CONTENTS

THE HEXAGRAMS OF THE *YIJING* (*BOOK OF CHANGES*) IN HISTORICAL STUDIES - LI ZHI'S *JIUZHENG YIYIN* (九正易因)[1]

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Li Zhi 李贄 (1527–1602), also named Zhuowu 卓吾, was born in Jinjiang 晉江 (in modern-day Quanzhou 泉州), Fujian Province in China. He was a prominent Chinese philosopher, historian and *literatus* of the late Ming Dynasty. In the field of historical studies, Aside from works in history, such as *Cangshu,* 藏書 (*A Book to Hide*), *Xu Cangshu* 續藏書 (*An Addendum to A Book to Hide*), *Shigang Pingyao* 史綱評要 (*Comments on the Outline of History*), *Chutan Ji* 初潭集 (*The First Collection Written in the New Residence of Dragon Pool*)[2] and others, he also created his own theory of and method of historiography. So Li Zhi was known as an enlightenment historian, his thought greatly influenced future generations. When it comes to the study of the Confucian Classics, Li Zhi's thought shows a unique characteristic. In my opinion, he is one of the important figures in the Ming Dynasty who used the *xin* 心 (mind/heart) to interpret the Confucian Classics.[3] His main work on the *Yijing* is the *Jiuzheng Yiyin* 九正易因. This thesis will focus on *Jiuzheng Yiyin,* mainly to study the status and influence of hexagrams of *Yijing* in historical studies. In this work, Li Zhi combined traditional culture and historical facts with the wisdom of the *Yijing* and established his two-fold historical principle: the historical development view (歷史發展觀) and the indeterminism of right and wrong (是非不定論). On this basis, he discussed the relationship of the *Yijing* to history, using the hexagrams to record historical events, and then also using historical facts to validate the *Yijing*. On the one hand, he learned from Xiong Guo 熊過 (1502-1573) and Yang Wanli 楊萬裡 (1127-1206)'s method of using history to study the *Yijing*; on the other hand, he also chose historical facts to prove the *Yijing*. He proposed the view that "the Six Classics are all histories (六經皆史)" and advocated the idea that "the Classics and history mirror each other (經史相為表裏)". In addition, he stressed the influence of the *Yijing* in historical thought,

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[2] An anthology of his writings after moving to Longtan 龍潭 and became a monk.

[3] Chen Xinyu 2009, pp. 19-23.

using the diagrams to integrate history and emphasizing equality between saints and mortals, farmers and merchants, men and women, thus creating his own characteristic theoretical framework.

1. Li Zhi and Jiuzheng Yiyin

The book *Jiuzheng Yiyin* was Li Zhi's last and most cherished work, containing his entire life's learning. He considered it of such importance that he revised it several times before his death. *Li Wenling Pingzhuan* 李溫陵評傳 (*The Biography of Li Wenling*) tells of his feelings about this book, "I have completed *Jiuzheng Yiyin* and soon I will die [我得《九正易因》成，死快矣]."[4] He was very pleased with this work and attached to it great importance, since it recapitulates his life's learning and realizations. For him, "the *Yijing* is truly the life blood of the sages [《易經》真是聖賢血脈]."[5]

Regarding the title *Jiuzheng Yiyin*, why used "Jiuzheng 九正 (*Nine revisions*)"? The first reason was the great importance Li Zhi attached to this work that it had to undergo several revisions before he was satisfied. "In two years of work, the initial edition almost did not make it, I had revised it as many as seven or eight times [更兩年，而《易》之舊者存不能一、二，改者且至七八矣]."[6] The second reason had to do with the traditional numerological significance attached to the number 'Nine' in connection with the development or creation of certain things. As Li Zhi explained, a Censor[7] suggested to him the following: "Music needs to be played nine times before it can be ready for performance; the elixir needs to be transformed nine times before it can attain its final form; and the book of Yi needs to be modified nine times before it can be perfect. So, to the title *Yiyin* 易因 (Causes of Change), you should add the two words *Jiuzheng* 九正 (Nine Revisions) [侍禦曰：樂必九奏而後備，丹必九轉而後成，易必九正而後定。宜仍其名《易因》，而加九正二字]." To this, Li Zhi said, "I was happy to follow his suggestion, so I entitled it *Jiuzheng Yiyin* [予喜而受之，遂定其名曰《九正易因》也]."[8] These efforts at multiple revisions show the great amount of work Li Zhi dedicated to the study of the *Yijing*.

