the ones fixed by the Qing central government. In the principles and guidelines regarding customs announced by Beijing, many import items were categorized in great detail and the cargo tax rates were fixed according to their quality and quantity as well as ship size. Roughly speaking, the rates stood at 4 percent for most of the commodities. The Qing import duties, as historians have agreed, were generally low.[97] In contrast, the rate of the British import duty (10 percent) was uniform but higher than the average rate of the Qing import duties.

Nevertheless, the amount of taxes that a Chinese merchant-shipper paid to the British Expedition in wartime eastern Zhejiang was lower than the total amount of dues that a merchant-shipper had to pay to the Qing customs personnel and subfunctionaries in the province before the war. This is because the British Expedition collected neither a ship tax

[95] Pottinger to Kiyeng et al., Sept. 3, 1842, FO 682/1975/80; Pottinger to Kiyeng et al., Sept. 5, 1842, Sasaki, *Ahen sensō*, 221; Yuan, "Renyin wenjian," Zhongguo shixuehui, *Yapian zhanzheng*, vol. 3, 107; Weng, *Weng Xincun*, vol. 2, 537. No source attests to the British collection of duties from Chinese merchant-shippers and ship owners in Guangdong during the Opium War.
[96] Bernard, *The Nemesis*, 267.
[97] Deng, *Qingdai qianqi*, 215–24; Qi, *Qingdai queguan*, 217–20; Van de Ven, *Breaking with the Past*, 58; Xu and Jing, "Qingdai qianqi shangshui."

nor additional taxes and fees. There were several factors that pushed up the total amount of dues and fees that a Chinese merchant-shipper was obliged to pay to Qing customs officials and subofficials. First, the Qing customs in different localities usually had their own set of practical rules on the tariff rates. These rates could be higher than the ones in the rules announced by the central government, which had already been outdated by the early nineteenth century.[98] Second, the British Expedition did not exact any ship tax, whereas under the Qing customs system the cargo and ship taxes were often levied from both the owner of a Chinese merchantman and the owner of its cargo, who could be different persons.

Furthermore, although the Qing customs' additional taxes and fees fixed by the Beijing were generally lenient, the irregular or ad-hoc fees imposed on Chinese merchant-shippers by Qing customs officials and functionaries at the local level could be much higher than the total amount of the fixed tariffs and surcharges. Records of such "extra fees" are not totally absent from the existing historical documents. In a case in the late seventeenth century, it was reported that the subfunctionaries of Jiangsu's Hushu customs exacted from Chinese merchant craft an extra fee of more than ten times than the total of the fixed taxes. Last but not least, unauthorized guild merchants also collected extra duties from Chinese merchant-shippers outside the Qing customs system.[99] In short, when comparing the Qing customs taxation and the British taxation in 1840–1842, while both of them included a cargo tax, the British taxation was much simpler, and the total amount of dues collected by the British Expedition from a Chinese merchantman was smaller.

[98] Deng, *Qingdai qianqi*, 234; Qi, *Qingdai queguan*, 218.
[99] Deng, *Qingdai qianqi*, 187, 268, 396.

One similarity between the Qing customs and the British "quasi-customs" in wartime was that both of them exempted certain kinds of Chinese craft and cargoes from tax payment. In principle, under the Qing customs system, some import and export items were either exempt from taxation (for example those under the "tribute trade") or subject to tax reduction, such as grain imported from other countries. In many localities, small fishing craft and local craft laden with provisions also enjoyed tax exemption.[100] The British Expedition's taxation was also based on this principle: during the Opium War, "private junks freighted with ordinary produce" and fishing boats in Guangdong entering and leaving ports in daytime were exempt from British naval blockade, the passport system, and taxation.[101]

The British Expedition also granted tax exemption to Chinese merchantmen arriving in the free ports established in the insular possessions of Hong Kong, Zhoushan, and Gulangyu. Hong Kong Island and Zhoushan Island had long been reputed for their excellent harbors. "One hundred sail of square-rigged vessels," a British officer observed, "may anchor with ease in the inner harbor of Chusan."[102] A few days after the occupation of Hong Kong, the British Expedition authorities, on February 1, 1841, proclaimed that "Chinese ships and merchants resorting to the Port of Hongkong for purposes of Trade" were exempt from "charge or duty of any kind to the British Government."[103] In June 1841, the British administration in Hong Kong reiterated the exemption of duties on "native

[100] Huang, *Yapian zhanzheng qian*, 245–48, 346–51; Qi, *Qingdai queguan*, 223–38.
[101] Parker to the respective captains, 1841, FO 17/54, 130–31.
[102] Urmston, *Chusan*, 15.
[103] *Canton Press*, Feb. 13, 1841. Interestingly, the only Chinese version of this proclamation, which was copied by the Guangdong military authorities and forwarded to the throne, stated that while Chinese merchant vessels from all the Qing provinces were allowed to trade freely in Hong Kong, "all the taxes, port duties et al. [from the merchant vessels] are to be paid to the treasury of Great Britain." This is opposite to the clause of the tax exemption in the English version. See Proclamation by Elliot and Bremer, Feb. 1, 1841, ZDLD, *Dang'an*, vol. 3, 93–94.

vessels" in Hong Kong from all the provinces under Qing rule.[104] In February 1842, Hong Kong and Zhoushan were formally declared to be free ports, where "no manner of Customs, Port Duties, or any other Charges" was to be imposed on vessels of all nations and flags as well as their cargoes. Merchantmen trading at British Gulangyu, Chinese and foreign alike, were also exempt from tariffs.[105] The British free trade policy originating in the wartime period constituted the British attempt to stimulate not only Western trade in China but also Chinese waterborne trade, which, as argued above, the Qing authorities also endeavored to promote from the late seventeenth to the eighteenth century.

In addition to promoting Chinese trade on water, the British Expedition played a part in protecting it. As the last chapter has detailed, the expeditionary force took up some of the responsibilities of Qing naval forces to maintain order on water. The British naval forces patrolled China's waters, routed and captured pirates, and convoyed Chinese merchantmen. Similar to Qing rule over Chinese maritime and river trade, the British wartime policy on the trade was also protective in nature in some ways.

Many of the British Expedition's wartime regulations on Chinese merchant craft and their trade ended when they retreated from the Yangzi River and the mouth of Yong River after the conclusion of the Treaty of Nanjing. After the war, while all the British wartime customs duties terminated, the free trade policy in the three islands of Hong Kong, Zhoushan, and Gulangyu—i.e. the British "insular frontier" in China—continued in the 1840s and beyond. In Hong Kong, the British authorities continued registering merchant

[104] *Canton Press*, June 12, 1841; Elliot's proclamation to maritime provinces, June 7, 1841, FO 682/1974/65.
[105] *Canton Press*, Nov. 20, 1841, Dec. 18, 1841; *Friend of China*, Mar. 17, 1842; Proclamation by Pottinger, Feb. 16, 1842, FO 682/1975/1b; Parker to the respective captains, 1841, FO 17/54, 130a–31; Proclamation by the British, 1839, FO 931/16 iv. Although the British naval forces, as discussed before, captured Chinese trading vessels in the Hong Kong waters and put them and their cargoes on public sale in late 1841 and early 1842, the existing records suggest that no customs dues were exacted from Chinese merchant craft staying in British Hong Kong and British Zhoushan after they were declared to be free ports.

vessels, Chinese and foreign alike, throughout the late Qing period and beyond.[106] The British forces continued to play a role in protecting Chinese waterborne trade by convoying Chinese merchant vessels and suppressing piracy in the 1840s and the following decades in the late Qing period.

Qing Control versus British Control

During the China War, the establishment of British rule over Chinese merchantmen and their trade often resulted in the removal of Qing control over them. In areas subject to British blockade and occupation, the Qing authorities were unable to collect tariffs from Chinese craft even when the customs stations were open. In eastern Zhejiang, there used to be a customs branch on Zhoushan Island that levied taxes from Chinese merchant craft. The two British attacks on Zhoushan, as discussed before, brought about the Qing closure of the Zhejiang maritime customs. Even though the Zhejiang maritime customs was totally reopened in November 1842, the Qing authorities did not reestablish the customs house and recollect tariffs until late 1846, when the British handed Zhoushan over to the Qing. This contributed to the decrease in customs dues collected by the Qing authorities in the province during the British occupation period.[107]

A similar situation occurred in Xiamen and Gulangyu. Prior to the war, there was a Qing customs branch inspecting small local craft at Gulangyu, which was subordinate to

[106] Munn, *Anglo-China*, 286–88.
[107] Huang, *Yapian zhanzheng qian*, 138–39, 148; Memorial by Liang Baochang, Jan. 6, 1846, ZYJY, *Buyi*, 128; Memorial by Kiyeng and Huang Entong, Sept. 5, 1846, ZYJY, *Buyi*, 157–59; Memorial by Liang Baochang, Dec. 2, 1847, ZYJY, *Buyi*, 195–96; Ni, *Qingchao Jia Dao*, 131.

the main station (*zhengkou* 正口) of the Fujian maritime customs in Xiamen.[108] After the British assault on Xiamen and Gulangyu in August 1841, the Gulangyu customs branch, and the Xiamen customs at large, was closed. During the attack, part of the customs house in Xiamen was burnt. At the beginning of the occupation of Gulangyu, when the island had not yet been declared a *de facto* free port, the British naval detachment guarding the insular possession collected duties from Chinese merchantmen in the adjoining Xiamen waters. Some Chinese merchants went to Quanzhou to appeal to the Qing authorities for help but to no avail.[109] Immediately after the war, the Qing authorities responsible for making peace protested to the expedition authorities against the exaction of cargo tax from merchant junks by the British forces around Gulangyu.[110]

Many Chinese merchant craft arriving in British-occupied Zhoushan, Gulangyu, and Hong Kong enjoyed tax exemption from the British because of their free port status. For the Qing state, however, these British free ports were nothing but havens for Chinese merchantmen to evade Qing tariffs and conduct clandestine trade. Upon the reopening of the Xiamen customs in 1843, the local Qing authorities paid much attention to prevent the collaboration for tax evasion between Chinese merchant-shippers and guild merchants, sailors, and steersmen in Xiamen.[111] The case of the free ports thus indicates how the establishment of British control over Chinese trading craft weakened Qing control over them.

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[108] Huang, *Yapian zhanzheng qian*, 126; Memorial by Baochang, Mar. 10, 1844, DCJHLZ, 03-3167-006; Zhou et al., *Xiamen zhi*, vol. 7, 4–5. On the Qing's Fujian maritime customs before 1842, see Huang, *Yapian zhanzheng qian*, 125–31.
[109] Li, *Li Xingyuan*, vol. 1, 314, 319, 333.
[110] Kiyeng et al. to Pottinger, Sept. 1, 1842, FO 682/1975/79.
[111] Memorial by Baochang, Mar. 10, 1844, DCJHLZ, 03-3167-006.

Nevertheless, despite the British presence, the Qing authorities did not totally lose control over Chinese merchantmen. Considering the consequence of port closure on littoral societies and the decrease in customs dues, the Qing authorities sought to partly reestablish customs control over Chinese waterborne trade as early as wartime, even in places where British threat had still been present, and recollect customs duties from Chinese trading craft. For example, closed in late September 1841, Qing customs ports in Zhapu, Wenzhou, and Taizhou were reopened in early January 1842, when the British still occupied Zhoushan, Zhenhai, and Ningbo in eastern Zhejiang.[112] After the war, although the Qing authorities in Ningbo found it impossible to check the ordinary traffic in local craft between Ningbo and British-occupied Zhoushan, they still exacted "a trifling duty upon each bale or package" carried by the local craft.[113]

In Gulangyu, the Qing's Xiamen customs was reopened in August 1843. As the British forces remained in the adjacent island of Gulangyu after the war, the Qing government, rather than closing the Gulangyu customs branch, relocated it to a western island called Xinyu, the customs personnel living afloat. The Qing reestablished the customs branch in Gulangyu after the British departed in 1845.[114]

The development of the free port of Hong Kong best illustrates that the Qing authorities were still able to control Chinese waterborne trade in the aftermath of the war. From late 1843 to 1848, British Hong Kong was under economic recession. Chinese "junk

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[112] Memorial by Liu Yunke, Dec. 1, 1842, DCJHLZ, 03-3166-021.
[113] *Canton Press*, May 18, 1843.
[114] Reply by Secretariat, Feb. 1, 1842, ZDLD, *Dang'an*, vol. 4, 581; Memorial by Baochang, Sept. 16, 1843, ZDLD, *Dang'an*, vol. 7, 275–76; Pottinger to Ilibu, Feb. 21, 1843, FO 682/1976/46; Ilibu to Pottinger, Feb. 22, 1843, FO 682/1976/47; Ni, *Qingchao Jia Dao*, 136; Memorial by Baochang, May 20, 1843, ZYJY, *Buyi*, 45; Memorial by Baochang, Apr. 2, 1844, ZYJY, *Buyi*, 77; Memorial by Jingmu, Dec. 20, 1845, ZYJY, *Buyi*, 123; Memorial by Baochang, Mar. 10, 1844, DCJHLZ, 03-3167-006; Memorial by Baochang, July 10, 1843, *lufu zouzhe*, *Daoguang chao*, *caizheng lei*, *guanshui xiang*, Memorial by Kiyeng, July 24, 1843, DCJHZZ, 04-01-35-0379-060.

trade" in the colony, like foreign trade, was minimal in the mid-1840s. This was partly due to the uneasy Qing-British relations and the concomitant Qing efforts to prevent Chinese merchant craft from trading in or with Hong Kong.[115] In the 1840s, thus, the Qing civil, military, and customs authorities still played an important part in regulating Chinese merchantmen and their trade.

During the war, while the British Expedition ruled many of the littoral regions where the local Qing authorities were expelled, a considerable section of war-affected areas in southeast China fell under both Qing and British control. Many of the Qing conventional methods and British wartime measures for managing Chinese merchantmen and their trade, namely blockading waters, issuing passports, and collecting duties, not only resembled each other but also overlapped in many regions. In eastern Zhejiang, after the first British conquest of Zhoushan in early July 1840, a small British blockading squadron was posted on the Yong River against Ningbo and Zhenhai. At the same time, in face of the imminent British threat, the Qing Zhejiang authorities blocked up the lower reaches of the Yong with iron chains, wooden stakes, and sunken vessels filled with stones, and drew all Chinese civilian craft ashore (see the chapter's epitaph).[116] The British blockade was removed in mid-October 1840, one month before the Qing government reopened all the ports and maritime customs stations in Zhejiang.[117]

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[115] For the relations between the Qing Guangdong authorities and the British in the aftermath of the Opium War in the mid-nineteenth century, see Wakeman, *Strangers*. The post-Opium War economic recession in Hong Kong was also partly due to the fact that the Supplementary Treaty concluded in 1843 limited foreign trade between Hong Kong and the Mainland within the five treaty ports. See Munn, *Anglo-China*, 44.

[116] Bingham, *Narrative*, vol. 1, 299; *Canton Register*, Sept. 22, 1840; Jocelyn, *Six Months*, 73; Memorial by Wuergong'e, July 11, 1840, ZDLD, *Dang'an*, vol. 2, 160; Memorial by Wuergong'e and Zhu Tingbiao, Aug. 13, 1840, ZDLD, *Dang'an*, vol. 2, 267; Memorial by Song Qiyuan, Sept. 1, 1840, ZDLD, *Dang'an*, vol. 2, 311.

[117] Memorial by Ilibu, Nov. 15, 1840, ZDLD, *Dang'an*, vol. 2, 538; *Canton Register*, Oct. 13, 1840; Elliot to Ilibu, Oct. 23, 1840, FO 17/50, 44, 45; Elliot to Ilibu, Nov. 3, 1840, FO 17/50, 61a.

The British collection of duties from Chinese merchant craft in the blockaded or occupied coastal regions and waters sometimes agitated the Qing government. The Qing authorities noticed and complained about the British exaction of taxes from Chinese merchantmen, to which they often attributed the decrease in customs duties.[118] On some occasions, both the British Expedition and the Qing customs demanded taxes from the same Chinese merchant vessel, which led to conflicts between them. In August 1842, the British blockading force at the Wusong mouth collected taxes from Chinese trading craft entering the embouchure. After making the required payment to the British and receiving a passport and a flag, the merchantmen arrived at the Qing customs port in Shanghai. The Qing authorities there, however, intended to check their cargoes and exact tariffs from them. The merchants disobeyed and argued with the Qing officials. Knowing this, the British informed the Qing authorities that the merchantmen concerned should not be taxed again as they had already paid customs dues to the British.[119] Most likely the Qing authorities ignored whether Chinese merchant vessels had ever paid any money to the British Expedition but required all of them to pay duties at the customs stations still in operation during the war.

The Qing authorities asserted that as a result of the British detention of and tax exaction from Chinese merchantmen, many Chinese trading craft evaded the Qing's customs ports still in operation during the China War.[120] Given the limitation of surviving sources, it is difficult to decide whether it was common among Chinese merchant craft to be requested by both the British Expedition and the Qing customs to pay tariffs during the

[118] Memorial by Liu Yunke, Dec. 1, 1842, DCJHLZ, 03-3166-021; Kiyeng et al. to Pottinger, Sept. 1, 1842, FO 682/1975/79.
[119] Liu, "Qing zhengfu," 332; Weng, *Weng Xincun*, vol. 2, 537.
[120] Memorial by Liu Yunke, Dec. 1, 1842, 03-3166-021.

war, and whether they often made the double payment. The conflicts between the British Expedition and the Qing customs over regulating Chinese merchantmen, however, did not mean that the trading craft necessarily fell under both Qing and British control, or even either of them. They may have escaped from both the British naval blockade and taxation and the Qing naval forces and customs during the war and in its aftermath, conducting clandestine trade in the eyes of both the Qing and the British Expedition authorities.

Both Qing and British customs statistics provide us with a rough idea of the prevalence of the "illicit" trade. According to the report by the British prize agent Chimmo, he totally collected some $12,800 as import duties and only about $4,700 as export duties in Ningbo during the seven-month occupation in October 1841–May 1842.[121] In contrast, from April 22, 1839 to April 21, 1840, when the British Expedition had yet to arrive in China, the Qing Zhejiang maritime customs collected as many as about $106,000 as fixed tariffs (*eshui* 額稅), which included both import and export duties.[122] As stated before, Zhenhai was the largest customs port in Zhejiang, and the general rate of Qing regular tariffs was not significantly higher than the British one. The Qing and British statistics thus suggest that in eastern Zhejiang, the amount of Chinese merchantmen and their cargoes taxed by the British Expedition in wartime were much lower than those of the merchantmen and cargos taxed by the Qing maritime customs in the province before the war.[123]

Apart from the general fall in the volume of Chinese waterborne trade in China during the war, another reason for the small amount of duties collected by the British Expedition is that many merchant vessels that were used to import goods to Ningbo

[121] Agents for the care and custody of property, Aug. 16, 1843, FO 17/69, 132; Amount of the ransom of Ningbo, Nov. 11, 1843, FO 17/70, 228.
[122] Huang, *Yapian zhanzheng qian*, 470.
[123] Memorial by Liu Yunke, Dec. 1, 1842, DCJHLZ, 03-3166-021.

changed their routes in order to escape British taxation. As the British naval commander-in-chief William Parker admitted in late November 1841, when the rules of British taxation in eastern Zhejiang had not yet been laid down, only a small number of Chinese trading craft had arrived or departed since the expedition held Ningbo. Parker further questioned the practicability of the expedition's imposition of import and export duties.[124] Bernard stated that the 10-percent import duty imposed upon all the cargoes of Chinese vessels passing up the Yong River was "in a great degree evaded, by an increase of smuggling along the coast, which the disorganized state of the local government of the province greatly favoured."[125]

Thus, though expelling the Qing customs authorities from eastern Zhejiang in October 1841–May 1842, the British Expedition did not succeed in establishing entirely effective control over Chinese merchantmen then in the region. This was partly due to the weakness of the British naval blockade (see Chapter 3), on which the British taxation was based. The lack of a dominant power in southeast China's waters (see Chapter 4) was also an important factor for the rise of the Chinese trade on water that fell beyond both Qing and British control during the war.

The following case is an excellent example of how Chinese merchantmen escaped both Qing and British control in wartime. In July 1842, eight seagoing Shandong vessels laden with freshwater fish originally intended to travel from Suzhou to the sea, probably by taking the Suzhou Creek. The British blockade of the Wusong mouth, however, dissuaded them from doing so. The vessels then sailed from Suzhou to Dantu district, which was adjacent to Zhenjiang city, planning to travel down the Yangzi to the sea. The Qing officials instructed the vessels to take the Huai River instead. This was a longer route, and

[124] Parker to Gough, Nov. 27, 1841, FO 17/54, 244.
[125] Bernard, *Narrative of the Voyage*, vol. 2, 237.

the craft did not obey the Qing order. Later when the British forces struck Zhenjiang, the eight vessels disappeared without a trace.[126] This case best illustrates the activities of Chinese merchant craft in the interstices of the British and Qing empires in wartime. The idea of fissures in state control and interstitial space will be examined in more detail in the next chapter.