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[4] *Li Zhi Wenji* 李贄文集 (*The Collected Works of Li Zhi*) 2000, *Jiuzheng Yiyin* 九正易因, The second part, p. 272. In this paper, Li Zhi's works *Jiuzheng Yiyin* 九正易因, *Cangshu* 藏書 (*A Book to Hide*), *Xu Cangshu* 續藏書 (*An Addendum to A Book to Hide*), *Shigang Pingyao* 史綱評要 (*Comments on the Outline of History*), *Chutan Ji* 初潭集 *Laozi Jie* 老子解 all in *Li Zhi Wenji* 李贄文集 (*The Collected Works of Li Zhi*), 7 vols., Zhang Jianye 張建業, eds. (2000), Beijing: Social Science Press 社會科學文獻出版社.

[5] *Li Zhi Yanjiu Cankao Ziliao* 李贄研究參考資料 (*Li Zhi Research Resources*) 1976, p. 8.

[6] *Li Zhi Wenji* 李贄文集 2000, *Jiuzheng Yiyin* 九正易因 (Preface), p. 89.

[7] *Shiyu* 侍禦, also known as *Shiyu Shi* 侍禦史, a designation for a Censorate official.

[8] *Li Zhi Wenji* 李贄文集 2000, *Jiuzheng Yiyin* 九正易因 (Preface), p. 89.

> Every time I lie down, I listen to the reading of the *Yijing* and discuss the *Yijing*. 予每臥聽讀《易》者說《易》。[9]
>
> From October till the present, I read the *Yijing* with Jiao Ruohou 焦弱侯 every night, one hexagram each night. 又我自十月到今, 與弱侯刻夜讀《易》，每夜一卦。[10]
>
> For three years, I studied the *Yijing* by following someone who did research on the *Yijing,* I did my utmost so that the 64 hexagrams of *Yiyin* may be introduced to the public. 於是遂從治《易》者讀《易》三年，竭晝夜力, 複有六十四卦《易因》鋟刻行世。[11]
>
> Ke 鈳 reckons that he followed the master for nine years and never saw him stop--not in any year, month, day, or moment--studying the *Yijing*, to the point of forgetting to eat and sleep. 鈳計從師先後記九載，見師無一年不讀《易》，無一月不讀《易》，無一日一時刻不讀《易》，至於忘食忘寢。[12]
>
> I studied the *Yijing* at the house of Ma Jinglun 馬經綸, working hard day and night. 讀《易》於通州馬侍禦經綸之精舍，晝夜參詳。[13]
>
> I studied the *Yijing* with Mr. Ma 馬經綸, going through every hexagram countless (literally, 'a thousand') times for a whole year until *Jiuzheng Yiyin* was completed. 與馬公讀《易》，每卦千遍，一年而《九正易因》成。[14]

The above materials reveal that Li Zhi studied the *Yijing* for many years with his friends Jiao Ruohou 焦弱侯 (1540-1620), Ma Jinglun 馬經綸 (1562-1605) and his student Wang Benke 汪本鈳,[15] until the completion of the *Jiuzheng Yiyin*. Judging from its contents and two-part structure, Li Zhi wrote the *Jiuzheng Yiyin* following the traditional division of the *Yijing.* In the first volume, he explained and commented on the first set of hexagrams, from hexagram *Qian* 乾 (䷀) to hexagram *Kan* 坎 (䷜); and in the second volume, on the second set of hexagrams, from hexagram *Xian* 鹹 (䷞) to hexagram *Weiji* 未濟 (䷿). Li Zhi dealt with the 64 hexagrams of the *Yijing* one by one, and his explanation is divided into three parts. The first part consists of the text of the *Yao Ci* 爻辭 (the commentary on the horizontal lines in the hexagram), followed by the text of the *Tuan Ci* 彖辭 (the commentary on the hexagram text) and that of the *Xiang Zhuan* 象傳 (the Confucian commentary on the image), first of the Small Xiang or *Xiao Xiang* 小象 (the Confucian commentary on the line image) and then of the Big Xiang or *Da Xiang* 大象 (the Confucian commentary on the

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[9] *Li Zhi Wenji* 李贄文集 2000, *Jiuzheng Yiyin* 九正易因 (First part 卷上), p. 91.
[10] Li Zhi 1975b, 1: 29.
[11] Li Zhi 1975b, 2: 66.
[12] Zhang Jianye 1992, p. 277.
[13] *Li Zhi Wenji* 李贄文集 2000, *Jiuzheng Yiyin* 九正易因 (Preface), p. 89.
[14] Zhang Jianye 1992, p. 282.
[15] Wang Benke 汪本鈳 (birth and death unknown) is Li Zhi's student and edited *Xu Fenshu* 續焚書 (*An Addendum to A Book to Burn*).

hexagram image). In the second part, Li Zhi offers his own, generally summary, view of the hexagram under discussion. Sometimes, views of disciples are also included. The last part consists of an appendix which cites other representative views on the hexagram under consideration.

Aside from this specialized work on the *Yijing*, the *Jiuzheng Yiyin,* Li Zhi also often quoted the *Yijing* in his other works. For him, knowledge of the *Yijing* included not only general principles of morality but also, like in the *Doctrine of the Mean* 中庸, practical prescriptions on ethical behavior.[16] He not only praised Zhang Zai's studies on the *Yijing*,[17] but also made the two hexagrams *Qian* 乾 ䷀ (Heaven) and *Kun* 坤 ䷁ (Earth) the origin of the world. At the end of his article *Fufu Pian Zonglun* 夫婦篇總論 (*General Remarks on the Husband and Wife*), Li Zhi summarized: "So great is the primordial Qian, everything (literally: the 'ten thousand things') originates from it, so ultimate is the primordial Kun, everything is generated by it. Originating and generating, they transform endlessly, maintain harmony and regulate destiny [大哉乾元，萬物資始！至哉坤元，萬物資生！資始資生，變化無窮，保合太和，各正性命]."[18] Obviously, the *Yijing* was the logical inference proof basis of Li Zhi's view. Obviously, the *Yijing* occupied a very important place in Li Zhi's thought.

2. Li Zhi's Principles of History

When speaking of history, the most important thing for Li Zhi was the establishment of the principles of history. Li Zhi absorbed the wisdom of *Yijing* and combined it with philosophy, using *Yijing* to establish his principles of history.

The first principle had to do with his view on historical development. Li Zhi proposed the "historical development view (歷史發展觀)" in which he emphasized the importance of *Bian* 變 (change) as the guiding principle for the study of the Confucian Classics and history. As time goes, things in the world change, including the meaning of the Confucian Classics.

In studying the Confucian Classics, Li Zhi advised against venerating them as some kind of immutable sacred scriptures. He said that: "Even if we can resurrect Confucius today, he also would not know how to determine what is Right and Wrong. How can we then make a fixed document the norm for Reward and Punishment [雖使孔夫子複生於今，又不知作如何是非也，而可遽以定本行罰賞哉]."[19] Second, in Li Zhi's mind, the teachings of the Sage are

[16] Li Zhi 1975a, 3: 108.
[17] Li Zhi 1975a, 3: 109.
[18] Li Zhi 1974, p. 1.
[19] *Li Zhi Wenji* 李贄文集 2000, *Cang Shu* 藏書, 1: 1.

also subject to change according to the needs of the times. "A need calls for a corresponding response, just as a medicine is given to cure a particular ailment or a physician prescribes certain medications at particular hours of the day [要亦有而發，不過因病發藥，隨時處方]."[20] Thirdly, Li Zhi regarded the *Yijing* precisely as the Classic for the times. He said: "Time changes constantly. And Dao can be both principle and expediency, as it follows change in order to reach expediency as time goes. There is nothing more profound than the *Book of Changes* [夫時有常變，道有經權，順變達權，莫深於《易》]."[21] For this reason, Li Zhi proposed *Bian* 變 (change) as the guiding principle for the study of history. Particularly in his article "Zhang Hengqu Yishuo Xu Daizuo 張橫渠易說序• 代作" ("Replacement. Preface to Zhang Zai's *On Change*") in *Fen Shu* 焚書 (*A Book to Burn*), Li Zhi praised the courage of Zhang Zai 張載 (1020-1077) who studied the *Yijing* for a long time but admitted that his research was not as good as that of his students, the Cheng brothers, Cheng Hao 程顥 (1032-1085) and Cheng Yi 程頤 (1033-1107). Zhang had the courage to change, to follow and learn from his students. Li Zhi thought that what Zhang Zai did was precisely what he wanted to say about the content of Yi 易. First, Li Zhi made a survey of the meanings of Yi. For the ancients, Yi meant generally three things: first, *Jianyi* 簡易 (simplicity), therefore it is the foundation of the world; second, *Buyi* 不易 (constancy), therefore it never changes even as the world changes; and third, *Bianyi* 變易 (change); therefore it is difficult to grasp. On the one hand, Li Zhi tried to combine the three meanings into one, since it is the simplest, it is constant; since it is constant, it is penetrating; since it transforms, it is miraculous. In other words, it is profound therefore it is wonderful and therefore it changes forever. On the other hand, he praised Zhang Zai's understanding of *Yijing*, "change in the *Yi* of Zhang Zai is so smooth in its quickness, how wonderful it is [先生變易之速，亦如反掌，何其神乎]."[22] One can say that Li Zhi's and Zhang Zai's "Change" are the same, as both refer to eternal and otherworldly transformation. For Li Zhi, this 'change' constitutes the fundamental principle of the *Yijing*.