Conclusion

The current chapter has explained and compared the Qing and British controlling mechanisms over Chinese merchant craft and their trade during the 1839–1842 Qing-British hostilities. It has highlighted some differences between many similarities between the two. It has examined how the war led to the slackening of Qing control over Chinese trading craft and their trade, and how the British Expedition replaced the Qing authorities to rule the merchantmen and their trade in regions under British blockade and occupation. It has also investigated how Qing and British control clashed, competed, overlapped, and failed to reach Chinese merchantmen, which contributed to the prevalence of Chinese illicit trade on water during the war.

Hitherto the thesis has explained the control of the Qing state over its subjects on the empire's sea frontier, the British advance on and occupation of vast maritime and riverine regions in southeast China, and the Qing-British conflicts over ruling the Chinese maritime and river population in the war-affected regions. The Chinese people, however, did not necessarily fall under the rule of the Qing state and the British Expedition or fall into victims of the Qing-British fighting. Many of them benefited from the war, taking advantage of the long existence and new emergence of fissures in Qing rule and interstices

[126] Su'an daoren, "Chuwei," Zhongguo shixuehui, *Yapian zhanzheng*, vol. 3, 49.

of the conflicting British and Qing empires to conduct their own socioeconomic activities and expand their own socioeconomic networks. In the next chapter, the focus will shift from the Qing state and the British Expedition to the vast Chinese maritime and river population in southeast China.

Chapter 6:

"Migratory Bipeds" and "Floating Town": Chinese People in Littoral Southeast China during the Opium War

On the [British] *squadron proceeding to the Bogue these natives could not accompany it . . . but as the Jupiter* [HMS] *and many merchant-ships remained at Toong-koo* [in the Pearl River Delta]*, they felt perfectly safe. Some unhappy Chinese soldiers, taking advantage of the absence of the principal part of the squadron, established themselves in a boat amongst this musquito fleet* [Musquito: an aboriginal bushranger in Australia]*, taking down the names of the* traitorous natives [original emphasis]*, for the purpose of denouncing them to the mandarins. One of these soldiers in an unguarded moment . . . "let the cat out of the bag." Horrid vengeance was instantly taken on the whole party; their boat being surrounded, was set fire to, and these poor wretches were literally roasted alive, their persecutors preventing their escape with long bamboos.*

Elliot Bingham of HMS *Modeste*, 1842[127]

Introduction

As the earlier chapters have shown, during the Opium War, in many littoral regions in southeast China, while the Qing and British military powers clashed and Qing and British control over the Chinese people conflicted or overlapped, many Chinese littoral people fell under neither the Qing's nor the British Expedition's effective control. The current chapter will center on fissures in Qing control and interstices of the competing Qing and British empires, which characterized southeast China's water borders during the Qing-British hostilities. During that time, many of these fissures and interstices lay within delta and embouchure regions and on islands' fringes, straits, and the riverside. The chapter will answer two questions: how did the Chinese people emerge and assemble to form coastal,

[127] Bingham, *Narrative*, vol. 2, 70–71.

riverine, and even floating settlements alongside British merchant and naval vessels in the fissures of Qing control in 1839–1842? How did these settlements survive and flourish under limited British protection but threats—both possible and real—from both the Qing authorities and Chinese pirates?

For decades before the 1839–1842 Qing-British hostilities, the China coast and its adjacent isles were dotted with anchorages taken by foreign vessels escaping the Canton System. Many of these berths lay within the outer waters of the Qing Empire's sea frontier, most of which, as examined in Chapter 2, fell beyond effective Qing administrative and military control. In 1839–1842, the "outer anchorages" in Guangdong's Pearl River Delta became shelters for many Britons and British merchantmen in China.[128] At these anchorages, British trading vessels maintained a certain degree of self-protection and looked to the British forces for shelter from the coercion of "mandarins." Meanwhile, the Qing authorities were still able to impose some threats on the outer anchorages. In fact, throughout the 1839–1842 hostilities, the British merchant craft and naval forces were not totally immune from threats from both the Qing authorities and Chinese waterborne raiders in southeast China.

Against this background, many Chinese people and their craft emerged in the fissures of Qing control, gathering alongside the floating British community and occupying force in many maritime and waterway regions. Despite the Qing's restrictive measures for "calming" the sea frontier and the adverse effects of the British Expedition's advance on Chinese waterborne transportation and trade (see Chapters 2 and 3), not all the Chinese people were war victims. Many of them benefited from working for or trading with the British forces and foreign merchant vessels. Along the coast and rivers, many Chinese

[128] Owen, *British Opium Policy*, 113–45.

people serving the British forces and foreigners went to the latter's anchorages individually in boats. Meanwhile, many "migratory bipeds," a British officer called them, assembled to form coastal settlements or, as described by the *Canton Press*, "floating towns."[129] This phenomenon was particularly striking in eastern Zhejiang, Xiamen and Gulangyu, and the Pearl River Estuary. The collaboration of Chinese littoral people with Westerners in China, however, did not begin in 1839. For decades, if not centuries, before the Qing-British hostilities, Chinese locals and civilian craft very often assembled next to where Western vessels were present in China's littorals.

While the Chinese people in the emergent coastal and floating settlements were accused by the Qing authorities of being "Han evildoers," "inner evildoers," or "villainous fishers and the poor Dan" (see Chapter 2), they constituted an integral part of the local economy and society of the regions neighboring the British anchorages long before the war. Many of them acted across land regions and waters. They originated in land regions but traveled to the British anchorages, living on shore or staying afloat. Many of those participating in the provisions and opium trades traveled between the mainland, the outlying islands, and their adjacent waters. They were so mobile and flexible that they took advantage of the existence of "cracks" in Qing rule and extended their socioeconomic activities into these fissures. The Qing rulers' classification of regions into inner and outer (see Chapter 2) did not make any sense for Chinese people in the littoral regions, many of who acted across the administratively categorized territories.

The Chinese craft and settlements next to the British merchant and naval craft, however, were not entirely free from the intimidation of both the Qing authorities and Chinese pirates. The British protection for them, and also for Chinese locals living in

[129] Bingham, *Narrative*, vol. 2, 69; *Canton Press*, Jan. 9, 1841.

British-controlled regions, proved to be inadequate. Moreover, like the Qing authorities, the British merchant fleet and naval forces sought to impose some rules upon the Chinese craft and coastal and floating settlements to maintain order in the fissures of Qing rule. Caught between the slackening (but still fairly active) Qing power, the rising (but not dominant) British power, and the disturbance caused by Chinese pirates, the Chinese people in the coastal areas and floating settlements resorted to self-defense, organizing themselves against the Qing agents and Chinese waterborne bandits. This is their "art of not being intimidated" in the interstitial space of southeast China's water borders during the Opium War.

Cracks in State Control

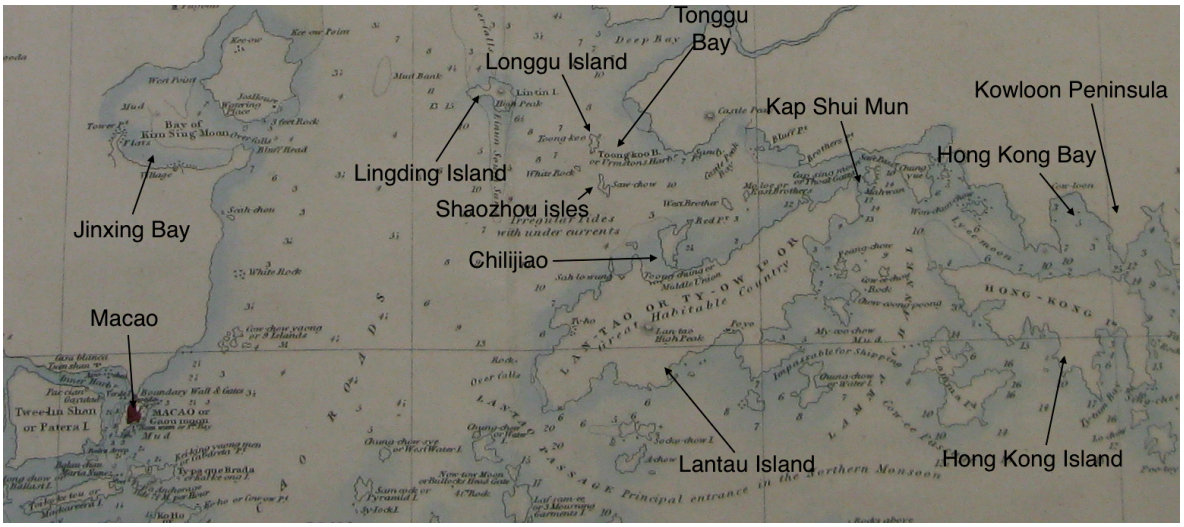
Fissures in Qing Control

For decades before Commissioner Lin's anti-opium campaign, many foreign merchantmen, often with the tacit permission of the local Qing authorities and forces, traded outside the Canton System. In the early nineteenth century, a great number of them were clippers, i.e. fast square-rigged ships, laden with tea or opium, and opium hulks (*dunchuan* 躉船), i.e. floating opium depots.[130] They berthed on the seaboard, islands' shores, and insular fringes in delta regions. In the 1820s and 1830s, some opium receiving ships laid anchor at Nan'ao Island on the Guangdong-Fujian border. During that time, Western opium-laden vessels intermittently visited the regions categorized by the Qing authorities as the sea frontier's outer waters on the coasts of Guangdong, Fujian, Zhejiang, and Jiangsu.[131]

[130] Collin, *Foreign Mud*, 19–104; Lubbock, *The Opium Clippers*, 1–148.
[131] *Chinese Repository,* vol. 1, no. 3, July 1832, 92–94; Lindsay and Gutzlaff, *Report*, 271.

Most of the notable anchorages taken by opium hulks and clippers during that time, however, lay within the Pearl River Estuary south of Humen, or, using the Qing official language, "outside" Humen.[132] These berths included Lingding Island; Jinxing Bay (Jinxingmen) to the south of Lingding; Tanzai adjacent to Macao; the southern shore of the Jiulong peninsula and its adjacent Hong Kong harbor, i.e. Hong Kong Bay, the "Jiulong waters," or "Jianshazui waters"; and Jishuimen (lit. "turbulent-water passage"; see figure 4.1, page 173) to the northwest of Hong Kong Island between Dayushan Island and Mawan Island, lying within the "Modao waters."[133] See map 6.1 below for the locations of these anchorages. Some of these berths, for example Hong Kong Bay and Jinxing Bay, functioned as temporary shelters from gales and typhoons for foreign merchantmen.[134]

[132] For a contemporary Westerner's introduction to the opium smuggling in China in the early nineteenth century, see Hunter, *The 'Fan Kwae'*, 64–72. On the informal foreign settlements and smuggling networks in the Pearl River Estuary in the Qing prior to the 1839–1842 hostilities, see van Dyke, "Smuggling Networks."
[133] Owen, *British Opium Policy*, 113–45; Wei, *Yisou rukou*, 462; Memorial by Lin Zexu and Yiliang, 5th month of Daoguang 20 (May 31–June 28, 1840), ZDLD, *Dang'an*, vol. 2, 129. In English records, Jishuimen was also referred to as "Capsingmoon" and "Cape Symoon Passage." It is named Kap Shui Mun at present. Today Modao or Da-Xiao Modao is called the Brothers, which consists of the islands of East Brother and West Brother. In 1794, the Macartney embassy once stayed temporarily on Lantau Island and Mawan Island. See Cranmer-Byng and Shepherd, "A Reconnaissance of Ma Wan." On the pre-Opium War history of Lantau Island, see Siu, "Tai Yu Shan."
[134] For example, see Bennet, *Wanderings*, vol. 2, 20–21; Hunter, *The 'Fan Kwae'*, 72.



Map 6.1 The Pearl River Delta (Extracted from the chart of the Pearl River by James Wyld, 1840)[135]

Some of the aforementioned "illegal" foreign berths in the Pearl River Delta were anchorages where the British merchant fleet and the British community in China found refuge during the time between the inception of Commissioner Lin Zexu's anti-opium crusade in March 1839 and the British taking of Hong Kong in early 1841. In late March 1839, less than two weeks after Commissioner Lin's arrival in Guangzhou, the British superintendent of trade Charles Elliot appealed to British merchant vessels to anchor on the Jiulong side of Hong Kong Bay. Apart from British merchant vessels, Britons resisting Lin's vigorous anti-British measures and fleeing Guangzhou's Factories in May and Macao in August also took shelter in Hong Kong Bay.[136] In mid-November 1839, the floating British community, for the safety concern stated below, moved to Tonggu Island (or Longgu Island) and the isles of Shazhou (or Shaozhou), west of the mainland and southeast

[135] Wyld, Chart of the Canton River, FO 925/2136. In fact this map is not entirely accurate. Shazhou, for example, should be two isles rather than one whole island.
[136] *Canton Press*, Mar. 23, 1839, Mar. 30, 1839, Nov. 16, 1839.

of Lingding Island, with the merchantmen anchoring in Tonggu Bay between Tonggu-Shazhou and the mainland.[137] The Qing authorities referred to this Tonggu-Shazhou anchorage as the "Tonggu waters" or "Changshawan waters." The British ships also scattered around Chilijiao (or Chilajiao), an island next to the northern shore of Duyushan.[138] Some British merchantmen also stayed at Tanzai.[139] All these Pearl River Delta anchorages are indicated in map 5.1 above.

The British merchant fleet had remained at the Tonggu-Shazhou anchorage until April 1840, when they moved to Jishuimen because of the upcoming typhoon season.[140] In October 1840, the British fleet went back to Tonggu and Shazhou. It had remained there until around April 1841, when the floating British community began to move to the nascent

[137] *Canton Press*, Nov. 2, 1839, Nov. 9, 1839, Nov. 16, 1839, May 30, 1840; Ellis, *Memoirs*, 81; Lin, "Lin Zexu," Zhongguo shixuehui, *Yapian zhanzheng*, vol. 2, 37; Memorial by Lin Zexu and Yiliang, Mar. 29, 1840, ZDLD, *Dang'an*, vol. 2, 46–49; Memorial by Lin Zexu and Yiliang, June 16, 1840, ZDLD, *Dang'an*, vol. 2, 133–34; Map of Xin'an, *Xin'an xianzhi Xianggang shiliao*, 24. In contemporary Western records, Tonggu or Longgu was also called Tongkoo, Tonkoo, Tungkoo, Toonkoo, Tong Koo, Taong Koo, Toong-koo, or Long Koo. In unofficial Chinese records, it was also called Linggu. See Chen, *Haiguo wenjian*, vol. 2, 55. It is named Lung Kwu Chau at present. Tonggu or Longgu Island should not be mixed up with Longgu Mountain, an isle south of Humen. See "Huanjing," Liu and Liu, *Xin'an xianzhi Xianggang shiliao*, 54. Shazhou was called Sowchow, Sawchow, Sanchoo, or San-chou in contemporary Western records. At present, it is called Sha Chau. Wei Yuan's *Yisou rukou ji* (Record of the invasion of barbarian craft) and an anonymous person's "Xizhu liuguan jishi" (A witnessing record of the war), two contemporary writings pertaining to the Opium War based on Qing official records, mistakenly regarded the Longgu-Shazhou anchorage as Changshawan, which was actually a place on the mainland where there was a Hakka village under the Qing division (*si* 司) of Guanfu in Xin'an district. See Wei, *Yisou rukou*, 462; "Shizhu liuguan jishi," Zhongguo shixuehui, *Yapian zhanzheng*, vol. 3, 238; Wang et al., *Xin'an xianzhi*, vol. 1, 92.

In Western historical records, Tonggu Bay was also called Tongkoo Bay, Toonkoo Bay, or Urmston's Bay/Harbour. The bay is now called Urmston's Road. It was named after James Urmston, president of the Factory of the East India Company in Guangzhou. In 1823, after a scuffle between some sailors of the merchantman *Topaze* and some Chinese natives, the Qing authorities stopped the "Canton Trade." British merchant ships then withdrew from Huangpu and came to anchor in Tonggu Bay, which was henceforth called Urmston's Bay or Harbour. See Bernard, *The Nemesis*, 70. For a historical study of Tonggu Island, see Schofield, "Tung Kwu Island."

[138] Lin, "Lin Zexu," Zhongguo shixuehui, *Yapian zhanzheng*, vol. 2, 37. Chilijiao is present-day Chek Lap Kok, where the Hong Kong International Airport is located.

[139] Memorial by Lin Zexu and Deng Tingzhen, Sept. 1, 1839, ZDLD, *Dang'an*, vol. 1, 672; Memorial by Lin Zexu et al., Sept. 18, 1839, ZDLD, *Dang'an*, vol. 1, 679.

[140] *Canton Press*, May 30, 1840; Memorial by Lin Zexu and Yiliang, 5th month of Daoguang 20 (May 31–June 28, 1840), ZDLD, *Dang'an*, vol. 2, 129.

British insular possession of Hong Kong, with most of the British merchantmen berthing in the Hong Kong harbor.[141]

As map 6.1 above shows, the berths taken by the British merchant fleet in 1839–1841, and also those taken by Western opium hulks and clippers in the early nineteenth century, were bays, harbors, roadsteads, island's fringes, waters between islands, and waters between islands and the mainland. According to the Qing rulers' conceptualization of their empire's sea frontier, only few of the anchorages lay within the inner waters and fell under Qing administrative and military control (see Chapter 2). The Qing authorities saw Jinxing Bay and the Jiulong/Jianshazui waters (Hong Kong Bay) as the inner waters, where they adopted comparatively vigorous measures to expel the sojourning foreign merchantmen. Foreign vessels, for example, were expelled from Jinxing Bay in the mid-1830s.[142] On the eve of the affray near Jiulong Mountain in September 1839, three Qing cruisers prevented the Chinese from provisioning the floating British community in the inner waters of Jiulong. Before the skirmish, supplies of every kind had been stopped for several days.[143] Later, in the so-called "Battle of Guanchong" in November 1839, the Qing fortifications in Jiulong opened fire (though ineffectively) at the British merchant fleet. Worried about the Qing military threat to the Jiulong anchorage, Charles Elliot requested the fleet to move to Tonggu Bay.[144] Thus, during their hostilities with the British, the Qing authorities maintained a certain degree of control over the inner waters in the Pearl River

[141] Cree, Journals, vol. 5, 1841, 19; *Canton Register*, Apr. 13, 1841. Hong Kong Island (Xianggang Dao) should not be confused with the village of Xianggang (Heong-kong) in the island's southwest. Elliot's intentional confusion of the two places brought about the British occupation of the whole island rather than only the village in early 1841. See Yu and Liu, *Shijiu shiji de Xianggang*, 45–53.
[142] Ruan et al., *Guangdong tongzhi*, vol. 124, 744; Memorial by Lin Zexu, Nov. 21, 1839, ZDLD, *Dang'an*, vol. 1, 734.
[143] *Canton Press*, Sept. 21, 1839; Memorial by Lin Zexu et al., Sept. 18, 1839, ZDLD, *Dang'an*, vol. 1, 679.
[144] *Canton Press*, Nov. 9, 16, and 23, 1839. A short description of the Jiulong clash and the battle at Chuanbi can be found in Chang, *Commissioner Lin*, 202–06.

Delta where the British vessels berthed. But still the Qing influence over these waters was weak, partly due to the defense and caution of the British merchant fleet and British forces against any threat from the local Qing authorities (see below).

In fact, most of the Pearl River Delta anchorages in map 6.1 above did not lie within the inner waters. Rather, they were either the outer waters or regions within the outer waters, both of which, as highlighted in the thesis, fell beyond effective Qing control. The Longgu waters and Modao waters, where Tonggu Bay and Jishuimen were located, belonged to the outer waters, whereas the islands of Lingding, Chilijiao, Tonggu, and Shazhou and the northern shore of Hong Kong Island were regions within the outer waters.[145] For local Qing officials, Dayushan and Hong Kong Island "hung isolated in the sea" (*guxuan haiwai*).[146] In his letter to the British naval commander appealing the expedition to retreat to the outer waters after the battle at Shajiao and Dajiao in January 1841, the Qing naval commander in Guangdong Guan Tianpei admitted: "As for the outer waters, they have long been places where ships of war and merchantmen from different countries anchored and so it is not forbidden [that these craft stayed in the outer waters]."[147] Prior to 1839, the Qing authorities caused little disturbance to the "outer anchorages" and never routed any "barbarian craft" in the outer waters. There were cruising forces in the

[145] Parker and Gough to the Qing Jiangsu authorities, July 5, 1842, ZYJY, *Buyi*, 157–59; Memorial by Ruan Yuan, Feb. 19, 1822, ZDLD, *Dang'an*, vol. 1, 34; Memorial by Lin Zexu, Nov. 21, 1839, ZDLD, *Dang'an*, vol. 1, 734; Memorial by Lin Zexu, Mar. 7, 1840, ZDLD, *Dang'an*, vol. 2, 26; Memorial by Lin Zexu and Yiliang, 5th month of Daoguang 20 (May 31–June 28, 1840), ZDLD, *Dang'an*, vol. 2, 129; Memorial by Yiliang, Nov. 22, 1840, ZDLD, *Dang'an*, vol. 2, 556; Memorial by Yišan et al., June 30, 1841, ZDLD, *Dang'an*, vol. 3, 527; *Gengzi Xinchou haijun*, 461; "Xizhu liuguan," Zhongguo shixuehui, *Yapian zhanzheng*, vol. 3, 238.