Besides the *Yijing*, Li Zhi, in his article *Zhanguo Lun* 戰國論 (*On the Warring States*), mentioned that "since it was the Warring States period, there existed wartime strategies [既為戰國之時，則自有戰國之策]."[23] In his view, each period required policies and strategies best suited to the realities of the time. Therefore, people should not be too rigid in their treatment of history. They should respect the objectivity of historical development. On the basis of development and change, Li Zhi tried to break the shackles of traditional metaphysics. In the first place, he proposed "not to follow old customs and not

[20] Li Zhi 1975a, 3: 91.
[21] *Li Zhi Yanjiu Cankao Ziliao* 李贄研究參考資料 1976, p. 76.
[22] Li Zhi 1975a, 3: 117.
[23] Li Zhi 1975a, 3: 93.

to tread old paths [不蹈故襲，不踐往跡]",[24] affirming the changes in the period. In the second place, one can see that Li Zhi attached great importance to individuality. Li Zhi's view, therefore, possessed a certain progressive quality. The second principle was on judgment between Right and Wrong – he advocated indeterminism. In his work *Cangshu Shiji Liezhuan Zongmu Qianlun* 藏書世紀列傳總目前論 (*Prologue to the Complete Catalogue of Biographical Sketches in A Book to Hide*), he said, "Whether a person is good or bad is not something predestined at the beginning. Whether a person is good or bad, one also cannot say definitely [人之是非，初無定質；人之是非人也，亦無定論]."[25]

Furthermore, he laid emphasis on individual judgment, "each one has his own judgment of Right and Wrong. I also have my own judgment of Right and Wrong [人各一是非，我亦一是非]."[26] Concretely, Li Zhi opposed, first of all, the deification of authority. He even opposed the authority of Confucius. He thought that we should not follow Confucius blindly; accepting Confucius' standard of what is Right and Wrong. After all, Confucius was just an ordinary human being. Secondly, Li Zhi opposed following in the footsteps of others or walking the path others have trodden. Each person is unique and should have his own soul and judgment, not following blindly the ancients. Thirdly, Li Zhi was against dogmatism, that is, turning writings of the past, even outdated ones, into immutable doctrinal texts. People are living beings who constantly accept new things. One should not, therefore, use fixed unchangeable teachings to regulate people in real life.

On this basis, Li Zhi proposed the relativity of truth. Any truth, under certain conditions, is limited and incomplete. Right and Wrong are also relative and changeable. He was against all authority and refused to emulate anyone. "Dao is always changing, changing without following any regular pattern [為道屢遷，變易匪常]."[27] He said that each person possesses an innate *Xin* 心 or heart-mind which he called *Tongxin* 童心 (the child-like heart-mind).[28]

> The child-like heart-mind is the true heart-mind. If something is not right to the child's heart-mind, then it is not right to the true heart-mind. The true heart-mind is never false and completely pure. It is the original idea of conscience. If one loses the child-like heart-mind, he loses his true heart-mind. And if one loses his true heart-mind, he loses his true humanity. To be human without being true is to completely lose the original humanity. As the child is the beginning of humanity, so is the child's heart-mind the beginning of the heart-mind.[29]
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> 夫童心者，真心也；若以童心為不可，是以真心為不可也。夫童心者，絕

[24] Li Zhi 1975a, 1: 27.
[25] *Li Zhi Wenji* 李贄文集 2000, *Cang Shu* 藏書, 1: 7.
[26] *Li Zhi Wenji* 李贄文集 2000, *Laozi Jie* 老子解 (First part 上篇), p. 1.
[27] Li Zhi 1975a, 5: 214.
[28] Pauline Lee 2012, p. 63.
[29] Li Zhi 1975a, 3: 91.