[146] Liang, *Yue haiguan zhi*, vol. 20, *bingwei*, 36; Memorial by Qi Gong and Yiliang, July 16, 1841, ZDLD, *Dang'an*, vol. 3, 568; Guan, *Chouhai chuji*, vol. 4, 55.

[147] Guan to Bremer, Jan. 8, 1841, Sasaki, *Ahen sensō*, 55. Also see Memorial by Ruan Yuan, Feb. 19, 1822, ZDLD, *Dang'an*, vol. 1, 37.

outer-water regions (see Chapter 4), but they were often bribed away or evaded the illicit foreign anchorages of their own accord.[148]

But the story was different during the period from the start of Commissioner Lin's anti-opium campaign in March 1839 to the commencement of the British expeditionary campaign in China in mid-1840. During that time, the Qing authorities in Guangdong attempted to extend their administrative, military, and naval grip to the outer-water regions where foreign vessels anchored and the floating British community sojourned. As the next section will detail, spies and informers were sent to the Pearl River Delta anchorages to suppress Chinese provisioning activities. The Qing authorities attempted to threaten the foreign fleet by adding poison to wells and (allegedly) to exported tea; kidnapping and murdering; launching fire attacks at night; issuing orders interdicting the Chinese to provision the British; and instigating the Chinese to kill the "rebellious barbarians" and destroy their craft."[149] Captain Henry Smith of HMS *Volage* described the Qing fire surprise against the Jishuimen in June 1840, which caused a great panic among the fleet even though it was abortive, as "the most successful attempt that has been made yet by the Chinese to burn the ships."[150] The Qing measures against the foreign vessels in the outer anchorages in the Pearl River Delta thus suggested a certain degree of Qing military influence in the region.

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[148] *Canton Press*, Mar. 30, 1839; Hunter, *The 'Fan Kwae'*, 67–69.
[149] *Canton Press*, Sept. 7, 1839, June 13, 1840, July 11, 1840. Elliot and Captain Henry Smith of HMS *Volage* were nearly taken by some Chinese soldiers when they were walking on shore on Chuanbi Island in January 1840. See *Canton Press*, Jan. 18, 1840. For the two unsuccessful Qing fire attacks on the Tonggu-Shazhou anchorage on February 28 and 29, 1840, see Bingham, *Narrative*, vol. 1, 125; *Canton Press*, Mar. 7, 1840; Memorial by Lin Zexu and Yiliang, Mar. 29, 1840, ZDLD, *Dang'an*, vol. 2, 46–49. For the larger-scale but still abortive surprise on the Jishuimen anchorage in mid-June 1840, see Bingham, *Narrative*, vol. 1, 183; *Canton Press*, June 13, 1840; Kerr, *Letters*, 235; Memorial by Lin Zexu and Yiliang, 5th month of Daoguang 20 (May 31–June 28, 1840), ZDLD, *Dang'an*, vol. 2, 129–30; Waley, *The Opium War*, 104; Smith to Elliot, June 9, 1840, FO 17/40, 42–43.
[150] Smith to Elliot, June 9, 1840, FO 17/40, 42.

The Foreign Merchant Fleet and British Naval Forces

Nonetheless, the above measures adopted by the local Qing authorities proved largely unsuccessful in intimidating the floating British community and routing the foreign merchant fleet. Contrary to the aim of Guangdong officials, the floating British community flourished in the fissures of Qing control in the Pearl River Estuary. In 1839–1841, a huge number of Britons as well as non-British merchants lived in the delta's outer anchorages. In late October 1839, in Hong Kong Bay, there were more than eighty foreign merchantmen—the vast majority being British—accommodating as many as two or three thousand foreigners, who included the British quitting Guangzhou and Macao, those recently arriving in China, foreign merchants, trading company staff, seamen, and some females and children.[151]

Foreign trade, including the opium traffic, remained vibrant at the temporary berths in the delta.[152] Importing and exporting cargos on behalf of the British merchants who defied Commissioner Lin's new trading regulations after the surrender of opium, the American firm Russell & Co. opened an office on board the British ship *Heroine* in Hong Kong Bay and later at the Tonggu-Shazhou anchorage.[153] During the trading seasons of 1840 and 1841, the foreign trade previously conducted in Huangpu and Guangzhou under the Canton System now took place at the Tonggu-Shazhou anchorage.[154] As shown below, the opium trade between Western wholesalers and Chinese petty traders also prospered in the Pearl River Estuary berths. Despite repeated Qing prohibitions, foreign opium clippers

[151] *Canton Press*, Oct. 26, 1839; Hoe and Roebuck, *The Taking*, 93; Kerr, *Letters*, 166.
[152] *Canton Press*, Nov. 9, Dec. 7, and Dec. 14, 1839; Lin and Deng to Elliot, Nov. 3, 1839, FO 682/1972/41.
[153] Hunter, *The 'Fan Kwae'*, 146.
[154] *Canton Press*, Nov. 30, 1839; Fay, *The Opium War*, 153; Wong, "The Trade of Singapore," 118.

and hulks anchored alongside other British merchant craft and continued their business at the outer anchorages.

During their sojourn at the Pearl River Delta's outer anchorages, the British community members and foreign sailors did not always stay afloat. They bathed on beach, walked alongshore, and procured provisions from coastal villagers and local dealers. They even intruded into some coastal Chinese settlements.[155] The troublesome behavior of some British and American seamen of Jardine, Matheson & Co.'s and Dent Co.'s merchantmen on Jiulong's shore and their intrusion into Jianshazui Village probably caused the death in July 1839 of the villager Lin Weixi, i.e. the so-called "Lin Weixi Incident" that has often been regarded as one immediate cause of the Opium War.[156] In an admiralty court summoned by Elliot on board the British merchant ship *Fort William* in Hong Kong Bay in August 1839, the seamen were charged for murdering Weixi and "riotously, unlawfully and injuriously entering certain dwelling houses in a village on the eastern shore of the anchorage of Hongkong in search for spirits," "assaulting the inhabitants, men and women, cutting, beating and otherwise dangerously ill using them," and damaging a "josshouse" in the village's neighborhood.[157]

Given the considerable size of the foreign fleet, of which British merchant ships constituted the majority, the British commercial authorities in China imposed some sort of control over the British fleet in the fissures of Qing control in the Pearl River Delta waters. Elliot appointed a Thomas Marqus as "Chief Magistrate of Police of the British Merchant Shipping" on the Huangpu beach and in Hong Kong Bay. The position lasted from November 1838, before the inception of Commissioner Lin's anti-opium campaign, to

[155] *Canton Press*, Nov. 9, 1839, Dec. 7, 1839; Kerr, *Letters*, 178.
[156] Chang, *Commissioner Lin*, 196–99.
[157] *Canton Press*, Aug. 17, 1839.

around July 1839.[158] Moreover, the British merchant fleet was able to create for itself a certain degree of self-protection at the outer anchorages. In March 1839, immediately after Lin began to incarcerate foreign merchants in the Guangzhou Factories, some captains of the British merchant vessels in Hong Kong Bay were charged "with the duty providing for the protection of British lives and property" in the absence of any British ships of war. The captains were required to "make the necessary dispositions for putting the ships in a posture of defence."[159] "[A]ll the ships" in Hong Kong Bay, remarked an American merchant in September 1839, were "armed & ready to repel any enemy."[160] Their caution and vigilant lookout on shift against threats from the Qing authorities helped foil the several fire attacks on the Tonggu-Shazhou and Jishuimen anchorages in 1840, which inflicted only slightest damages on the shipping.[161]

The foreign merchant vessels, however, failed to fully protect themselves against all the threats from the "mandarins" to the Pearl River Delta anchorages, where the Qing Guangdong administration maintained a certain degree of influence. On November 3, 1839, when a "party of five gentlemen" took a walk alongshore in Jiulong, some armed Chinese people coming from the direction of the Qing's recently constructed Guanchong Fort tried to make them prisoners and, failing in so doing, assaulted them. On their escape, one of the foreigners in question "received a severe cut with a spear on the head." The floating community contemplated sending "a large party on shore to drive away the Chinese and destroy their breastworks," but eventually the retaliatory measures did not materialize. In

[158] Marqus to Palmerston, Dec. 11, 1840, FO 17/44, 163–65a.
[159] *Canton Press*, Mar. 30, 1839.
[160] Kerr, *Letters*, 166.
[161] Bingham, *Narrative*, vol. 1, 125; *Canton Press*, Mar. 7, 1840, June 13, 1840; Smith to Elliot, June 9, 1840, FO 17/40, 42–43; Memorial by Lin Zexu and Yiliang, 5th month of Daoguang 20 (May 31–June 28, 1840), ZDLD, *Dang'an*, vol. 2, 129.

late December 1839, after the capture of the British merchant Henry Gribble by a sixty-oared Qing cruiser on his way up from Humen to Tonggu, the British fleet in Tonggu Bay sent sixteen boats and two brigs to chase the abductor. They, however, failed to rescue the captive.[162]

Given the British merchantmen's insufficient self-protection, the small British naval force in China sought to protect the fleet in the Pearl River Delta before the expedition's arrival. There was once a British frigate guarding the entrance of Hong Kong Bay.[163] In early November 1839, HMS *Volage* and *Hyacinth* went to Chuanbi to send a dispatch to Commissioner Lin demanding that he withdraw his repeated threats of burning and destroying the British fleet in Hong Kong Bay and allow them to remain unmolested. This resulted in what Commissioner Lin and Chinese historians have called the "Battle of Chuanbi," i.e. the clash between the British squadron and a Qing flotilla near Chuanbi. It resulted in the "total destruction" of the latter.[164] Moreover, the British force in the Pearl River Estuary played a significant role in sabotaging the Qing fire surprises at the Tonggu-Shazhou anchorage in late February 1840 and at the Jishuimen anchorage in June 1840.[165]

Before the advent of the expeditionary force, however, the British naval squadron in the Pearl River Delta was too weak to fully safeguard the British mercantile community against dangers from the hostile Qing authorities. To protect the British in Macao (some British returned to the Portuguese settlement after the August 1839 exodus), to counter the Qing's anti-British actions, and to stop the British merchantmen from entering Humen to conduct trade, the few British armed ships in China sailed around the delta region, going

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[162] *Canton Press*, Jan. 4, 1840.
[163] Kerr, *Letters*, 166; Memorial by Lin Zexu et al., Sept. 18, 1839, ZDLD, *Dang'an*, vol. 1, 679.
[164] *Canton Press*, Nov. 9, 1839; Smith to Lin, Nov. 2, 1839, *British Parliamentary Paper*, vol. 31, 21.
[165] Bingham, *Narrative*, vol. 1, 136; *Canton Press*, Mar. 7, 1840, June 13, 1840; Smith to Elliot, June 9, 1840, FO 17/40, 42–43.

back and forth between Macao, Hong Kong Bay, the Tonggu-Shazhou anchorage, Jishuimen, Jinxing Bay, and Chuanbi Island.[166] Rather than dispersing the Qing war craft and destroying the forts at Jiulong that threatened the British merchant ships in Hong Kong Bay, Henry Smith of HMS *Volage* appealed to the merchantmen's commanders to proceed to Tonggu Bay "if they wish to avail themselves of the protection of the men-of-war."[167] Despite the retreat, British naval protection in Tonggu was still far from adequate for the merchant fleet. Although Smith endeavored to station an HMS in Tonggu Bay after the shift of anchorage, a Western observer complained that no HMS was present in Tonggu after the aforementioned kidnap of Gribble in December 1839.[168] Due to the limited British naval power in China before the expedition's arrival in mid-1840, Elliot was obliged to deploy some employed and armed British merchantmen and opium hulks in protecting the floating British community.

The Competing Qing, British, and Chinese Pirate Forces

After the China Expedition arrived in mid-1840, the British forces available to safeguard the British shipping in the Pearl River Delta were considerably strengthened. The expeditionary force rendezvoused at the Tonggu-Shazhou anchorage before its majority advanced up the China coast. In the Pearl River Estuary, before the expedition occupied Hong Kong in early 1841 and turned it into the main military and naval station in Guangdong, a great section of the British forces often berthed at the Jishuimen and Tonggu-Shazhou anchorages from mid-1840 to April 1841. During that time, a British

[166] *Canton Press*, Nov. 9, 1839, Jan. 4, 1840; Hoe and Roebuck, *The Taking*, 96–98, 115. The Portuguese authorities in Macao were largely unable to protect the British against Qing coercion throughout the 1839–1842 Qing-British hostilities.
[167] *Canton Press*, Nov. 9, 1839.
[168] *Canton Press*, Nov. 30, 1839, Jan. 4, 1840.

naval squadron of several ships of war in the delta anchored in Jishuimen and Tonggu-Shazhou. Meanwhile, in late 1840 the Madras Native Infantry, Bengal Volunteers, and some Royal Artillery soldiers were stationed in Shazhou, which was "slightly fortified, there being Store houses on it for Coals and Provisions."[169] The Qing government's preoccupation of its Guangdong forces with the British Expedition in the province hindered its efforts to inflict any significant threats on the floating British community in the Pearl River Delta during the 1840–1842 China War.

The rise of British naval power in China during the war, however, as Chapter 4 has shown, did not bring about a British dominance in southeast China's waters. In the Pearl River Delta, "when nearly abreast of Toong-koo Island," Elliot Bingham of HMS *Modeste* witnessed, "we saw a long way to windward a large fast-boat board and plunder a smaller one, the men of which jumped overboard." The *Modeste* did nothing to help the plundered.[170] The following cases of British-occupied Zhoushan and Gulangyu and Xiamen further illustrate the inability of the British Expedition to dominate the regions categorized by the Qing authorities as outer-water regions on the Qing Empire's sea frontier in 1840–1842.

According to the Qing official understanding of the sea frontier, Zhoushan Island, where Dinghai district was located, "hung isolated in the sea," and was separated from the mainland by the high sea (*yuange chongyang* 遠隔重洋).[171] The two British attacks on Zhoushan crushed the Qing naval forces in eastern Zhejiang and drove out the land forces

[169] Bingham, *Narrative*, vol. 1, 383–84; Ellis, *Memoirs*, 142; Return of the true naval and military in the Canton River, Dec. 7, 1840, FO 17/50, 70–71; MacKenzie, *Narrative of the Second Campaign*, 4–5. After the British departure from Tonggu in April 1841, the Qing authorities probably fortified the island. See *Canton Press*, Dec. 18, 1841.
[170] Bingham, *Narrative*, vol. 1, 412.
[171] Memorial by Ijing, May 1, 1842, ZDLD, *Dang'an*, vol. 5, 217.

from the island. Moreover, some isles neighboring Zhoushan fell under British control. In the minds of the Qing authorities, British-occupied Dinghai became an outer-water region largely beyond the reach of their administrative and military grip.[172]

Nevertheless, the Qing authorities still maintained a certain degree of military and political influence in the Zhoushan Archipelago and its waters during the two British occupation periods. Qing secret agents in Zhejiang were active on Zhoushan Island kidnapping British soldiers and "Han evildoers." Qing regular and irregular forces hid in eastern Zhejiang's isles and remote ports to prepare for counterattacks against Zhoushan. In April 1842, they did launch a large-scale (though ineffective) surprise.[173] On water, despite the British naval blockade of eastern Zhejiang and the constant naval patrol at the island's outposts, Chinese waterborne raiding, as Chapter 4 has shown, was rampant in the locality. In short, the emergence of fissures of Qing control in British Zhoushan did not bring about the ascendance of British power in the region, where Chinese pirate forces also played a part in the power equilibrium on water.

The case of Xiamen and Gulangyu was slightly different from that of Zhoushan: the Qing presence in the two islands and their adjacent waters following the British attack was weaker. In the eyes of Qing officials, Xiamen Island straddled the inner and outer waters. While Xiamen "hung isolated in the waters" (*gushi shuizhong* 孤峙水中) and the waters adjacent to its east belonged to the outer waters, "inner ports" lay in the island's north, south, and west (see map 3.4, page 120).[174] On the one hand, the Qing civil authorities and

[172] Memorial by Ijing, May 1, 1842, ZDLD, *Dang'an*, vol. 5, 220; Continuation of Strachan's journal, Nov. 7, 1840, FO 17/50, 345; Memorial by Yan Boxi and Liu Yunke, Jan. 28, 1841, ZDLD et al., *Yapian zhanzheng zai Zhoushan*, 182.
[173] D'arcy-Brown, *Chusan*; Memorial by Ijing et al., May 1, 1842, ZDLD, *Dang'an*, vol. 5, 217–20.
[174] Memorial by Yiliang, Apr. 4, 1842, ZDLD, *Dang'an*, vol. 5, 147; Mar. 11, 1841, ZDLD, *Dang'an*, vol. 3, 213. Also with the inner-outer concept in mind, contemporary Westerners differentiated Xiamen's "inner

armed forces vacated Xiamen and Gulangyu after the British attack in August 1841. Even though the British forces retreated from Xiamen after a short occupation, the Qing civil authorities did not venture to return to the island and reoccupy the public office.[175] On the other hand, maintaining some control over Xiamen's locals, the British squadron based in Gulangyu and led by George Smith of HMS *Druid* played an active role in suppressing banditry in the Xiamen waters.[176] Yet, the proliferating pirates still remained to be a constant threat to the Chinese coastal population throughout the war and in its aftermath.

In short, in areas of the Pearl River Delta south of Humen, many of which lay within the outer waters, Qing control was generally tenuous before 1839. During the Qing-British hostilities, many Britons and British merchant vessels took refuge at the outer anchorages within the fissures of Qing control in the estuary. Meanwhile, the China War saw the rise of British naval power and the emergence of interstices of Qing and British control in the Pearl River Delta region and beyond, where Chinese pirates were active. In 1839–1842, many Chinese people took advantage of the existence of such gray zones of state control and became opium traders, provisions dealers, and boatmen (and boatwomen) ferrying Westerners at the outer anchorages and in the British-occupied regions. Where did they come from? How did they emerge in the fissures of Qing control and the interstices of the Qing and British empires?

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harbor," i.e. the waters that Gulangyu blocked up with Xiamen, from the "outer harbor," the waters south of the two islands. See the inner and outer harbors in map 3.4 on page 120.

[175] *Canton Press*, Sept. 25, 1841; *Canton Register*, Oct. 19, 1841; Cree, Journals, vol. 5, 1841, 74; Memorial by Yan Botao, Sept. 9, 1841, ZDLD, *Dang'an*, vol. 4, 53; Memorial by Duwanhūwa, Dec. 31, 1842, ZDLD, *Dang'an*, vol. 4, 480.

[176] *Canton Register*, Oct. 19, 1841.

The Chinese Littoral Population and the Opium War

Chinese People in the China War: Victims, Negotiators, and Beneficiaries

Despite the British reiteration that the China War was fought against the "mandarins" and the "oppressive Tartar government," the British fighting in China in 1840–1842 caused great suffering to many Chinese people.[177] British fighters and Western observers were often astonished by the horrors of war.[178] Joseph de Rosamel of the French corvette *Danaide* vividly depicted what he saw in Zhenhai city immediately after its fall to the British hands in October 1841:

> The morning of the attack, Chin-hae presented a strange aspect; all the houses and shops were shut or pillaged, and miserable [and] ruined creatures whose dwellings had been destroyed might be seen or heard crying and rolling themselves on the earth, unploring assistance from every European passing, while the lower classes wandered about the streets, throwing themselves upon their knees and clenching their hands as the soldiers passed.[179]

Many Chinese merchant-shippers and ship owners, as shown in Chapters 2 and 4, suffered from the British advance, attack, and naval blockade, and the prize-agent system. Below is a description by a foreign Protestant missionary in 1844 of a certain Lim-pai recently reclaimed from opium smoking:

> The comparative poverty of his present circumstances—the consequence of the late British war—had produced in him a fretfulness and irritability, which he had great difficulty in controlling. He was formerly a landowner in Koo-lang-soo [Gulangyu],

[177] *Canton Press*, Nov. 20, 1841.
[178] On horrors of the Opium War, see Crossley, *Orphan Warriors*, 100–18; Elliott, "Bannermen and Townsmen"; Stevens, "The Taking of Chapu."
[179] *Friend of China*, July 20, 1843.