> 假純真，最初一念之本心也。若夫失卻童心，便失卻真心；失卻真心，便失卻真人。人而非真，全不復有初矣。童子者，人之初也；童心者，心之初也。

Tongxin 童心 is inborn that is why it is most pure and most true. It regulates human conscience nature and reflects each person's individuality. Therefore, we should consider *Tongxin* as the norm for for Right and Wrong. Besides, the hexagram *Meng* 蒙 (䷃) in *Jiuzheng Yiyin*, also manifests this notion of the 'child's heart-mind''. First, Li Zhi says that: "*Meng* refers to the upright nature of human beings; cultivate *Meng* and you cultivate uprightness [蒙，乃人之正性；養蒙，即所以養正]."[30] Second, he continued to cite the words of Wang Ji 王畿 (1498-1583): "Pure and non-germinated it is called *Meng*, and *Meng* is the base of the sages [夫純一未發謂之蒙，蒙者，聖之基也]."[31] Third, he also cited Mencius 孟子 (372 BC-289 BC), "the great man is he who does not lose his child's heart-mind; the child's heart-mind is *Meng* [大人者，不失其赤子之心者也。赤子之心，乃為蒙]."[32] Therefore, Li Zhi's *Tongxin* is the soul of the hexagram *Meng*. "The world has no fixed seasons and human beings have no fixed patterns [世無定時，人無定術]."[33] Li Zhi held that one should not cling to one standard. He should combine the *Tongxin* with the development of history, and following our own true heart-mind, respect the objectivity of the historical development.

In brief, to Li Zhi, the 'development-change view' and the 'indeterminism of Right and Wrong theory' were principles of history. On the one hand, they express the wisdom of the *Yijing* and, on the other hand, they also guided Li Zhi in his study of the *Yijing* and thus of history. On this basis, Li Zhi went on to discuss the relationship of the *Yijing* to history, focusing on the role and influence of the hexagrams to historical studies.

3. The relationship of the Yijing *to History*

Li Zhi concentrated on placing the study of the *Yijing* within the context of history, making his interpretations of the *Yijing* more convincing. At the same time, he also emphasized the function of the *Yijing* in his historical studies, thus making them more authoritative.

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[30] *Li Zhi Wenji* 李贄文集 2000, *Jiuzheng Yiyin* 九正易因 (First part 卷上), p. 103.
[31] *Li Zhi Wenji* 李贄文集 2000, *Jiuzheng Yiyin* 九正易因 (First part 卷上), p. 104.
[32] *Li Zhi Wenji* 李贄文集 2000, *Jiuzheng Yiyin* 九正易因 (First part 卷上), p. 105.
[33] Li Zhi 1975a, 5: 203.

3.1. Historical References: Xiong Guo 熊過 *and Yang Wanli* 楊萬裡

As mentioned above, Li Zhi's writings commonly combine the *Yijing* and history together. In fact, this method of using history to explain the Confucian Classics had been very popular during the Song dynasty. For instance, the *Contents Summary of the Complete Library of the Four Treasures* (*Siku Quanshu Zongmu Tiyao* 四庫全書總目提要), the massive Qing Dynasty imperial collection, mentioned precisely that the use of historical facts to explain the *Yijing* was an important research method during the Song Dynasty. The *Chengzhai Yizhuan* 誠齋易傳 (Chengzhai's Commentary on *Yijing*)[34] by Yang Wanli 楊萬裏 (1127-1206) and the *Yong Yi Xiangjie* 用易詳解 (Detailed explanations for the use of *Yijing*)[35] by Li Qi 李杞[36] are typical examples of this methodology. There are several reasons for this. First, the *Yijing* itself contains a lot of historical references and can withstand the test of historicity. For example, in the story *Jizi Mingyi* 箕子明夷, referred to in hexagram *Mingyi* 明夷: Ji Zi 箕子(also named Zi Xuyu 子胥餘) was a minister during the Shang Dynasty, the uncle of King Zhou 商紂王. His story first appeared in the *Shang Shu* 尚書 (*Book of Documents*). Another example is the story *Di Yi Guimei* (帝乙歸妹), referred to in hexagram *Guimei* 歸妹. It is about the reconciliation efforts between the Shang and the Zhou peoples. Di Yi 帝乙[37] consented that his sister be given in marriage to King Wen of Zhou 周文王. This story also appeared in *Shijing* 詩經 (*Book of Poetry*). Second, historical facts can bolster the accuracy of the interpretation of the text, or it can express the author's own point of view and enrich the interpretation. The third reason for this methodology is the fact this tangled relationship between the Classics and history had existed for a long time and, therefore, had become normal.