> and was also the proprietor of some trading junks. The arrival of the British force involved him in ruin, and he had to effect his escape across to Amoy.[180]

Off land, many Chinese people living or working afloat suffered from the British Expedition's compulsory recruitment of Chinese craft of various kinds and also the owners, captains, and sailors on board. The expedition forcibly engaged the Chinese on board civilian craft to be messengers sending correspondence to the Qing authorities,[181] or to be pilots helping the British naval vessels to navigate in shallow, turbulent, and unfamiliar waters as well as narrow waterways.[182] "Pilots," Elliot assured the British Indian government, were "always easily pressed out of the numerous fishing craft along the whole coast of China."[183] The British forces also converted appropriated Chinese craft into pilot craft, transports (see figure 3.8, page 143), passage boats, yachts, floating camps and ordnance stores, and even buoys.[184] At the same time, many Chinese suffered from the Qing measures for controlling the sea frontier, namely the conscription of craft, port closure and blockade, and the sea ban. To quote but one example, while many fishers were prohibited from going to sea under the Qing's port blockade (see Chapter 2), the advance of the British Expedition damaged many fishing nets hung along the China coast.[185]

The British advance on China and their rule in the occupied regions, however, did not mean suffering for every Chinese people. Not every ordinary Chinese was afraid of the British Expedition. Sailing up the Pearl River during the second campaign in Guangdong in early March 1841, the British expeditionary force, which included the naval surgeon-

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[180] Smith, *A Narrative*, 411–12.
[181] For example, see Weng, *Weng Xincun*, vol. 1, 396; *Yifei fanjing*, vol. 2, 13.
[182] For example, see Cunynghame, *An Aide-de-Camp's Recollections*, 59–60; Zhongguo kexue yuan Shanghai shehuikexue yuan lishi yanjiusuo choubei weiyuanhui, *Yapian zhanzheng moqi*, 317.
[183] Elliot to Auckland, Mar. 22, 1840, enclosure in no. 22, PRO 30/12/36/5, 77.
[184] Belcher, *Narrative of a Voyage*, vol. 2, 220; Bernard, *The Nemesis*, 325; Cree, Journals, vol. 4, 85, vol. 5, 31–32; Jocelyn, *Six Months*, 96.
[185] Jocelyn, *Six Months*, 44; Loch, *The Closing Events*, 34.

wartime painter Edward Cree, passed by a bustling village near Yaliangxie Island adjacent to the Pearl River. Rather than dispersing, the boatmen and boatwomen, as shown in figure 6.1 below and described in Cree's journals, worked and rested in their own sampans as usual. [186]



Figure 6.1 Village near Yaliangxie Island (Cree's watercolor, 1841)[187]

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Many Chinese people helped the British Expedition on a voluntary basis. When the British forces arrived in Ningbo in October 1841, some Chinese volunteered to help remove the obstructions piled up behind the city gates by the Qing forces. In many cases, Chinese assistance to the British was mutually beneficial. After a "well-dressed Chinaman" secured

[186] Cree, Journals, vol. 5, 1841.
[187] Cree, Journals, vol. 5, 1841.

the help of some British officers and soldiers to rout Chinese plunderers in his "spacious and well-furnished apartment," he expressed his gratitude to the British soldiers by showing them a large Qing military store, where the leaden missiles as prizes were estimated at £700 or £800.[188]

Similar to what they did with local Qing officials and functionaries, some local Chinese people resorted to bribery to negotiate with the British forces for profits or other gains. With the Grand Canal's mouth near Zhenjiang blockaded by the expedition prior to the British attack in July 1842, some Chinese men, on board their punts, presented "vegetables, fish, bullocks, and all the good things the country afforded" as "cum-shaw (presents) to bribe the 'illustrious eye'"—their designation for HMS *Modeste*'s captain Rundle Watson—"to allow their private trade to continue." While they were rejected, some other Chinese people were successful in such endeavors.[189] In mid-1842, a number of Chinese craft laden with Qing official rice arrived in British-occupied Zhenjiang. One Yangzhou Chinese surnamed Bao bought some gifts to the British squadron, appealing to them to let the craft unload the rice. His request being successful, some bureaus were set up to sell the rice in Zhenjiang accordingly.[190] Some even cracked and abused British rule to their own advantage. On one occasion, seeing that unofficial property in British-occupied Ningbo could be ransomed at 10 percent of their estimated value, a Chinese pointed out a house, "ransomed" it at 15 percent of its value, and removed all the property inside, though the house, as later proved, did not belong to him.[191]

The case of Chinese merchants trading between China and Singapore exemplifies

[188] Ellis, *Memoirs*, 262–63.
[189] Loch, *The Closing Events*, 87.
[190] Zhu, "Caojian," Zhongguo shixuehui, *Yapian zhanzheng*, vol. 3, 87.
[191] *Canton Press*, Jan. 22, 1842.

how Chinese people grasped wartime opportunities for making profits. According to a British official report to the London government, in 1839–1840 the total value of cargoes shipped in "junks" from China to Singapore was about 1.1 million dollars. In 1840–1841, the figure nearly doubled, soaring to 2.1 million dollars. Regarding goods shipped from Singapore to China in "junks," in 1839–1840 the total value was 1.5 million dollars. In 1840-41, it rose to nearly 2.8 million dollars.[192] The boom was largely thanks to the export of tea from China to Singapore and the import of opium from Singapore conducted by some speculative Chinese merchants. As the historian Lin Ken Wong argues,

> The temporary dislocation of trade in Canton in 1839 lowered the prices of tea in this port and it became an extremely worthwhile speculation for the Chinese junks to buy the cheap tea and bring it to Singapore. Early in 1840, it was reported that about 10,000 chests of tea were brought to Singapore. The success of this first venture and the high prices ruling in 1841 and 1842 led to a wild speculation in tea by the Chinese merchants of Singapore who obtained generous advances from the local European firms to buy tea from China.[193]

Concerning the opium trade, because of the unstable opium market in China during the Qing-British hostilities, many Chinese merchant craft imported opium from Singapore, which became a prosperous opium depot in 1839–1842.[194] Such speculation, however, did not guarantee success. It proved that the war did not seriously disrupt Guangzhou's tea trade, and "several of the most respectable Chinese merchants (of Singapore) [who speculated in the opium and tea trades] became insolvent" in 1843.[195]

Some Chinese people even held a positive attitude toward British rule in China in 1840–1842. In Xiamen, where much trade between China and Southeast Asia in Chinese

[192] *Canton Press*, Jan. 29, 1842; *Friend of China*, June 16, 1842; Martin, *China*, vol. 2, 138–39.
[193] Wong, "The Trade of Singapore," 118.
[194] Owen, *British Opium Policy*, 161–62.
[195] Ibid.

vessels was conducted, a Westerner participating in the British Expedition noticed that "As a great part of the people hereabouts have visited the India Archipelago, they are well conversant with foreigners, and did not shew any symptoms of fear."[196] "During the heat of the bombardment [of Xiamen in August 1841], a [Chinese-owned] Siamese junk, with a white flag at her mast-head, stood into the harbour, apparently perfectly aware that she would not in any way be interfered with."[197] Experiencing British rule in Singapore, Xiamen merchants, the Western witness observed, "showed far greater acquaintance with European ideas and manners, than we are even accustomed to see at Canton . . . the name of Singapore invariably produced a grateful smile, and sundry remarks in favor of the English nation."[198] Many Xiamen Chinese even evinced to the expedition the thought that "If you wish to be our rulers, treat us as your people, but not as your enemies. We understand the nature of your government from the establishment of your dominion at Singapore, and to similar sway we are willing to bow."[199]

Whether the ostensibly friendly smiles and willing compliance were out of sincerity or fear, the Xiamen Chinese, propelled by the anarchy following the British assault, did seek British protection against local marauders. Shortly after the British retreated from Xiamen, some "principal merchants" on the island invited the *Druid*'s captain Smith, who commanded the squadron in Gulangyu, "to live among them on shore, to protect them from the ladrones, and to establish a police force; and the people say, that as now they have not any mandarins, let captain Smith come and rule over us."[200] In Zhoushan, shortly after the British occupation of the island, the British forces, at the request of some peaceable

[196] *Canton Press*, Nov. 13, 1841.
[197] Bingham, *Narrative*, vol. 2, 247.
[198] *Canton Press*, Nov. 20, 1841.
[199] *Canton Press*, Nov. 13, 1841.
[200] *Canton Register*, Oct. 19, 1841.

islanders in Zhoushan's neighborhood, drove away a band of Chinese pirates injuring them and ravaging their dwellings.[201] Sometimes Chinese locals expressed their gratitude for the British suppression of piracy. In the Zhoushan waters, when, in July 1840, HMS *Modeste* stopped three piratical boats from plundering the Chinese islanders, "From one of the islands a boat was sculled off with a Chinaman standing up in the bows, ko-tooing [kowtowing] and chin-chining as if his head would come off."[202]

In addition to those susceptible to waterborne raiding, many Chinese littoral people took the economic advantage of the British presence in China and the changing political-social situation. In 1839–1842, many Chinese people on board merchant or fishing craft or passage boats asked for the sale of opium from Western merchant and British naval craft.[203] Chinese merchant-shippers benefited from the British Expedition's convoy service and tax exemption in Xiamen and Hong Kong (see Chapters 4 and 5). On water, many Chinese people worked on board British naval and merchant vessels as compradors and servants; offered to serve the British as pilots, informants, messengers, interpreters, boatmen (and boatwomen) ferrying passengers, and prostitutes (see figure 6.2); and traded provisions and opium with the British.[204]

[201] Elliot to Palmerston, July 9, 1840, FO 17/38, 75a–76.
[202] Bingham, *Narrative*, vol. 1, 181–82.
[203] For example, see *Canton Register*, Sept. 1, 1840; Cree, Journals, vol. 5, 11; D'Arcy-Brown, *Chusan*, 51, 175.
[204] Cree, *The Cree Journal*, 75; D'Arcy-Brown, *Chusan*, 153; Memorial by Lin Zexu, Jan. 8, 1841, ZDLD, *Dang'an*, vol. 1, 756. On the activities of Chinese provisioners in the Pearl River Estuary in 1839–1841, see Luk, "Collaboration and Conflict," 15–43.



Figure 6.2 "Boats manned by women." On the two boats in the drawing are probably prostitutes going to British-occupied Hong Kong. Cree wrote in the Hong Kong harbor on April 7, 1841: "In the evening two boats with about 30 Chinese girls came along side the ship, but Brodie [captain of the *Rattlesnake*] very properly would not allow them to remain." (Cree's watercolor, 1841)[205]

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Chinese Craft in Fissures of Qing Control

Among those labeled by the Qing authorities in 1839–1842 as "Han evildoers" who served the "outer barbarians" on water, many took a small craft to go to the anchorages taken by the British merchant and naval craft. The long and tortuous coastline of China and its circuitous and intricate water channels enabled small Chinese craft to easily evade the scattered Qing military and naval forces during the Qing-British hostilities, and in the

[205] Cree, Journals, vol. 5, 20.

preceding two centuries at large. Moreover, as the Qing authorities did not register small boats in the inner rivers, small Chinese craft, sampans for example, were exempt from the surveillance of both the Qing authorities and local social leaders, who, as Chapters 2 and 5 have examined, played important roles in registering Chinese merchant and fishing craft and overseeing the Chinese people on board.[206] Many Chinese locals sailed to the British anchorages in small boats for procuring opium—individually or in a small group—even at the zenith of Commissioner Lin's anti-opium campaign. In July and August 1839 Deng Sandi, who made his living by conveying passengers and cargoes on water, twice rowed his boat to the Jianshazui waters, i.e. Hong Kong Bay, where the British merchant fleet was located, to buy opium from two foreign ships.[207] The Qing's cruel punishment of beheading "Han evildoers" captured as opium or provisions dealers and displaying their heads at conspicuous spots along the coast proved largely ineffective in dissuading Chinese littoral people from going to the British anchorages in boats.[208]

The exemption of small Chinese craft from Qing registration, moreover, means that they were not required to frequent any regular ports where the Qing civil, military, and customs authorities inspected civilian craft, and leave and return at regular times. In 1839–1842, many Chinese craft went from "illicit ports" or "remote ports," ports beyond effective Qing administrative and military control, to the outer anchorages taken by the British naval and merchant vessels, which were excellent hiding places for small Chinese craft.

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[206] Memorial by Lin Zexu et al., Apr. 27, 1840, ZDLD, *Dang'an*, vol. 2, 67; Memorial by Yuqian, Apr. 6, 1841, ZDLD, *Dang'an*, vol. 3, 317.
[207] *Canton Press*, Nov. 23, 1839; Memorial by Lin Zexu, Nov. 21, 1839, ZDLD, *Dang'an*, vol. 1, 728.
[208] *Canton Press*, Nov. 9, 1839, Nov. 23, 1839; Memorial by Lin Zexu et al., Nov. 21, 1839, ZDLD, *Dang'an*, vol. 1, 729.

Many Chinese craft, especially the small ones, were so mobile and flexible that they took advantage of the fissures of Qing control by traveling easily between the mainland and the berths taken by the British merchantmen. Many of them did not stay at the anchorages for a long time. This was particularly so for Chinese opium traders, who needed to sell the product in other places. In 1839 Peng Yakai and Ou Yazhu, respectively a fisherman and a boat-householder (*tinghu*), and Ou's brother-in-law Liang Yabao became partners in procuring opium. In early September, Peng and Ou drove a craft to the Jianshazui waters, bought six opium balls from a foreign vessel called "Keshun" (English name unknown), and brought the opium balls to Liang for resale at Xinxu, a bazaar to the east of Jianshazui in the mainland. In mid-September 1839, Peng and Ou attempted to procure opium again from the same vessel in the Jianshazui waters. This time they failed, as the opium previously on board that vessel had been shipped away. Peng and Ou then went back to Xinxu and gave the money back to Liang. They were finally caught at another bazaar.[209] These petty opium traders were part of the numerous Chinese littoral people who acted across land regions and waters to pursue their own socioeconomic activities during the 1839–1842 Qing-British hostilities, and also in the preceding decades or centuries.

Another good indication of the great mobility and flexibility of local Chinese craft in 1839–1842 is that those laden with provisions and local produce often surrounded foreign merchant and British naval vessels in great numbers immediately after the latter two's arrival at the outer anchorages and in British-controlled regions. This occurred across southeast China. In Guangdong, after the British attack on Shajiao and Dajiao Forts in January 1841, "the forts, on both sides the channel, were in a few days dismantled. The bumboats [small craft carrying provisions to moored or anchored ships for sale],

[209] *Canton Press*, Nov. 23, 1839; Memorial by Lin Zexu et al., Nov. 21, 1839, ZDLD, *Dang'an*, vol. 1, 727.

compradors, and fishermen, gaining confidence by our boldness, continued to frequent the fleet in great numbers."[210] In Fujian, when the *Rattlesnake* troopship was leaving Xiamen for the north in early September 1841, "Chinese boats came alongside with bullocks for sale."[211] In Zhejiang, during the truce in late 1840–early 1841, "every kind of supply" in Zhoushan, Elliot Bingham recorded, "became most abundant," boats "containing much variety of them swarming from all quarters."[212] The boom lasted until the first British retreat in February 1841.[213] In Jiangsu, in a stream on Chongming Island, the *Auckland* steamer "was surrounded by junks, each containing from 2 to 3 water buffaloes, besides pigs and baskets of poultry. It was difficult to determine which were the noisiest, the pigs or their masters."[214]

Coastal and Floating Chinese Settlements

During the 1839–1842 Qing-British hostilities, many Chinese people acted across the littoral regions that were classified by the Qing rulers as inner and those classified as outer (see Chapter 2). While many Chinese took craft to go to help the British individually, many others congregated to form coastal or even floating settlements alongside British merchant and naval vessels. In fact, this was nothing new. In the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, along the coast and in river mouths in southeast China, many Chinese people, a

[210] McPherson, *Two Years*, 75–76.
[211] Cree, Journals, vol. 5, 74.
[212] Bingham, *Narrative*, vol. 1, 355–56. Also see *Chinese Repository*, vol. 10, no. 9, Sept. 1841, 500; D'Arcy-Brown, *Chusan*, 111; Elliot to Fenall, Oct. 21, 1840, FO 17/49, 340–40a.
[213] *Canton Press*, Oct. 24, 1840; *Chinese Repository*, Sept. 1841, vol. 10, no. 9, 500; Memorial by Yuqian, Mar. 11, 1841, ZDLD, *Dang'an*, vol. 3, 317. During the war, while the British Expedition blockaded the waters of eastern Zhejiang, they never forbade the shipping of ordinary produce in the Zhoushan waters because they needed fresh provisions not only from the island, whose production was limited, but also from the neighboring isles and the mainland. See Parker to the respective captains, 1841, FO 17/54, 130–31; George Elliot and Charles Elliot to Palmerston, Nov. 6, 1840, PRO 30/12/36/5, 130.
[214] Loch, *The Closing Events*, 66.

great part of whom dwelt afloat, had already assembled next to the "illicit" berths taken by foreign merchantmen despite the Qing junction banning any Chinese service to foreigners outside the Canton System. In 1830, the American Protestant missionary David Abeel visited Lingding Island, one of the famous anchorages for foreign vessels in private trade outside the Canton System in the Pearl River Delta. He described it as "the resort and habitation of fishermen, and the possession of a few families, who cultivate the ground, and supply the shipping with provisions."[215] Along the coast, when foreign ships approached or suddenly appeared in a port or harbor, Chinese fishing craft and bumboats usually congregated on an ad-hoc basis to provision the foreigners. Many coastal and riverine Chinese also established temporary bazaars nearby until the departure of the passing foreign vessels.[216]

Similar to what happened before 1839, during the 1839–1842 Qing-British hostilities many new Chinese bazaars or settlements emerged next to where the British forces were stationed. "On making them understand, by signs," Bingham recorded on his procurement of provisions on an island adjacent to Zhili's Bai River mouth near Tianjin in August 1840, "that I wanted to purchase vegetables, a market was quickly established on the beach."[217] Generally speaking, a number of factors determined whether the Chinese people would choose to congregate next to or amid the British merchant vessels and naval forces and, if so, the size and duration of the Chinese assemblages. These factors included the geography of the anchorages concerned; the size and length of stay of the British land and naval forces; the British pressure on the Chinese locals who were required to provision the expedition; the coercion of the Qing authorities against "Han evildoers" and the degree

[215] Abeel, *Journal of a Residence in China*, 47.
[216] For example, see Anderson, *Narrative of the British Embassy*, 75; Abeel, *Journal of a Residence*, 116–17.
[217] Bingham, *Narrative*, vol. 1, 259.

of British protection for local craft against the Qing threats; the level of confidence among the Chinese population in British power; and the economy of the localities surrounding the British anchorages. The following examples will explain all these factors.

- Jiangsu and Eastern Zhejiang

In Jiangsu, during the British advance up the Yangzi in 1842, there were only few emergent Chinese riverside bazaars or assemblages of Chinese craft along the river. This is mainly because of the relatively short British military and naval presence in the Yangzi region, and the widespread panic of the Chinese populace across the area (see Chapter 3). One exception was the "regular market" in Yizheng city in the courtyard of a "large joss-house which stood close to a landing place at the mouth" of a Great Canal branch linking to the Yangzi. It was established under the initiative of a "Chinese gentlemen"—perhaps a Qing official—in exchange for immunity from British attack. From the canalside bazaar "supplies were all sent down [the Yangzi] to the fleet at Zhenjiang as fast as they could be procured, Chinese boats or small junks being employed to convey them."[218]

In eastern Zhejiang, during the British occupation of Ningbo and Zhenhai in October 1841–May 1842, Chinese boats working for the British forces took their usual moorings along the Yong River. They did not congregate at any new anchorages taken by the British squadron (see figure 6.3). Thanks to the intricate and well-established networks of creeks and canals spreading over eastern Zhejiang's mainland, local craft sailed along the Yong and plied easily around the two cities and the countryside.

[218] Bernard, *The Nemesis*, 362.



Figure 6.3 Chinese craft mooring on the Yong River in Ningbo city in the mid-1840s. This fleet had already been present for decades, if not centuries, before the war.[219] (From Fortune's *Three Year's Wanderings*, 1847)[220]

After retaking Zhoushan and occupying Zhenhai and Ningbo in October 1841, the British forces controlled water transportation between Zhoushan and the mainland of eastern Zhejiang. While the British occupation on many occasions interrupted water transportation on the island and in the Zhoushan Archipelago at large (see Chapter 3), Chinese craft provisioning and ferrying the British forces gathered in the Dinghai harbor throughout the second occupation until 1846.[221] The traffic of local Chinese craft between Zhoushan Island and the mainland and in the Zhoushan Archipelago was busy during most of the occupation period (see figure 6.4).[222] Chinese craft remained in the Dinghai harbor throughout the occupation due to the strong British protection against Qing intervention; the sizeable British military and merchant fleet; and the longtime presence, since the late

[219] *Chinese Repository*, vol. 13, no. 1, Jan. 1844, 21.
[220] Fortune, *Three Year's Wanderings*, 71.
[221] *Chinese Repository*, June 1841, vol. 10, 335; Cree, Journals, vol. 5, 84; D'arcy-Brown, *Chusan*, 137.
[222] *Canton Press*, Nov. 6, 1841; Cree, Journals, vol. 5, 107, vol. 7, 3, 7, 19–20; Smith, *A Narrative*, 263.

seventeenth century, of an assemblage of Chinese passage craft in the harbor.[223] This local Chinese flotilla constituted part of the economy of eastern Zhejiang long before the advent of the British expeditionary force. The wartime activities of these craft around the Zhoushan waters were largely an extension of the pre-war socioeconomic activities of many local Chinese people in the archipelago.



Figure 6.4 Jintang Island (Silver Island) to the west of Zhoushan Island in 1843, when Zhoushan was still under British occupation. The numerous Chinese craft anchoring on shore in the drawing probably transported between Jintang and Zhoushan and in the Zhoushan Archipelago throughout the occupation period. (Cree's watercolor, 1843)[224]

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[223] Dinghai xianzhi bianzuan weiyuanhui, *Dinghai xianzhi*, 125; *Chinese Repository*, vol. 10, no. 6, June 1841, 335.
[224] Cree, Journals, vol. 7, 1843.

- Xiamen and Gulangyu

In Fujian, after the British Expedition's attack on Xiamen and its neighboring isles in late August 1841, a British detachment of three ships of war, three transports, and some six hundred soldiers were garrisoned in Gulangyu and patrolled around the waters of Gulangyu and Xiamen.[225] Similar to the case of Zhoushan, the continuing presence of the British troops in Gulangyu meant a demand for fresh provisions, which were plentiful throughout the British occupation thanks to the Chinese provisioning activities.[226] The Gulangyu British, as admitted by an imperially commissioned Qing official investigating the fall of Xiamen, "bought pigs, lambs, and cattle at a high price for some time, and villains who want to reap a profit as well as poor people have also carried fruit and vegetables with poles on shoulders and sold them on the Gulangyu coast at a handsome price."[227] Given the small Chinese population on the island vis-à-vis the British occupying force, there were probably many Chinese people who crossed the strait from Xiamen or Fujian's mainland (see figure 6.5). The strait-crossing activities of local Chinese craft continued throughout the British occupation until 1845.[228]

[225] *Canton Press*, Sept. 25, 1841; Cree, Journals, vol. 5, 74.
[226] *Canton Press*, Nov. 13, 1841; "A Field Officer," "The Last Year in China," 44, 81. On the situation of Zhoushan regarding fresh provisions, see D'Arcy-Brown, *Chusan*; Munn, "The Chusan Episode."
[227] Memorial by Duwanhūwa, Dec. 31, 1842, ZDLD, *Dang'an*, vol. 4, 481. Also see Liu Hong'ao, June 4, 1843, ZYJY, *Buyi*, 48.
[228] Memorial by Duwanhūwa, Dec. 31, 1842, ZDLD, *Dang'an*, vol. 4, 481.



Figure 6.5 Point of Gulangyu opposite Xiamen. Some Chinese craft are sailing in the Lujiang (lit. Egret River), i.e. the Xiamen-Gulangyu Strait or the "Inner Harbor" of Xiamen. (Cree's watercolor, 1843)[229]

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The Chinese littoral people who provisioned the British soldiers in Gulangyu were largely free from the intimidation of the Qing authorities in Fujian. After the British expulsion of the Qing military and civil administrations from Xiamen in late August 1841, by October 1841 "only one Chinese officer had returned, who had taken up his station close to Xiamen, but he said he would not have any thing to do either with his own countrymen

[229] Cree, Journals, vol. 7.

or the English."[230] Some Qing officials also hid in Xiamen's countryside to organize local militia, but they did not interfere with the activities of both the British forces and the Chinese inhabitants in Xiamen and Gulangyu.[231] Thanks to the tacit permission of the local Qing authorities for Chinese provisioning activities, a new Chinese bazaar catering for the British forces burgeoned on shore in Gulangyu. Guarding the insular possession, Charles Buckton, commander of HMS *Algerine*, wrote in early 1842 that on the island "a market is held every morning from 6 until 10, at which very many articles in demand are obtainable, more particularly excellent Beef, Fowls, Geese, Green Peas, Yams, Spinach, and many other vegetables in abundance."[232] The British military authorities even contemplated establishing a permanent bazaar in Gulangyu.[233] The continuous presence of the British detachment in Gulangyu, therefore, favored the growth of the Chinese coastal bazaar in the fissures of Qing control.

- The Pearl River Delta

Similar to what happened in British Gulangyu, in the Pearl River Delta a temporary Chinese bazaar grew on the shore of Jiulong when the British merchant fleet found refuge in Hong Kong Bay from March to November 1839. In early August 1839, before the British fled Macao, Commissioner Lin complained there had already been "several shops for the sale of rice, wine, and miscellaneous articles" that "opened near the seashore for the

[230] *Canton Register*, Oct. 19, 1841.
[231] Memorial by Yan Botao, Sept. 6, 1841, ZDLD, *Dang'an*, vol. 4, 47; Memorial by Yan Botao, Sept. 18, 1841, ZDLD, *Dang'an*, vol. 4, 89; Memorial by Yan Botao, Dec. 31, 1841, ZDLD, *Dang'an*, vol. 4, 480.
[232] *Canton Press*, Mar. 19, 1842.
[233] Gough to Pottinger, Mar. 29, 1842, FO 17/56, 302a–03; Mountain to Cowper, Mar. 19, 1842, FO 17/56, 305a.

[sic] supplying the foreign shipping with provisions." There were also "daily upwards of 100 comprador's boats," i.e. local boats provisioning the merchant fleet.[234]

As discussed before, Jiulong lay within the Jianshazui waters, which belonged to the inner waters of the Qing Empire's sea frontier over which the Qing authorities retained some administrative and military control. In late August and early September 1839, "Supplies of every kind" were stopped for several days, as "Some mandarins have been stationed at the different entrances to this harbour [Hong Kong Bay], in order to stop the passage of boats bringing provisions."[235] Moreover, three Qing cruisers obstructed Chinese provisioning activities in the Jianshazui waters.[236] This resulted in the aforementioned Qing-British fight at Jiulong, or the "Battle of Jiulong" as Commissioner Lin and Chinese historians have called it, on September 4, 1839, "a conflict to procure supplies of food" in which "Elliot had contracted with people on shore for a certain quantity of live-stock etc., which he went in the Cutter [*Louisa*] to take, when the mandarins prevented the provisions being shipped."[237] The cutter and an accompanying schooner having "roughly handled" the "Mandarin junks," the Chinese craft "again began to supply the shipping."[238] This again shows that the British armed presence was an important factor for the Chinese craft to congregate to serve the British when threats from the Qing authorities existed.

Compared to the Chinese locals gathering on Jiulong's shore, which was classified by the Qing rulers as an inner-water region, many Chinese people assembled on an even larger scale in localities categorized by the Qing authorities as regions within the outer

[234] *Canton Press*, Aug. 17, 1839.
[235] *Canton Press*, Sept. 21, 1839.
[236] Bingham, *Narrative*, vol. 1, 144; *Canton Press*, July 4, 1840; Memorial by Lin Zexu et al., Sept. 18, 1839, ZDLD, *Dang'an*, vol. 1, 679.
[237] *Bombay Times*, Nov. 25, 1839, ADM 1/5496, 3312.
[238] *Canton Press*, Sept. 21, 1839.

waters in the Pearl River Delta, where the British merchant and naval vessels remained from November 1839 to April 1841. In these outer-water regions, which included Tonggu and Shazhou Islands, Tonggu Bay, Jishuimen, and some of their neighboring lands and waters, many of the Chinese who traded with the British stayed afloat. Elliot wrote to London in January 1840 that at the Tonggu-Shazhou anchorage, there was "a native population amounting to at least 2000 souls" who supplied the shipping and "live in their boats."[239] The Qing fire attacks against the anchorage in late February 1840 (see below for more details) resulted in the burning of twenty-three Chinese craft of various kinds, comprising one "big seagoing craft" (*da haichuan* 大海船), one "cabin-craft" (*caochuan* 艚船), one "big comprador's craft" (*da maiban ting* 大買辦艇), one "big rowing boat" (*da pating* 大扒艇), three "shrimp-net comprador's craft" (*xiagou banting* 蝦笱辦艇), one craft selling miscellaneous items, and fifteen "flat boats" (*bianting* 扁艇) selling fruit and cakes (see figure 6.6).[240] There were also Chinese "smuggling boats" such as "scorpion boats," "fast crabs," and "dragon boats" at the outer anchorages.[241]

[239] Elliot to Palmerston, Jan. 19, 1840, PRO 30/12/36/5, no. 14, 45.
[240] Memorial by Lin Zexu, Mar. 7, 1840, ZDLD, *Dang'an*, vol. 2, 28. In the Qing fire surprise against the Jishuimen anchorage in mid-June 1840, it was reported that eleven Chinese comprador's craft were burnt. See Memorial by Lin Zexu and Yiliang, 5th month of Daoguang 20 (May 31–June 28, 1840), ZDLD, *Dang'an*, vol. 2, 130.
[241] *Canton Press*, Jan. 4, 1840.



Figure 6.6 "Flat boat" or "flat watermelon boat" (*xigua bian* 西瓜扁), whose shape resembles a half watermelon in contemporary eyes, in the Pearl River[242] (Cree's watercolor, 1841)[243]

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At the Tonggu-Shazhou anchorage, while some of the Chinese craft scattered amid the British vessels, many others chose to group themselves to become, as Bingham called it, "a musquito fleet." In January 1841, the *Canton Press* made a lively report on the thriving "floating community" and spatially well-organized "floating town" in Tonggu Bay:

> Ever since the English shipping have made Tungkoo [Tonggu] their anchorage, a number, daily encreasing, of all kinds of Chinese tradesmen carrying on their business in boats, have gathered there, until at the present time there are so many, that they present the appearance of a floating town, the boats being moored in regular lines, forming streets, each boat being a shop in which most necessaries and even some luxuries of life are offered for sale. In some of the boats their occupants are

[242] Memorial by Yišan et al., Apr. 26, 1841, ZDLD, *Dang'an*, vol. 2, 386.
[243] Cree, Journals, vol. 5.

> carpenters, in others blacksmiths; here you see a tailor's shop, there a disciple of St Crispin plies his awl; on one side visitors are eased of their loose cash by the allurements of a gambling table, and on the other the anti-temperance men may find ample opportunity of satisfying their propensity in a ginshop, nor are temptations of a softer kind wanting; in short, that part of Tung-koo bay presents exactly the same sort of business as is found in maritime towns near the harbour—a floating Wapping.[244]

The emergence of this "floating Wapping" close to the British merchant and naval fleet in the Pearl River Delta and the diverse Chinese socioeconomic activities in this floating settlement best illustrate how the Chinese people took advantage of the emergence of cracks of Qing control and the opportunities provided by the 1839–1842 Qing-British hostilities to make profits and expand their socioeconomic activities.

Not all the Chinese flocking to the Pearl River Delta anchorages lived afloat. Many went there in craft, erected temporary huts on shore, and conducted business on beach. In February 1840, Yuan Ya'er and Lin Yade became business partners and set up a mat shed on a beach in Tonggu to sell poultry, fish, and vegetables. Some foreigners sailed to the beach in boats and bought their food. Zhong Yashou and Liu Yawu also provisioned the foreigners on the beach. Seeing that it was late, Zhong and Liu spent the night of February 28 in a fisherman's mat shed. In the Qing's raiding of Tonggu-Shazhou in the early morning of February 29, Yuan, Lin, Zhong, and Liu were all captured, with six sheds being burnt.[245] In addition to Tonggu and Shazhou Islands, local Chinese people set up huts or sheds to provision the British on the shore of Castle Peak Bay opposite Tonggu and Shazhou on the mainland, at the Jishuimen anchorage, and at Xiaohao port on the northern shore of Dayushan (see map 6.1, page 239).

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[244] *Canton Press*, Jan. 9, 1841.

[245] Memorial by Lin Zexu and Yiliang, Mar. 29, 1840, ZDLD, *Dang'an*, vol. 2, 46–49. Many other Chinese mat sheds were destroyed during the subsequent Qing fire surprises against the British anchorages in May and June 1840. See Memorial by Lin Zexu and Yiliang, 5th month of Daoguang 20 (May 31–June 28, 1840), ZDLD, *Dang'an*, vol. 2, 129–30.

The coastal Chinese settlement that followed the British fleet to shift anchorages in the Pearl River Estuary developed so rapidly that when the latter returned to Tonggu-Shazhou in late 1840, the settlement had grown into a "bamboo town" on Tonggu Island, as Bingham called it, alongside the Chinese floating town described above. According to Bingham's description of the bamboo town, "The houses were formed of bamboo poles and mats, and the whole male and female population were generally employed in their erection. No nails were required, no carpenter wanted, and the whole being bound together with thin strips of bamboo." Opium and gambling booths were prevalent in the settlement. Bingham was highly impressed with the incredible mobility of the bamboo town. For him, "it was strange to see with what rapidity it presently sprang up on a sandy barren spot, four-and-twenty hours sufficing for the operation."[246] The high flexibility of the Chinese people in these bamboo towns enabled them to switch between anchorages in the Pearl River Estuary and follow the British forces to conduct and expand their socioeconomic activities in the fissures of Qing control.

Chinese People between Land and Water

To sum up, evading Qing control over regions within the outer waters on the Qing Empire's sea frontier, many Chinese people went to the anchorages taken by the British merchant and naval fleet in the Pearl River Delta and, among other socioeconomic activities, traded provisions and opium with the sojourning British. Where did these Chinese people and their provisions come from?

Many of these people originated in regions neighboring the anchorages. In Jiulong, many Chinese who formed the beachside bazaar were probably locals from Jianshazui

[246] Bingham, *Narrative*, vol. 1, 408–10.

Village on the eastern shore of the peninsula.[247] Concerning the Tonggu-Shazhou anchorage, prior to the British arrival in late 1839, there were no indigenous people on Tonggu and Shazhou Islands but only some migratory fishers.[248] During the two British sojourns, many of the Chinese people who stayed in boats and set up sheds at the anchorage came from neighboring villages on the mainland, and procured provisions from the coastal villagers, who "sell them their supplies with the utmost readiness."[249] They acted across regions in the mainland, islands, and their neighboring waters, which straddled the regions classified by the Qing rulers as inner and those categorized as outer. Among the Tonggu Chinese captured by the Qing authorities in the February 1840 surprise attacks, Lin Yachang procured provisions on the mainland, embarked on a fishing craft at Changshawan, crossed the channel, and sold the food on a beach in late 1839 or early 1840. According to Qing trial reports of those arrested in the Qing surprise attacks against the several British anchorages in the Pearl River Delta, the vast majority of them were natives of Xin'an district, where the anchorages were located under the Qing administration, and its neighboring districts such as Dongguan and Guishan.[250]

A closer examination of the socioeconomic backgrounds of the Chinese people at the anchorages taken by the British merchant vessels indicates that their activities were an extension of the delta's local economy and society to the adjoining regions. Before they went to the anchorages, their occupations—full-time, seasonal, or temporary—were land-based, waterborne, or both. They went to work for or trade with the British when the

[247] In the 1819 gazetteer of Xin'an district, the village was recorded as Jianshatou under the Qing administration of Guanfu division (*si* 司). See Wang et al., *Xin'an xianzhi*, vol. 1, 76, 82.
[248] Schofield, "Tung Kwu Island."
[249] Elliot to Palmerston, Jan. 19, 1840, PRO 30/12/36/5, 45; McPherson, *Two Years*, 62–63.
[250] Memorial by Lin Zexu et al., Jan. 8, 1840, ZDLD, *Dang'an*, vol. 1, 755–56; Memorial by Lin Zexu and Yiliang, Mar. 29, 1840, ZDLD, *Dang'an*, vol. 2, 46–49; Memorial by Lin Zexu and Yiliang, May 26, 1840, ZDLD, *Dang'an*, vol. 2, 108; Memorial by Lin Zexu and Yiliang, June 16, 1840, ZDLD, *Dang'an*, vol. 2, 132–35.

chance came. Qiao Yaxian, for example, lived by peddling in Xin'an. With Liang Desheng as his partner, Qiao procured some sesame candy from a rural bazaar (*cunxu* 村墟) adjacent to the Tonggu-Shazhou anchorage on the mainland, and sold it to foreigners at Tonggu in late 1839 or early 1840. Among those arrested for trading opium with foreigners, Hong Yaozhang rowed boats for a living, whereas Li Qisheng and Zhang Yadu worked for Li Fusheng and Chen Yashouzai respectively on their craft. Qisheng and Zhang followed their employers to go to the Tonggu-Shazhou anchorage to procure opium from foreign vessels.[251] Procuring opium from a foreign merchantman in Hong Kong Bay, Huang Tianfu made his living by fishing, conveying passengers, and working as a servant on land.[252] His opium trade with foreigners can be considered as the continuation of his activities across land and watery regions before 1839.

Many Qing trial reports on culprits captured at the British anchorages echoed the Qing official allegation that many of the "Han evildoers" or "inner evildoers" who helped the "outer barbarians" or took advantage of their presence in the outer waters were fishers. In the trial records, many of the Chinese people going to the berths and caught by the Qing authorities were described as fishing-householders or those who made a living by fishing (*buyu wei sheng* 捕魚為生). In late imperial times, while many Chinese people in the Pearl River Delta were full-time fishers, many others practiced fishery when the farming season was off, or supplemented their livelihoods with fishing (see figure 6.7).[253] For many of them, serving the British was one of the many ways to make a living. They took fishing craft (*yuting* 漁艇), as described by the Qing authorities, to go to the outer anchorages, or

[251] Memorial by Lin Zexu and Yiliang, June 16, 1840, ZDLD, *Dang'an*, vol. 2, 132–35.
[252] Memorial by Lin Zexu et al., Nov. 21, 1839, ZDLD, *Dang'an*, vol. 1, 727–28.
[253] Siu and Liu, "Lineage, Market"; Yang, "Pinhai"; Yang, "Government Registration"; Ye, "Notes."

collaborated with fishers. Trading with the British on a beach at the Tonggu-Shazhou anchorage and seeing that it was late, the aforementioned Zhong Yashou and Liu Yawu stayed overnight in a fisherman's mat shed on February 28, 1840.[254]



Figure 6.7 Local people catching fish at Changzhou Island (Danes Island), an isle in the Pearl River Delta near Huangpu. This kind of riverside fishery was commonplace in the estuary region in Qing times, and across China in the late imperial period at large. (Cree's watercolor, 1845)[255]

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In addition to fishers, Chinese people in Guangdong arrested for being or helping "Han evildoers" and participating in the opium trade were occasionally identified as Dan people. Deng Jingtai, described in Qing official records as a Dan originating in Duntou of

[254] Memorial by Lin Zexu and Yiliang, Mar. 29, 1840, ZDLD, *Dang'an*, vol. 2, 48.
[255] Cree, Journals, vol. 9, 1845.

Dongguan district, transported opium in his "shrimp-net craft" and sold the illicit product in areas around Dongguan. On December 25, 1839, a Qing cruising force captured him along with his brother, wife, and child on a river channel in the Pearl River Delta. Five opium balls and 2,000 copper coins were found on board.[256] In fact, very few of those captured by the Qing authorities for being "Han evildoers" in 1839–1842 were classified as Dan, which, as Chapter 2 has shown, was both a kind of household and an ethnic label that the Qing authorities, and also Chinese land settlers, attached to many of those who lived in Guangdong's littorals. This ethnic construction does not veil the fact that the majority of the Chinese who served the British sojourners in the Pearl River Estuary actually shared common socioeconomic backgrounds with others living in the delta region.

The fact that many Chinese people serving the British in 1839–1841 at the Pearl River Delta's outer anchorages had frequent contacts with foreigners before 1839, under the Canton System or not, indicates that during the Qing-British hostilities, the local economy and society of the delta regions "inside" Humen extended to areas "outside" Humen, if we use the Qing rulers' inner-outer dichotomy. Before 1839, in the delta region, many Chinese people already worked on foreign merchantmen as private compradors, ferried foreign messengers, or lived beside foreigners along the Pearl River.[257] Their activities in the estuary region in 1839–1841 were often a continuation of their pre-war activities. The dramatic story of Huang Tianhua is an excellent example. He became a Chinese servant (*shawen* 沙文) in a Dutch company in the Guangzhou Factories in 1823. Thanks to the introduction by Huang Cheye, a private comprador working for an Indian merchantman (*gangjiaochuan* 港腳船), Tianhua started to provision a British vessel in

[256] Memorial by Lin Zexu et al., Feb. 1, 1840, ZDLD, *Dang'an*, vol. 1, 809–10.
[257] Van Dyke, *Canton Trade*, 5–93; Downing, *The Fan-Qui*.

1834. Knowing the "barbarian language" (*yiyu* 夷語), which was probably pigeon-English, Tianhua helped the ship he served to sell opium to the Chinese. Until being caught in 1839, Tianhua had for some time been a private ship's comprador of the *Carnatic* of Jardine, Matheson & Co. Quite a number of the Chinese people captured by the Qing authorities for serving the British at the outer anchorages knew the "barbarian language."[258]

Although Commissioner Lin's anti-opium campaign in Guangdong had been vigorous until his dismissal in late 1840, the 1839–1842 Qing-British hostilities witnessed the continuation of the opium smuggling network in the Pearl River Delta and its extension to the outer anchorages. This is partly thanks to the connection of the opium trade with trade in provisions between Chinese locals and foreigners. In early 1840, Huang Tianfu used a seagoing vessel to transport four cattle to the outer waters of Changshawan, i.e. Tonggu Bay. He traded twice with a foreign ship called "Sanbalun" (English name unknown) for totally four Bengal opium balls (*gongbantu* 公班土).[259] After procuring opium from the foreign hands in the outer anchorages, the Chinese traders sold the product across the delta region. In June 1839, when Lin's anti-opium campaign reached its peak, Chen Yacheng, who fished in Xin'an for a living, formed partnership with two Chinese people in trading opium. The three partners asked Lin Yayou, who knew the "barbarian language," to procure opium from a foreign vessel in the Jianshazui waters. The opium was then transported to Changzhou Island near Huangpu and sold to Lin Yahui and Li Yasi,

[258] *Chinese Repository*, vol. 8, no. 2, June 1839, 112; Hanes and Sanello, *The Opium Wars*, 61; Memorial by Lin Zexu et al., Nov. 21, 1839, ZDLD, *Dang'an*, vol. 1, 727; Memorial by Yiliang et al., Nov. 21, 1839, Zhongguo Shixuehui, *Yapian zhanzheng*, vol. 2, 189.

[259] The price of opium fell so seriously in the first phase of the 1839–1842 Qing-British hostilities that in mid-1840, a Bengal opium ball was sold at $5 or $6, a mere 30% of the price before 1839. See Memorial by Lin Zexu and Yiliang, Mar. 29, 1840, ZDLD, *Dang'an*, vol. 2, 46–49.

who then resold them to other people.[260] Thanks to the Chinese provisioners and opium dealers, the extensive opium trade network continued and thrived across the Pearl River Delta's outer waters and "illicit ports" and their neighboring regions, which were characterized by fissures of Qing control, during the Qing-British hostilities.[261]

Between the Qing, the British, and Chinese Pirates

Qing and Chinese Piratical Threats

Although fissures of Qing control characterized the anchorages taken by the British merchant and naval fleet, Chinese craft and settlements that emerged amid or next to the British shipping were not entirely free from the influence or coercion of the local Qing authorities. Quite the contrary, the terror of the Qing official retaliation for helping the British enemies was pervasive and widely felt among the Chinese people at the outer anchorages and also in British-occupied regions. In March 1841, during the second British campaign in Guangdong, under the strict prohibition by local Qing officials against provisioning the expedition, the "boats which had hitherto come fearlessly alongside" the British naval vessels "all on a sudden disappeared."[262]

Moreover, across southeast China, the Qing officials taking part in the anti-British war operated extensive spying networks against the "Han evildoers" and "inner evildoers" who served the "outer barbarians" in regions dominated by the British merchant fleet or the

[260] Memorial by Lin Zexu et al., Jan. 8, 1840, ZDLD, *Dang'an*, vol. 1, 755–56.
[261] Memorial by Lin Zexu and Deng Tingzhen, Sept. 1, 1839, ZDLD, D*ang'an*, vol. 1, 671.
[262] Bernard, *The Nemesis*, 134.

British forces.[263] At the Pearl River Delta's Tonggu-Shazhou anchorage, detectives dispatched by the local Qing administration and pretending to sell provisions in small boats noted down the information of the Chinese coastal and floating people who helped the "English barbarians" for future punishment. Reportedly the Qing agents collected as many as 150 names of the Chinese at the floating town in Tonggu Bay.[264]

The Qing detective network even extended from water to land. "The mandarins who had been sent to Tonkoo Bay, six in number, were prowling about the villages situated in that neighbourhood, for the purpose . . . of taking down the names and description of those Chinamen who supported and frequented the shipping."[265] As Elliot Bingham surmised,

> had these . . . spies succeeded in their object, they would have brought down unheard-of punishments on hundreds of innocent people, who were relations of the Toong-koo Chinese; for, according to the *very mild and just laws* of China, the family and connections of *supposed* culprits are held responsible, and punished for the *unproved* crimes of their relatives [original emphases].[266]

In order to capture the "Han evildoers" at the outer anchorages, the Qing authorities even took advantage of their families or relatives on land. The family of the aforementioned foreign ship comprador Huang Tianfua lived in Xiangshan district. To seize Huang, the Xiangshan authorities detained his family as hostages. Finally when he went home in secret and collected news and intelligence (probably regarding his family), he was under arrest.[267]

Furthermore, local Qing officials interrupted the activities of Chinese people at the British anchorages by stretching their military grip to some of the territories classified as

[263] The spying network was particularly extensive in eastern Zhejiang. See *Chinese Repository*, vol. 9, no. 4, Aug. 1840, 233, vol. 10, no. 9, Sept. 1841, 495; D'Arcy-Brown, *Chusan*.
[264] Bingham, *Narrative*, vol. 1, 409; *Canton Press*, Jan. 9, 1841; Cunynghame, *An Aide-de-Camps*, vol. 2, 80–82.
[265] McPherson, *Two Years*, 62–63.
[266] Bingham, *Narrative*, vol. 1, 410–11.
[267] Memorial by Lin Zexu et al., Nov. 21, 1839, ZDLD, *Dang'an*, vol. 1, 729.

outer-water regions. At the anchorages and their neighboring land regions and waters, the Chinese who helped the British were subject to kidnap and arrest by the local Qing authorities and cruising forces. Though unsuccessful in annihilating the "barbarian bandits," the Qing authorities were successful in apprehending numerous provisioners and opium dealers and destroying many of their craft and sheds at the Pearl River Delta's outer anchorages in several fire attacks from late 1839 to mid-1840.[268] Some "comprador's craft" (*banting* 辦艇) apparently selling food at the British berths were in fact informers who knew the "barbarian language" and helped the Qing authorities to carry out fire surprises against the British fleet as well as the coastal and floating Chinese settlements in the outer waters.[269] This again shows that Qing control over the outer waters of the empire's sea frontier was not totally absent in 1839–1842.

In addition to the Qing authorities, Chinese pirates threatened the property and lives of the Chinese people who resided next to the British merchant vessels or naval forces during the Qing-British hostilities. During that time Chinese waterborne bandits, as Chapter 4 has studied, infested China's coast and rivers across southeast China. Islanders in the Zhoushan Archipelago often fell victim to Chinese piracy in wartime.[270] In Xiamen, "The greatest evil," a British military officer observed immediately after the British attack in August 1841, "was the native robber, who crowded from every direction into the city. By far the major part came in boats, and attacked the inhabitants during the night."[271] For many Chinese living in the British-conquered regions, and for those cooperating with the British

[268] *Canton Press*, Dec. 14, 1839, July 4, 1840; Memorial by Lin Zexu and Yiliang, Mar. 29, 1840, ZDLD, *Dang'an*, vol. 2, 46–49; Memorial by Lin Zexu and Yiliang, 5th month of Daoguang 20 (May 31–June 28, 1840), ZDLD, *Dang'an*, vol. 2, 129–30; Waley, *The Opium War*, 104; Memorial by Lin Zexu, July 17, 1840, ZDLD, *Dang'an*, vol. 2, 212.
[269] Memorial by Lin Zexu and Yiliang, 5th month of Daoguang 20 (May 31–June 28, 1840), ZDLD, *Dang'an*, vol. 2, 129.
[270] Bingham, *Narrative*, vol. 1, 181–82; *Chinese Repository*, vol. 10, no. 5, May 1841, 252–53.
[271] *Canton Press*, Nov. 20, 1841.

in particular, they were subject to threats from both the Qing authorities on land and Chinese raiders on water.

Limited British Protection and Rule

The British merchant vessels and naval forces were able to offer a certain degree of protection for the nearby Chinese people staying afloat or sojourning on shore against the local Qing authorities' coercion and vengeance. During the 1839–1842 hostilities, the British authorities in China, British officers, and Western observers often felt obliged to protect the Chinese people who provisioned them and aided them in many other ways, as they thought that they themselves and those Chinese helpers were interdependent.[272] They were optimistic that once the Chinese people felt secure under British protection against reprisals of the "mandarins," provisions could be guaranteed.[273] "The experience of the last few months [since the Jiulong skirmish in September 1839]," Elliot wrote in March 1840, "has satisfactorily proved that where there is protection in China, there will always be abundance of supply."[274]

The British did seek to put into practice their verbal protection Chinese people in regions subject to their control against the Qing's intimidation.[275] In June 1839, in revenge for the arrest of Huang Tianhua by the Qing cruising force in Hong Kong Bay, the commander of the foreign vessel on which Huang worked seized some Qing officers. Finally Elliot's arrival in the bay secured the liberation of these officers, with Huang

[272] Bingham, *Narrative*, vol. 2, 68–69; *Canton Press*, Jan. 11, 1840; Elliot to Lin and Deng, Jan. 7, 1840, "Xinjilu," Zhongguo shixuehui, *Yapian zhanzheng*, vol. 2, 358–59.
[273] *Canton Press*, Oct. 12, 1840.
[274] Elliot to Auckland, Mar. 22, 1840, Correspondence relating to China, enclosure in no. 22, 77, PRO 30/12/36/5.
[275] Bernard, *The Nemesis*, 362; *Canton Register*, Feb. 9, 1841; Proclamation by Caine, submitted to the throne on Dec. 11, 1840, ZDLD et al., *Yapian zhanzheng zai Zhoushan*, 142–43.

escaping in a boat (though he was finally arrested at his home.)[276] The British Expedition also promised to suppress and punish waterborne bandits and protect Chinese people in regions under British advance, attack, and blockade against any piratical threats. The expeditionary force, as Chapter 4 has shown, played an important part in combating piracy during the war.[277]

Rather than passively receiving the British's anti-Qing and anti-pirate protection, many Chinese people actively sought the protection for not being intimidated by the local Qing authorities and Chinese pirates. The Chinese coastal population had a long history of approaching or following foreign ships to get rid of any possible or actual threats on water. According to the naval surgeon James Johnson of HMS *Caroline*, in the early 1800s, when the coastal waters from Guangdong to Zhejiang were infested with pirates, "The small craft on the river [the Pearl River] . . . are so terrified at the idea of falling into the hands of the Ladrones, that when any of our boats were proceeding to, or returning from Macao, a whole convoy of Chinese vessels of various descriptions were seen attending them, and taking advantage of the protection they afforded."[278]

Similarly, during the China War in 1840–1842, Chinese merchant and fishing craft often followed British naval vessels to seek shelter from piratical threats.[279] Many Chinese people, especially those serving the British, also actively sought protection from the foreign merchant fleet and the British expeditionary force against the vengeance of the local Qing authorities. In their raid against the "Han evildoers" at the Tonggu-Shazhou anchorage in

[276] *Canton Press*, Nov. 23, 1839; *Chinese Repository*, vol. 8, no. 2, June 1839, 112; Memorial by Lin Zexu et al., Nov. 21, 1839, ZDLD, *Dang'an*, vol. 1, 727.
[277] Elliot to Xie, July 2, 1841, Sasaki, *Ahen sensō*, 120; Proclamation by Pottinger, Parker, and Gough, 1841, Sasaki, *Ahen sensō*, 135; Proclamation by Pottinger, Parker, and Gough, Sept. 2, Sasaki, *Ahen sensō*, 135–36.
[278] Johnson, *The Oriental Voyager*, 163–64.
[279] For example, see Bingham, *Narrative*, vol. 1, 181–82.

late 1839, the Qing Guangdong authorities destroyed some grog shops erected on shore. They, however, failed to capture any of the local bumboats, "they taking shelter in the middle of the English fleet.[280] On the eve of the January 1841 British attack on Shajiao and Dajiao Forts, Chinese boats provisioning the British squadron and following them from Shazhou "would not now leave the ships, to which they respectively attached themselves, and proceed on shore for supplies, giving as a reason that they were afraid of being seized by the mandarins."[281]

The British wartime protection for Chinese people against the Qing and Chinese piratical intimidation, however, was neither incessant nor adequate. Prioritizing the fighting in China, the British Expedition often evacuated the occupied regions despite their repeated promise to protect the Chinese population therein. While they proclaimed on February 1, 1841 upon the occupation of Hong Kong that all Chinese inhabitants on the island were "promised protection in Her Majesty's gracious name against all enemies whatever," the British forces retreated from Hong Kong Island in mid-February for three weeks for the upcoming battle up the Pearl River. "How are they [the Chinese]," the *Canton Register* cynically asked, "to be protected without a British force in the island?"[282] Similarly, the British gave up Ningbo and Zhenhai in mid-1842 for the ensuing Yangzi campaign, leaving the cities, the *Canton Press* opined, "reoccupied by native authorities who are doing what damage they can to those lately engaged in assisting the English."[283] Nor did British

[280] *Canton Press*, Dec. 14, 1839.
[281] McPherson, *Two Years*, 61–62.
[282] *Canton Register*, Feb. 23, 1841; Hoe and Roebuck, *The Taking*, 155.
[283] *Canton Press*, Apr. 23, 1842.

protection in the wartime possessions, for example Zhoushan, suffice to free the Chinese inhabitants from arrest, kidnap, and assassination by the Qing authorities.[284]

At the outer anchorages in the Pearl River Delta, while the floating British community and British forces were able to protect themselves against the Qing's surprise attacks, their protection did not fully extend to the neighboring coastal and floating Chinese settlements. Worried that spies in these settlements would set fire to the British fleet at the anchorages under the pretense of selling provisions, the British sojourners did not allow Chinese provisioners to stay too close.[285] Partly due to the limited British protection for the Chinese, the Qing authorities often captured Chinese opium traders and provisions dealers in the waters where the British merchant fleet was present. The huge damage that the Qing fire attacks inflicted on the coastal and floating Chinese settlements in 1839 and 1840 indicates the inability of the British merchant and naval vessels to offer adequate shelter to the Chinese craft and coastal settlements.[286] Nor were the British forces able to offer full protection for the Chinese people against piracy (see Chapter 4). Waterborne banditry took place in the delta's outer anchorages even within arm's length of the British ships of war.[287]

At the Pearl River Delta's outer anchorages, the Chinese and the British communities did not always live peacefully together in 1839–1841. On February 27, 1840, one day before the Qing's Tonggu surprise attacks, "an affray occurred between the boatscrew of the Earl Balcarras [an East Indian Company merchantman] and Chinese on shore at Tungkoo [Tonggu Island], in which wounds were given and received on both sides,

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[284] *Chinese Repository*, vol. 10, no. 9, Sept. 1841, 494.
[285] *Canton Press*, Nov. 16, 1839.
[286] *Canton Press*, Dec. 14, 1839, July 4, 1840; Memorial by Lin Zexu and Yiliang, Mar. 29, 1840, ZDLD, *Dang'an*, vol. 2, 46–49; Memorial by Lin Zexu and Yiliang, 5th month of Daoguang 20 (May 31–June 28, 1840), ZDLD, *Dang'an*, vol. 2, 129–30; Memorial by Lin Zexu, July 17, 1840, ZDLD, *Dang'an*, vol. 2, 212; Waley, *The Opium War*, 104.
[287] For example, see Bingham, *Narrative*, vol. 1, 413.

two of the Lascars being dangerously wounded by spears, and some Chinese by the Lascar's boathooks."[288]

As the captains of the Western merchant fleet and British naval forces found their Chinese neighbors potentially disorderly and some of their activities disruptive, they, similar to the local Qing authorities, attempted to establish some rule over the individual Chinese craft, the "musquito fleet," and the "bamboo town" at the outer anchorages in fissures of Qing control. Some informal laws were imposed on the Chinese craft and the coastal settlements. Chinese thieves were flogged on British vessels. According to Edward Cree, in August 1840, in Zhoushan, "six Chinese were flogged on board for attempting to steal a junk laden with ordnance stores. They had a dozen and a half or two dozen lashes each, which they certainly disliked. They made an attack, a short time since, on an unarmed foraging party and nearly succeeded in making off with a sergeant of marines."[289] See figure 6.8 below for the punishment scene. Sale of samshu, a kind of Chinese liquor, to foreign sailors was forbidden. On one occasion, Henry Ellis of HMS *Wellesley* posted a public notice in Chinese at the landing place of Dahuangjiao Fort near Guangzhou city in mid-1841 warning the Chinese locals that if any samshu trade was detected, their boats would be destroyed. Caught for concealing in his boat twelve bottles of the spirit, a Chinese bumboatman was flogged and his boat temporarily detained. He was even threatened to lose his queue.[290]

[288] *Canton Press*, Mar. 7, 1840.
[289] Cree, Journals, vol. 4, 1841, 85.
[290] Ellis, *Memoirs*, 191–92.

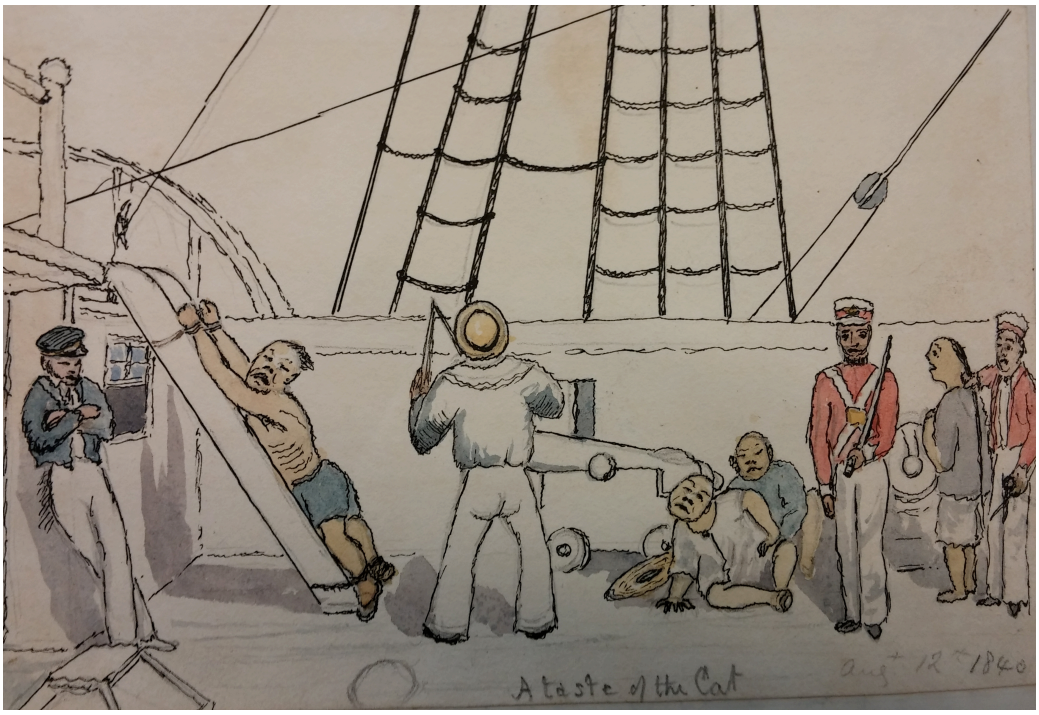


Figure 6.8 "A taste of the Cat" (Cree's watercolor, 1840)[291]

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In early 1841, when the Chinese bamboo town moved from Tonggu to Hong Kong but the British Expedition authorities had yet to establish a civil administration in the nascent insular possession, some military control was imposed upon the Chinese people in what Bingham called the "native bazaar" on the northern shore of the island. According to Bingham,

> a military police or provost-marshalship was instituted from the Modeste, who had charge of the bazaar, to prevent the sale of shamsoo [samshu] to the soldiers or sailors; and to the same effect a notice in Chinese had been stuck up in the bazaar. This police consisted of a mate, corporal, and two marines; the commanding officer of the ship attending at the head Chinaman's house every morning with his "lictor," *i.e.,* boatswain's-mate, when after inquiring fully, by the assistance of a native interpreter,

[291] Cree, Journals, vol. 4, 1841, 85.

> into any complaint, he caused corporal or other punishment to be inflicted. None of the Chinese ever stood more than six blows with the cat, when they invariably fainted from sheer fright. After the first case or two it was rarely requisite to resort to this method.[292]

This was the first British attempt to extend control to the Chinese population who migrated from the outer anchorages to British-occupied Hong Kong. This rule over the "native bazaar" constituted the earliest systematic British rule over the Chinese migrant population in Hong Kong.

Self-Defense and Self-Rule

Given the insufficient British shelter against the Qing official and Chinese piratical threats, the Chinese people who sojourned or congregated next to the British merchant and naval fleet resorted to self-defense for not being intimidated. In fact, such kind of self-defense was commonplace during the Qing-British hostilities. Frederic Wakeman has paid much attention to the militarization of villagers in Sanyuanli, the suburb of Guangzhou, to resist against the British and suppress local banditry during the war and in its aftermath in the mid-nineteenth century.[293] In Shanghai, after the British attack in mid-1842, many Chinese vessels laden with rice had been robbed. Many merchant-shippers held back on the trade. Some villagers and gentry-merchants (*shenshang* 紳商) then donated money to organize militias to become convoying forces to protect their own craft, which contributed to the continuous circulation of rice.[294] During their anti-British war, the Qing authorities encouraged local people to organize themselves to defend or fight against the "barbarian

[292] Bingham, *Narrative*, vol. 2, 128.
[293] Wakeman, *Strangers*.
[294] "Yihuan beichang," Zhongguo shixuehui, *Yapian zhanzheng*, vol. 3, 140–41.

bandits" and Chinese bandits both on land and on water in regions under British threat across southeast China.

The British Expedition also encouraged Chinese people in the areas subject to British attack or occupation to organize themselves against Chinese marauders. Before evacuating Xiamen in September 1841, the expedition authorities issued a Chinese proclamation urging Xiamen's "good people" to devise means to protect their own property, and to recruit able-bodied men for patrolling day and night against banditti.[295] But in many cases, the self-defense was out of the initiative of the ordinary Chinese people themselves rather than the appeal by the Qing or the British. In the Pearl River Delta region, Chinese villagers installed stakes "to keep off the Ladrones or river pirates."[296] On water, Chinese craft were commonly seen moving in convoys for mutual protection against waterborne banditry during the Qing-British hostilities.[297]

The self-defense of Xiamen islanders exemplifies the efforts of local Chinese people to organize themselves against piratical threats during the war. Chinese raiding, and also raiding by lascars in the expeditionary force, was rampant after the British Expedition struck the island in August 1841. The British occupying force appealed to the local people to suppress the plundering. "The second morning after the occupation," a British officer recorded, "the heads of the principal houses were called together to confer about the most eligible measures." The Xiamen inhabitants handed the captured waterborne robbers over to the British naval forces. Meanwhile, probably under the initiative of some Qing functionaries still in Xiamen, "a committee of public safety" was established among the Xiamen people. The committee, however, seemed ineffective to achieve its aim of driving

[295] Proclamation by Pottinger, Parker, and Gough, 1841, Sasaki, *Ahen sensō*, 135.
[296] Ellis, *Memoirs*, 225–26, 229.
[297] Lubbock, *The Opium Clipper*, 181.

robbers out of Xiamen. "The candidates were indeed numerous enough, but when it came to the point to adopt one single resolution, they most carefully kept back, partly from fear of involving themselves with their own government, partly from apprehending troubles."[298]

Between the local Qing agents, British naval forces, and Chinese land and waterborne bandits, the Xiamen people mostly relied on themselves to resist against piratical threats. The aforementioned British officer observed:

> To meet these marauders with sufficient spirit, the natives [in Xiamen] collected great quantity of stones upon the tops of the houses, and mixing them with glass, showered them down upon the thieves as soon as they approached. Thus was a constant warfare carried on from the roofs, and the neighbors uniting in protecting each other, assisted the attacked in throwing down missiles upon the desperadoes.[299]

According to another British officer, in the Xiamen waters, after the pinnace of HMS *Druid* fired at three pirate boats, which forced them to retreat,

> they then run two of their boats on the beach, and one stuck on a rock; after they had had many killed, they look to the water; some were drowned, and those who did escape fell into the hands of the fishermen who were waiting on the beach with bamboos, and they *licked* them [original emphasis]! Those [sic] who they did not kill lost their tails- a great many were left dead on the beach, and the two boats were destroyed.

The above anti-piracy measures by the Xiamen islanders—from the local prominent people to fishers—indicate that on the Xiamen coast and in its neighboring waters, where Qing naval power weakened but did not totally collapse and British naval power and Chinese piratical forces rose but did not dominate, local Chinese people relied on themselves to resist against banditry on water in the interstices of Qing and British control.

[298] *Canton Press*, Nov. 20, 1841.
[299] Ibid.

In this interstitial space, the local Chinese organized themselves for self-defense and captured and punished the pirates themselves. The case of the Xiamen people best illustrates the development of self-defense and self-rule in the interstices of Qing and British control among the Chinese people in southeast China's littoral regions during the Qing-British War.

Self-defense and self-rule also took place among the Chinese in the coastal and floating settlements next to the British anchorages in the Pearl River Delta, but their foes were the hostile local Qing authorities. In Tonggu Bay, the "Toong-koo Chinese," as Bingham called them, discovered and captured some spies or informers in early January 1841. After discussing how to deal with the captives, the Tonggu Chinese resolved that they should be cruelly punished. According to a British military officer,

> Taking the party by surprise, a scuffle, in which several lives were lost, ensued, and the mandarins fell into the hands of the mob. The chief they boiled alive in oil, and the five others, bound hand and foot, were chained in a boat which had previously been filled with combustibles of every description, and drifting out to sea with the tide, suffered a fearful and awful death.[300]

Consequently, the activities of the Chinese people in the "floating town" at the Tonggu-Shazhou anchorage remained unaffected.

The Tonggu fracas attracted the attention of a number of contemporary Westerners in China. They include Elliot Bingham (see the chapter's epitaph quoted from his narrative of the 1839–1842 Qing-British hostilities), who regarded the incident as a "horrid vengeance" on the intimidating local Qing authorities. The *Canton Press* editor considered

[300] McPherson, *Two Years*, 62–63.

the incident as an "atrocious cruelty" of "the most desperate characters of the floating community at Tungkoo."[301] The editor also opined:

> We suppose the perpetrators of this foul deed think themselves safe from the reach of the law, and this act of cruelty committed by people generally mild and humane, is but another proof of the many history records, of how prone men are to relapse into barbarity whenever the wholesome restrictions society has imposed for its protection, are moved, and the fear of punishment no longer restrains them from evil.[302]

Although the newspaper editor expressed some dislike of the act of the Tonggu Chinese people, he aptly highlighted that their act was out of the absence of Qing control over the Chinese perpetrators. In Tonggu-Shazhou, as well as in other British anchorages, while the local Qing authorities maintained some influence over the Chinese people serving the British, their power in these outer anchorages was precarious at best and non-existent at worst. On the British side, although the British merchant fleet and naval forces attempted to maintain some degree of restraint over the coastal and floating Chinese staying next to them, such regulation was not strong and pervasive. The rather "stateless" condition—to borrow Wang Wensheng's idea—in the Pearl River Delta's outer anchorages, therefore, was conducive to the emergence of self-defense and self-rule in the interstices of Qing and British control among the Chinese people.[303] This, after all, was their "art of not being intimidated."

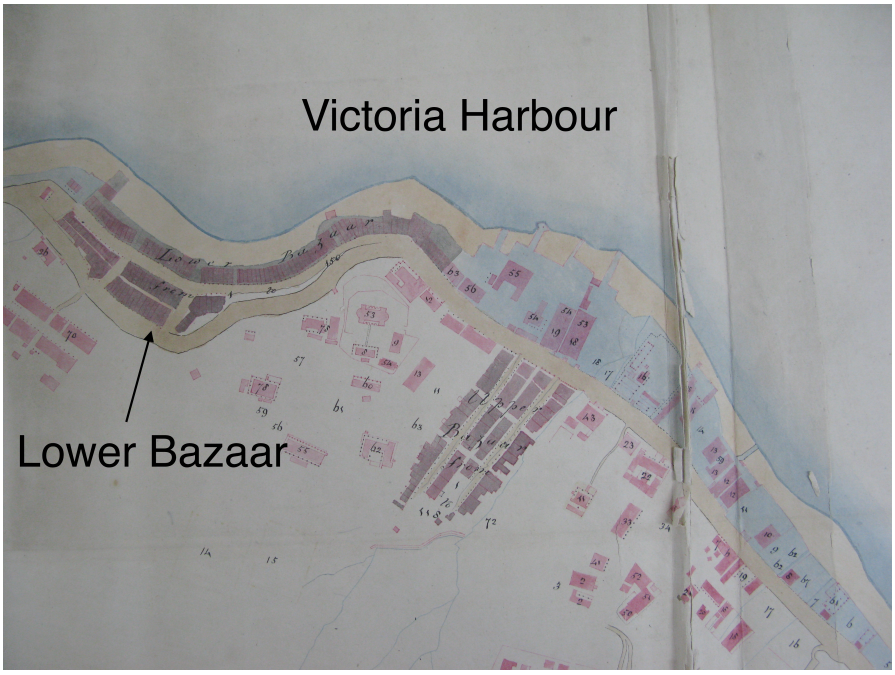
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[301] The reports by the *Canton Press* and Bingham on the incident were slightly different from McPherson's. See Bingham, vol. 1, 409; *Canton Press*, Jan. 9, 1841. Julia Lovell has touched upon the incident. See Lovell, *The Opium War*, 127. The British military officer Arthur Cunynghame also reported an incident whose details was similar to the 1841 Tonggu attack, but it is difficult to judge whether it was the Tonggu fracas. See Cunynghame, *An Aide-de-Camp*, vol. 2, 80–82.
[302] *Canton Press*, Jan. 9, 1841.
[303] Wang, *White Lotus Rebels*.

Conclusion: The First Chinese Settlements in British Hong Kong

When some British forces in the Pearl River Delta sailed from Tonggu Bay to Hong Kong and occupied the island in late January 1841, the Chinese "floating town" and "bamboo town" at the Pearl River Delta's Tonggu-Shazhou anchorage followed the British occupying force and settled in the nascent British insular possession. Ellis wrote on January 30: "An immense crowd of Chinese, principally boat-men, with their wives and children, arrived to-day from Tong-koo and neighbourhood to locate on Hongkong."[304] On April 30, Edward Cree saw a "new village" "springing up rapidly" on the northern side of Hong Kong Island.[305] According to the first census of Hong Kong released in mid-May 1841, eight hundred Chinese people were in this "bamboo town."[306] It developed quickly into the Lower Bazaar, one of the first Chinese settlements in early British Hong Kong (see map 6.2).[307] Not all the Chinese people migrating from the Tonggu-Shazhou anchorage, however, settled on land. A huge number of them chose to live afloat. The aforementioned census recorded that out of the total Chinese population of 7,450 on the whole island, two thousand lived "in the boats." In the mid-nineteenth century, the "boat population" in Hong Kong's Victoria Harbour (see map 6.2 and figure 6.9) constituted around one fourth of the whole Chinese population in the British colony.[308]

[304] Ellis, *Memoirs and Services*, 156.
[305] Cree, *The Cree Journal*, 79.
[306] *Canton Register*, June 1, 1841.
[307] Evans, "Chinatown"; Luk, "Occupied Space"; Smith, "The Chinese Settlement."
[308] Luk, "Collaboration and Conflict."



Map 6.2 Victoria Harbour and the Lower Bazaar in the western part of Victoria City on the northern shore of Hong Kong Island (Extracted from Major Aldrich's map, 1843)[309]



Figure 6.9 Chinese and Western craft in Victoria Harbour (Cree's watercolors, 1844)[310]

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[309] De Havilland, *Survey of the Northern Face of the Island of Hong Kong* , FO 925/2387.
[310] Cree, Journals, vol. 8, 1844.

The history of the first Chinese settlements—both on land and on water—in British Hong Kong during the Opium War tells us a lot about the striking features of the activities of the Chinese people who lived along the coast and rivers in southeast China in 1839–1842, and also in times of other serious political-social upheavals in late imperial China. As in other late imperial times, during the Qing-British hostilities many Chinese people went from land to water, taking advantage of the existence of fissures of state control and extending their socioeconomic activities and networks to these fissures. This characterized China's water borders during the Opium War. While many of them chose to settle on land, many others chose to live on water. During the Opium War, and in the late imperial era at large, people did not necessarily go from land to water. Rather, many Chinese littoral people went from land to water or acted across land territories and waters according to the changing political and socioeconomic circumstances.

Chapter 7:

Conclusion

Historicizing the Opium War

The thesis has constructed and employed the framework of water borders to illuminate the triangular relations between the British Expedition to China, the Qing state, and the Chinese littoral population during the Opium War. It has scrutinized three "inner" aspects of the Opium War understudied in the previous scholarship: the endeavors of the central and local Qing authorities to control the Qing Empire's sea frontier and their subjects thereon (Chinese and non-Chinese alike), British rule in regions under the expedition's occupation and blockade, and the conflicts between the Qing state and the British Expedition over controlling Chinese maritime and riverine people. "Re-reorienting" the Opium War toward the coast and filling in the gap of mid-nineteenth-century Chinese littoral societies in Opium War studies and scholarship on late imperial and modern Chinese society, the thesis has examined the profound impact of the Opium War on Chinese littoral societies in wartime, and some aspects of its long-term impact on China's littorals.

Contextualizing southeast China's littoral regions during the Opium War in late imperial and modern China, the thesis argues that the time of the Opium War was both a critical departure of and continuation of the previous decades and centuries. It was a critical departure because the war brought about and also itself marked an unprecedented level of encounters between Westerners and Chinese littoral people in China. Southeast China's littoral societies were a continuation of the littoral societies in the previous decades, if not

centuries, because of the similarities between the two, for example the state reliance on land settlers to control people living on the "water margins." Moreover, as in late imperial times, many Chinese littoral people acted across land regions and waters. Furthermore, the war brought about the beginning of what the thesis considers the "fourth waves" of piracy in late imperial China.

The thesis further argues that the 1839–1842 Qing-British hostilities brought about one of the greatest political-social upheavals in late imperial southeast China. Resembling other serious political-social upheavals in late imperial China, the war was not only destabilizing and disastrous for Chinese people; it also brought opportunities to Chinese people in the maritime and riverine regions, many of who shifted occupations and traveled from land to water to serve the British. In short, if we consider Chinese littoral societies from the Ming period to the fall of the Qing, and even up to the present, southeast China's littoral societies during the Opium War underwent an important transition from the "pre-modern" to "modern societies."

The thesis also contributes to scholarship on British imperialism in modern China in a number of ways. First, by tracing the formation of the British imperial frontier in China in 1840–1842, the thesis calls for more scholarly attention to the significance of "formal" British rule over British possessions in modern China. Second, the thesis has analyzed several aspects of the weaknesses of British power in China during the Opium War, and in the following century at large. The British power, for example, was unable to dominate China's littoral regions subject to British blockade and occupation or subdue rampant banditry and clandestine trade on water. The British Expedition, moreover, had to draw Chinese support to fight the battles and rule the wartime possessions. This indicates the

need for more studies on "indigenous collaboration" with the British as well as with other Western (and Japanese) imperial powers during the latter's "imperial war" with China in the late Qing and early republican periods, before the Japanese dominated northeast China the 1930s and the Second Sino-Japanese War (1937–1945).

Last but not least, the thesis serves to illuminate the significance of the Opium War in the history of the Qing Empire. It has regarded the Qing's anti-opium and anti-British war in 1839–1842 as one of the recurrent threats to the Qing Empire's maritime frontier in the first two centuries of the Qing. Moreover, inspired by the Qing-centered approach and transfrontier perspective in recent scholarship on Qing China's frontiers and borderlands, the thesis has highlighted a number of resemblances and connections between the Qing's maritime and inland borders. They included the presence, according to the Qing official conceptualization of the sea frontier, of "barbarians" and "Han evildoers" on both the inland and maritime frontiers, and the similarities and association between the maritime customs and inland customs. The thesis, moreover, has reevaluated the Qing state's capacity during the war and in its aftermath by highlighting its partial ability to control the sea frontier and maintain order in China's littorals. The local Qing authorities, for example, were able to retain some control over Chinese waterborne banditry, initiate some raids against the Chinese who served the British in the outer anchorages, and extend spying networks into both the inner-water and outer-water regions. Last but not least, built on Bello's scholarship, the thesis has highlighted the similarities between Qing and British control over Chinese merchant craft and their trade in wartime to challenge the tradition-modern binary between the Qing and British empires.

The Opium War and China's Water Borders

Drawing on scholarship on frontiers, the thesis argues that the Opium War transformed vast maritime and waterway regions in Guangdong, Fujian, Zhejiang, and Jiangsu provinces into what can be conceptualized as "water borders." These water borders were initially characterized by the existence of the Qing Empire's "sea frontier," where the Qing authorities strove to maintain or strengthen control over those labeled as "outer barbarians," "Han evildoers," and "villainous fishers and indigent Dan people" in regions within the "inner" and "outer waters." The rise of a British wartime frontier in China and its profound impact on local transportation and regional and international trade in Chinese craft, however, destabilized the socioeconomic order of many coastal and riverine regions. With Qing forces weakened, Chinese piracy was unleashed, and given limited British naval power, there was an absence of any militarily dominant power in southeast China's waters.

The establishment of British rule in regions occupied or blockaded by the expedition, moreover, resulted in the emergence of overlaps and interstices of the Qing and British empires. On the one hand, the British Expedition and the Qing state conflicted over managing Chinese merchant craft and their trade. On the other hand, subject to neither Qing nor British control, many Chinese people living along the coast and rivers took advantage of the opportunities that the war provided, and expanded their activities and networks to fissures in Qing control and the newly opened interstices of Qing and British rule.

Water Borders in Late Imperial China

The analytical framework of water borders constructed in the thesis can be applied in a wider historical context. It can be employed to illustrate the politics, economy, and society

of a huge section of maritime and waterway regions in southeast China in late imperial times. The main features of water borders analyzed in the thesis include the sea frontier of empire in China, a destabilized Chinese socioeconomic order, the absence of a militarily dominant power on water, and the overlaps and interstices of different regimes. Considering the history of southeast China from the arrival of the Portuguese in the early sixteenth century to the fall of the Qing in 1912, it can be argued that in these four centuries, water-border regions in southeast China included the coastal waters and waterways, outlying islands adjacent to the coast, and maritime and waterway regions where Ming/Qing imperial rule reached its limits, and where different political and military powers collided.[1] These powers included those of the Ming/Qing Empire, anti-Ming/anti-Qing regimes, Western Empires, Southeast Asian regimes (e.g. Vietnam's Tay Son dynasty), and, since the late nineteenth century, the Japanese Empire. These border regions were zones of frequent contact and encounters between Ming/Qing state agents, foreigners—Westerners, Southeast Asians, and the Japanese (some being the so-called *wokou* in the Ming), and the Chinese littoral population.[2]

In the water-border regions, a vast section of Chinese people living along the coast and waterways remained outside effective Ming/Qing administrative and military control.[3] In the late imperial period, intermittent political-social upheavals destabilized the economy and society of vast maritime and river regions. The anti-Qing Taiping Rebellion in 1850–1864, for example, greatly disrupted the socioeconomic order of the Yangzi region and

[1] Murray, "Conflict and Coexistence."
[2] As Kwan-wai So has noticed, the *wokou* in Ming records were composed of not only the Japanese but also the Koreans, the Chinese, and the Portuguese. See So, *Japanese Piracy*, 15–40.
[3] Yang, "Pinhai."

brought great calamities and traumas to a huge Chinese population.[4] On the water borders, moreover, a political-military power that dominated the sea (and sometimes rivers) was often lacking. In the mid-seventeenth century, for example, the Qing, the Spanish, the Dutch, and the Zheng regime's forces played their respective parts in maintaining, upsetting, or reforming the equilibrium of power on water in southeast China.[5]

Different political-military powers on the water borders, moreover, conflicted over controlling the seafaring people. In the mid-nineteenth century, for example, the Qing, the British, and Western consular authorities competed with each other for registering Chinese-owned and/or Chinese-manned merchant craft and regulating their activities.[6] Control of different powers or regimes over the Chinese people, however, did not extend to all maritime and waterway regions. Many of these people fell beyond all forms of stable state control, switching between occupations (licit or illicit in the eyes of the Qing/Ming authorities), identities, and also the regimes they worked with or served according to the changing political and socioeconomic circumstances.

Generally speaking, from the Portuguese advent in the early sixteenth century to the end of the Qing imperium in the early twentieth century, there were two epochs in which the water borders in southeast China underwent particularly fundamental transformations. The first epoch lay in the late Ming and early Qing, lasting from the 1620s to the 1680s. In this epoch, European settlements emerged on the islands of Penghu and Taiwan, whereas anti-Qing regimes were established on outlying islands and along southeast China's coast and waterways. Meanwhile, the epoch saw the Qing imposition and subsequent lifting of

[4] Jen, *The Taiping Revolutionary Movement*; Meyer-Fong, *What Remains*.
[5] Cheng, *War, Trade and Piracy*; Ho, "Sealord Lives in Vain."
[6] Morse, *The International Relations*, 298–66, 400–37.

the sea ban and coastal depopulation, and the Qing's eventual establishment of the maritime frontier in Fujian.[7]

The second epoch of the transformation of southeast China's water borders was the last seven decades of the Qing, from the 1839–1842 Qing-British hostilities to the Qing Empire's total collapse in 1912. During the Opium War and the Arrow War, the British expeditionary force (and also the French Expedition in the Arrow War) advanced on vast regions along the seaboard and waterways in southeast China. The Opium War gave rise to British insular possessions, foreign concessions (*zujie* 租界) in treaty ports, and "informal" foreign settlements, such as smuggling bases, along southeast China's coast and rivers. After the war, anti-Qing revolts prevailed across southeast China in the mid-nineteenth century. Many of them were closely associated with piracy. Similar to many other anti-government forces in late imperial China, in the mid-nineteenth century anti-Qing insurgents often occupied territories intersected by waterways. The late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries witnessed the establishment of more Western (and, since the late nineteenth century, Japanese) concessions and foreign outposts, as well as the spheres of influence along the coast and waterways in southeast China and beyond.[8]

The thesis is thus a study focusing on the beginning of this second transformative era of the water borders, i.e. the 1839–1842 Qing-British hostilities. Though cursory, the foregoing outline of the evolution of late imperial southeast China's water borders serves to highlight the parallels between the interactions among the British Expedition, the Qing state, and the Chinese littoral population during the Opium War on the one hand, and the

[7] Andrade, *How Taiwan Became Chinese*; Borao, *The Spanish Experience*; Cheng, *Helanren*; Ho, "Sealord Lives in Vain"; Souza, *The Survival of Empire*; Zhao, *The Qing Opening*.
[8] Chang, "From Island Frontier"; Fei, *Zhongguo zujie*; Hurd, *The Arrow War*; Kim, "The Red Turban"; Laai, "The Part"; Lung, "Britain and the Suppression"; Wong, *Deadly Dreams*.

interactions between foreigners in China (including Taiwan and its neighboring islands), Ming/Qing authorities, and Chinese people along the coast and rivers in other late imperial times on the other. The parallels indicate the continuity of one intrinsic political and socioeconomic development of southeast China before and after the Opium War from the early sixteenth to early twentieth century.

Water Borders beyond China

In the mid-nineteenth century, the travels of Edward Cree, whose drawings have been widely quoted and closely studied in the thesis, were not limited to southeast China's maritime and waterway regions. On board HMS *Vixen* and *Fury* as naval surgeon, he sailed across the China seaboard, the coast of mainland Southeast Asia, insular Southeast Asia, and India, sometimes crossing the South China Sea (see map 7.1). Following the British ships of war in the China Station, he visited many regions in insular Southeast Asia, which belonged to what James Scott calls the "watery Zomia" (see figure 7.1). As Scott succinctly describes,

> The numerous *orang laut* (sea nomads, sea gypsies) in insular Southeast Asia are clearly a seagoing, archipelago-hopping variant of swiddeners dwelling in mountain fastnesses. Like many hill people they also have a martial tradition and have moved easily between piracy (seaborne raiding), slave-raiding, and serving as the naval guard and strike force of several Malay kingdoms. Poised strategically at the edge of major shipping lanes, able to strike and disappear quickly, they conjure up a whole watery Zomia.[9]

[9] Scott, *The Art of Not Being Governed*, preface, xiv.



Map 7.1 Guangdong and Southeast Asia. The route from Guangdong to insular Southeast Asia across the South China Sea indicated in the map was the one that Cree took in his journey back to Britain via Africa's Cape of Good Hope in 1846. (Cree's map, 1846)[10]

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[10] Cree, Cree journal, vol. 10, 1846.

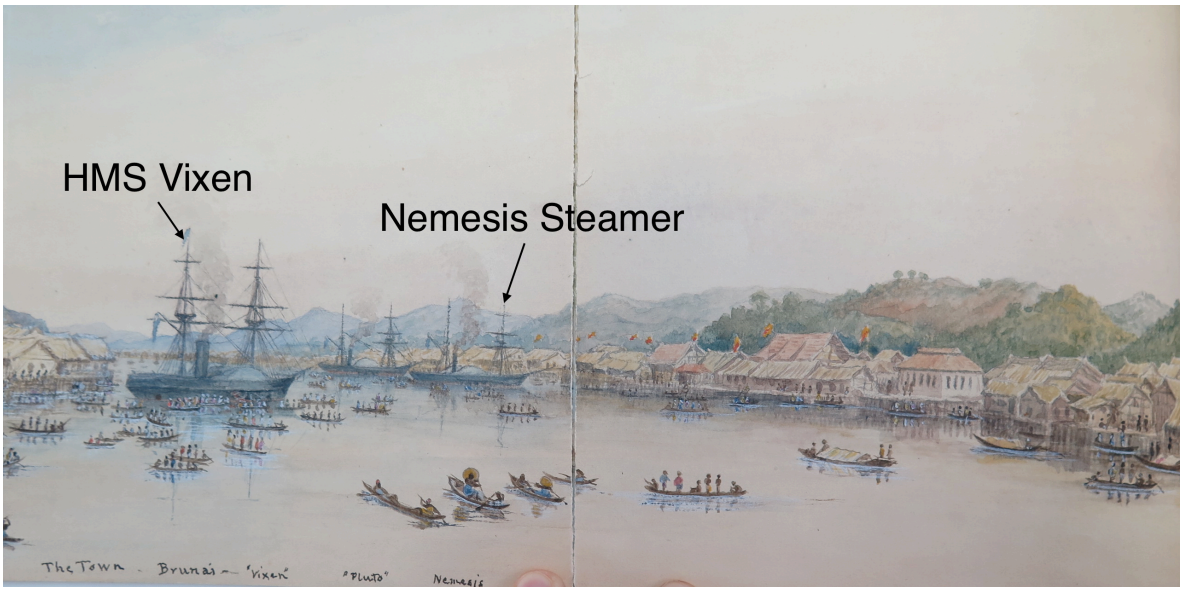


Figure 7.1 Brunei in 1845, which then fell within the sphere of the China Station of the British Navy. The British ship of war on the right is the *Nemesis* steamer, which played a significant role in fighting the China War in 1840–1842.[11] (Cree's watercolor, 1845)[12]

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The region of what Scott calls the "watery Zomia" has received increasing scholarly attention. Tana Li and some other scholars have studied the "water frontier," a theoretical framework on which the thesis is based (see Chapter 1), of mainland Southeast Asia's Lower Mekong Delta in the late eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. Eric Tagliacozzo has delved into the "porous borders" of the Dutch and British empires in insular Southeast Asia in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries.[13] There has also been rich scholarship on the *orang laut*—"sea gypsies"—in insular Southeast Asia.[14]

By constructing the water border framework, the thesis suggests the possibility of

[11] Bernard, *The Nemesis*.
[12] Cree, Cree journal, vol. 9, 1845.
[13] Cooke and Li, *Water Frontier*; Tagliacozzo, *Secret Trades*.
[14] Chou, *Orang Suku Laut*; Sopher, *The Sea Nomads*.

comparing China's water borders and Southeast Asia's "water frontiers," "porous borders," and "watery Zomia." A brief comparison between the two suggests that both of them saw the destabilization of local socioeconomic order in times of recurrent political-social upheavals, the absence of any militarily dominant power, and the existence of fissures of state control, of which people took advantage to expand their own socioeconomic activities. This brief comparison indicates that the existence of water borders was to some extent a macroregional historical phenomenon in Asia. More comparison between the water borders in China and other regions across the globe that shared the similar features as the water borders is needed before we could decide whether the existence of water borders was a global-historical phenomenon.

Is it possible to consider southeast China's water borders and their adjoining East Asian and Southeast Asian regions as one single entity? Angela Schottenhammer has proposed the idea of the East Asian Mediterranean to illustrate the socioeconomic and cultural exchanges between the East Asian countries via the East China Sea, whereas Wang Wensheng has examined the border-crossing activities of pirates in the South China Sea to illustrate the "nonstate space" of the "Sino-Vietnamese water frontier" in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries.[15] In fact, this "water frontier" lying across China and Southeast Asia still existed in the mid-nineteenth century. In the late 1840s, the British Navy, cooperating with Qing forces, conducted a large-scale campaign annihilating Chinese pirates in the Gulf of Tonkin, which straddled the Sino-Vietnamese water frontier. Edward Cree, who followed the British Navy across China and Southeast Asia, witnessed and drew one of these battles (see figure 7.2).[16] Hopefully the concept of water borders

[15] Schottenhammer, *The East Asian Mediterranean*; Wang, *White Lotus Rebels*.
[16] Hay, *The Suppression*; Lung, "Britain and the Suppression"; Scott, *An Account of the Destruction*.

introduced in the thesis helps trace the various political and socioeconomic links between southeast China, other East Asian regions, mainland and insular Southeast Asia, and beyond. Only after we trace these connections could we judge whether these regions can be regarded as one integral region with its unique political-military and socioeconomic order in the early modern and modern periods.



Figure 7.2 The British destruction of the flagship of the notorious Chinese pirate Shap-ng-tsai in the Gulf of Tonkin in 1849 (Cree's watercolor, 1849)[17]

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Comparing Qing China's Frontiers

Corresponding to the recent scholarly efforts on highlighting the comparability and connectedness of different borderlands of the Qing Empire, the thesis has constructed the

[17] Cree, Cree journal, vol. 12, 1849.

water border framework to facilitate comparison between the Qing's maritime and inland borders. The water borders during the Opium War are comparable to inland borderlands in late imperial China in at least two aspects. First, both of them were characterized by a destabilized socioeconomic order, the absence of a militarily hegemonic power, and fissures in state control. There was, for example, a strong parallel between the water borders and highlands in southwest China in the Qing. In the latter, there were cracks of Qing control where the highland people, many of who were classified as Miao, evaded state incorporation. Wars in southwest China in the late eighteenth and nineteenth centuries also drove many people up to the mountainous areas, part of which belonged to Scott's Zomia (see Chapter 1). The Qing state, moreover, struggled with the indigenous elites and the neighboring Southeast Asian regimes for controlling the aboriginal people as well as Han immigrants in the border region.[18] This is similar to the conflicts during the Opium War between the British Expedition and the Qing state (which was supported by local Chinese land settlers) over controlling Chinese people living afloat, many of whom were regarded as "Han evildoers", the Dan, and fishers.

Another resemblance between southeast China's water borders during the Opium War and inland frontiers in Qing China concerns the clashes between and the overlapping of the Qing Empire and other Western empires. In the Qing period, the British imperialists sought to extend their influence from India, which became the British Raj in 1858, to Tibet from the late eighteenth through the early twentieth century. In northeast China, while the Qing and Russian Empires struggled for control over Manchuria since the Qing's foundation, the Japanese Empire had also expanded to Manchuria since the late nineteenth century. Moreover, the southernmost of the Qing Empire, i.e. Guangdong and Guangxi

[18] Atwill, *The Chinese Sultanate*; Herman, *Amid the Clouds*; Weinstein, *Empire and Identity*.

provinces, bordered "Indo-China" of the French Empire. These border regions were all characterized by interstices of control by different imperial powers. Manchuria, for example, did not begin to develop until the late nineteenth century, and many people spread over the regions under tenuous Qing, Japanese, and Russian control in the two decades around the turn of the twentieth century.[19] The thesis, therefore, seeks to broaden the platform of dialogue between scholars of Ming/Qing imperial and colonial history and scholars of Western and Japanese imperialism and colonialism in modern China.

In short, by constructing the water border framework, the thesis aims to facilitate comparison between the maritime and inland frontiers of the Qing Empire where the Qing authorities, other East Asian regimes, Southeast Asian, South Asian, and Inner Asian rulers, Western "imperialists," and local people interacted. Doing a comparative history of these frontiers can be considered as one "prospect for global history" in the early modern and modern periods.[20]

Future Research Directions

Ethnicity on Water Borders

There are a number of future research directions that serve to further enhance and explain the analytical concept of water borders in southeast China in the mid-nineteenth century. While the thesis has examined how the Qing authorities characterized people on the empire's sea frontier and contributed to shaping their ethnicity, for example "Dan," further

[19] Hess, "From Colonial Jewel to Socialist Metropolis"; Lee, "The Manchurian Frontier in Ch'ing History"; Shao, "Ethnicity in Empire and Nation"; Reardon-Anderson, *Reluctant Pioneers*; Zatsepine, "Beyond the Black Dragon River."
[20] Belich, Darwin, Frenz, and Wickham, *The Prospect of Global History*.

research can be conducted on how Western perceptions contributed to the ethnicity formation of the Chinese people along the coast and rivers. A preliminary look at contemporary Western narratives of China indicates that many Chinese littoral people were called the "Tanka," "boat people," or "amphibious race." The roles of Westerners in China (including Hong Kong) in shaping the ethnicity of these Chinese people have been largely overlooked in scholarship on Chinese maritime and riverine societies.[21] How did Westerners in China contribute to shaping the fabric of Chinese society by observing, recording, defining, and categorizing local Chinese people? How did the British authorities rule their insular frontier in China—which was composed of Hong Kong, Zhoushan, and Gulangyu in the 1840s— based on their perceptions of the Chinese population? Answering these questions will illuminate the dynamics of ethnic relations between Westerners and the Chinese on the water borders.

James Hevia has recognized the close relations between ethnography and Western imperialism and colonialism in China: "scrutinizing or gazing at other places, peoples, and peoples' artifacts and then representing them in writing or in pictures (first drawing and painting, later photography) was a fundamental way in which knowledge was produced about colonized populations in European empires."[22] To unveil the Western perceptions of Chinese coastal and river people, contemporary Western narratives, memoirs, journals, travelogues, and also drawings—such as one of Cree's numerous watercolors below (see figure 7.3)—can be employed as ethnographic accounts of the depicted or classified

[21] The few exceptions include Ru, "Qing zhong houqi"; Tsang, "Hong Kong's Floating World"; Zhang, "Jindai Guangzhou." Interestingly, while Western anthropologists of the "boat people" in Hong Kong have not paid much attention to the relationships between their research subjects and foreigners, their field trips have reflected the dynamics of interactions between the Western anthropologists and their research subjects. The "boat people" in Castle Peak, for example, drew the support of the American anthropologist Eugene Anderson in their bargain with the Hong Kong government for welfare. See Anderson, "The Floating World."
[22] Hevia, *Cherishing Men*, 5. A classical work on the British categorization of knowledge about colonial possessions is Bernard S. Cohn's *Colonialism and Its Form of Knowledge: The British in India*.

Chinese. This approach echoes the efforts of Laura Hostetler and Emma Teng to investigate how Qing state agents and Chinese literati constructed the ethnicity of natives on maritime and inland frontiers by making ethnographical records and travel writings.[23] Moreover, to highlight the similarities between the maritime and inland borders, it will be useful to adopt a transfrontier perspective and compare Western perceptions of the Chinese people on the water borders and Western perceptions of the non-Han Chinese in inland borderlands, such as Tibet and Xinjiang, where encounters between Westerners and natives were frequent.



Figure 7.3 "Tanka boat Girls—Hong Kong" (Cree's watercolor, 1843[24])

© National Maritime Museum, Greenwich, London

[23] Hostetler, *Qing Colonial Enterprise*; Teng, *Taiwan's Imagined Geography*.
[24] Cree, Cree journal, vol. 7, 1843.

Several questions are worth exploring when examining Western perceptions of the Chinese littoral people: How did daily encounters between the Westerners and these people lead to, as a preliminary exploration of contemporary Western records shows, the formation of the "boat population," "Tanka," and "amphibious race" as distinct ethnic groups? Did Qing official and late imperial Chinese perceptions of the Dan and fishers, as Chapter 2 has detailed, affect Western perceptions of these people? If so, how? Were the Westerners able to distinguish between these people and also Chinese craft with various shapes and purposes along the coast, rivers, and creeks? If not, how did the British authorities in China rule the Chinese "boat population" in their possessions? How did the Western perceptions of these people, and also British rule over these people based on the perceptions, vary according to the changing political and socioeconomic circumstances? How did British rule in turn shape or reinforce the ethnicity of the categorized Chinese? By addressing all these questions, we can judge whether the British authorities ruled their insular possessions in China in the 1840s based on their perceptions of the Chinese "water population." If so, this would be another striking similarity between the British Empire in China and the Qing Empire in the way that both the Qing and British authorities ruled the Chinese subjects in China's maritime regions according to their understanding (if not imagination) of the peoples concerned.

Opium Trade Networks

To elaborate on the features of water borders in mid-nineteenth-century southeast China, further research can be conducted on the networks of the opium trade in the maritime and riverine regions. The thesis has discussed how the Qing-British hostilities of 1839–1842

brought about Chinese "illicit" trade on water. In the mid-nineteenth century, those who participated in illicit maritime trade in China were not limited to Chinese people. A good example is the distribution of opium imported by sea, which involved a wide variety of Chinese people and Westerners with different backgrounds and also local Qing authorities and their forces.

In the past scholarship pertinent to the opium trade in maritime China, much attention has been paid to its relations with the two "Opium Wars" and British imperialism in Asia.[25] The scholarship, however, has largely focused on Western "imperial" parties connected to the trade—the British Indian government, "country" traders, as well as Western groups participating in the traffic. This results in overshadowing the roles of the Chinese people with different socioeconomic backgrounds in the opium traffic during the war and in its aftermath in the mid-nineteenth century.[26] Bello has noticed the "complexity of social relations created by the drug's use," but his focus is primarily on the opium trade networks in southwest China and Xinjiang.[27] Tagliacozzo's book on the "secret trades" across the "porous borders" between the British and Dutch Empires in insular Southeast Asia, on the other hand, has provided an excellent example of how smuggling networks operated in areas characterized by overlaps and interstices of empires. What were the roles of local and non-local Chinese people in shaping the networks of the "nonstate activity," to use Wang Wensheng's term, of the opium trade in China's maritime and river areas? How did these Chinese people collaborate with Westerners and also Qing state agents in the trade? Answering these two questions will illuminate the operation of the opium trade networks in fissures of state control on the water borders.

[25] Brook and Wakabayashi, *Opium Regimes*; Tan, *China*; Trocki, *Opium, Empire*; Wong, *Deadly Dreams*.
[26] Collis, *Foreign Mud*; Lubbock, *Opium Clippers*; Murakami, "Min Yue yanhai."
[27] Bello, *Opium and the Limits of Empire*, 10.

To some extent, the opium trade networks in China's littoral regions in the 1840s were a continuation of the networks before the Qing's anti-opium campaign starting in the late 1830s.[28] The post-war networks, however, differed in many ways from the pre-war ones because of the emergence of the British insular frontier, the opening of treating ports in China, and the change of power equilibrium on water (see Chapter 4) in the 1840s. During the Opium War and in its aftermath, "illicit ports" or "informal" foreign mercantile settlements, which were principally opium smuggling bases, burgeoned along the coast and in river mouths across southeast China. Many were situated next to the British insular possessions in China, including those in the Pearl River Delta region near Hong Kong, Zhangzhou near Gulangyu, and the Zhoushan Archipelago. Many others lay near the treaty ports, and one was located at Nan'ao Island on the Guangdong-Fujian, and Quanzhou and its adjacent Shenhu Bay. As Robert Fortune wrote in 1847,

> Chimoo Bay [Shenhu Bay] is about fifty miles north of Amoy. It has been an opium station for foreign ships for some years; and here, even during the war [in 1840–1842], that trade was carried on in spite of the mandarins. The natives of the different towns on the shores of this bay are an independent and lawless race.[29]

The opium trade was a nonstate activity. The Qing, British, and non-British Western consular authorities usually turned a blind eye to the opium trade, and the heavily armed clandestine traders, Western and Chinese alike, were subject to tenuous state control.

To examine the opium trade networks in the 1840s and the roles of Chinese people in the trade, the following questions should be raised: how did Chinese merchant-shippers, fishers, sailors, and even farmers, who were lineally, geographically, or occupationally

[28] Madancy, *The Trouble Legacy*, 42–95.
[29] Fortune, *Three Years' Wanderings*, 39.

connected to each other, contribute to the formation and maintenance of illicit opium trading ports? How did they collaborate with the Western parties participating in the trade, including foreign opium receiving ships and Western armed smuggling forces, and also with Qing state agents to maintain the traffic in those smuggling bases? How did the Chinese people contribute to linking different opium smuggling depots? How did the opium trade networks in southeast China illustrate fissures of state control and the absence of a militarily hegemonic power, which, as I have already shown in the thesis, were two central features of southeast China's water borders in the mid-nineteenth century?

Convoy Systems

In the mid-nineteenth century, several parties ran convoy systems in southeast China's waters. In addition to those run by the Qing and British forces introduced in the thesis, the convoy systems included those operated by Chinese pirates and rebels, non-British Western consular authorities in China, and also foreign private adventurers. Generally speaking, these convoy systems have received scant scholarly attention.[30] In scholarship on late imperial China's piracy, waterborne banditry has essentially been characterized as a threat to the Qing state.[31] To avoid such a state-centered approach, further research should be conducted on the roles of pirates in the balance of power along the coast and waterways of southeast China. While much scholarly attention has been paid to protection networks

[30] Convoys provided by Western consular authorities in China and foreign private adventurers in the mid-nineteenth century have only been briefly mentioned in Morse's *The International Relations of the Chinese Empire*.
[31] Antony, *Like Froth*.

maintained by Chinese pirates in late imperial China, there has only been scant attention to the interactions of their protection networks with convoy systems kept up by other parties.[32]

As far as convoy systems are concerned, it can be argued that southeast China's water borders in the 1840s were so highly contested that no single party dominated the sea and rivers. Political boundaries and administrative divisions were insignificant for convoying parties, who traveled across regions subject to Qing rule, British rule, or no state control. Many non-British Western consular authorities were merchants who kept armed vessels. They convoyed Chinese vessels mainly for rewards. Foreign adventurers, for example the Portuguese and American ones, also ran their heavily armed escorting forces on water.

Meanwhile, and paradoxically, Chinese craft increasingly relied on Chinese pirates for protection to avoid being plundered by other raiders on water during the Opium War and in its aftermath. As it happened, Chinese rebels and pirates did not necessarily lose in the competition for escorting Chinese craft even though they possessed comparatively backward weapons and vessels. Their success was mainly due to their extensive "protection networks" stretching across southeast China's maritime and riverine regions which many Chinese civilian craft were obliged to join. This exemplifies the absence of a militarily hegemonic power on water in mid-nineteenth-century southeast China, one striking feature of the water borders during that time.

[32] Antony, *Like Froth*; Munn, *Anglo-China*.

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