In the *Jiuzheng Yiyin*, Li Zhi cited many scholars who studied the *Yijing*. Among them were Xiong Guo 熊過 (1502-1573), the most cited (29 times), and Yang Wanli (cited 9 times), they both keen practitioners of the method of using history to (explain and) confirm the *Yijing*.

Xiong Guo and Li Zhi were contemporaries. He was twenty-five years older than Li Zhi. Xiong was one of the "Four Greats of Western Sichuan (西蜀

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[34] *Jingyin Wenyuange Siku Quanshu* Mulu 景印文淵閣四庫全書目錄 (*The Catalogue Summary of Siku Quanshu in Wenyuange*), Jingbu 經部 (Section of the Confucian Classics), 8: 513.

[35] *Jingyin Wenyuange Siku Quanshu* Mulu 景印文淵閣四庫全書目錄 (*The Catalogue Summary of Siku Quanshu in Wenyuange*), Jingbu 經部 (Section of the Confucian Classics), 13: 349.

[36] Li Qi 李杞, also named Li Zicai (birth and death unknown) was a hermit in South-Song Dynasty and he was very proficient in *Yijing*.

[37] Di Yi 帝乙, also named Zi Xian 子羨, is the king of late Shang Dynasty and the father of the last king of Shang Dynasty, King Zhou 商紂王.

四大家)" and one of the "Eight Talents of the Jiajing Period (嘉靖八才子)". Li Zhi paid great attention to Xiong Guo principally because of the latter's methodology, he employed history at the service of expounding the Confucian Classics. He was a direct heir to the tradition of Han Learning which emphasized historical facts. On the *Yijing*, Xiong Guo authored a seven-volume collection, *Zhouyi Xiangzhi Juelu* 周易象旨決錄 (The Final Version of the Gist of Images in *Yijing*).[38] In the foreword, he expressed the reasons of his project, as many Ming Dynasty commentators had used Daoist and Buddhist concepts to explain the *Yijing,* which made it even more mysterious and difficult to understand. He was puzzled in particular by the work of Cai Qing 蔡清 (1453-1508) and wanted to correct it. Xiong Guo's work on the *Yijing* was very serious and careful, including the use of historical materials; in the content and definition of the hexagrams; as well as in explaining the symbology and numerology of *Yixue* 易學.

As mentioned earlier, Li Zhi referred a lot to Xiong Guo's work on the *Yijing*. In *Jiuzheng Yiyin,* this is reflected in the following aspects: first, in citing many of the same classical texts. For example, the *Shijing* 詩經 (*Book of Poetry*) in hexagram *Pi* 否 (䷋), the *Zhouli* 周禮 (*Rites of Zhou*) in hexagram *Shike* 噬嗑 (䷔), the *Erya* 爾雅 (*Approaching Elegance*) in hexagram *Lin* 臨 (䷒), the *Shuowen Jiezi* 說文解字 (*Explaining and Analyzing Characters*) in hexagram *Qian* 謙 (䷎), the *Qimin Yaoshu* 齊民要術 (*Essential Techniques for the Common People*) in hexagram *Daguo* 大過 (䷛), and so on. Second, Li Zhi also cited many of the same Confucian figures who also did research on the *Yijing* such as Zi Xia 子夏 (507 BC-420 BC), Zheng Xuan 鄭玄 (127-200), Yu Fan 虞翻 (164-233), Wang Su 王肅 (195-256), Shen Kuo 沈括 (1031-1095), and others. Third, Li Zhi also cited many of the same historical accounts. For example, in hexagram *Yu* 豫 (䷏), he cited the story of Liu Shan 劉禪 (207-271) to show the waywardness of the king in the *yin* fifth line (or 6-5th line),[39] and the story of Wang Mang 王莽 (45 BC-23 AD) and Sima Yi 司馬懿 (179-251) to show in the *yang* fourth line (or 9-4th line) the toughness of the ministers.[40] From these examples, one can see the great influence of Xiong Guo on Li Zhi's thought.

Aside from Xiong Guo, Li Zhi likewise cited many of Yang Wanli's

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[38] *Jingyin Wenyuange Siku Quanshu* Mulu 景印文淵閣四庫全書目錄 (*The Catalogue Summary of Siku Quanshu in Wenyuange*), Jing Bu 經部 (Section of the Confucian Classics), 25: 421.

[39] In the *Book of Changes*, *Tuan* (彖) ordinarily refers to the general description of the different hexagrams. Every hexagram has six lines called *yao* 爻 which are either solid (*yang*) or broken (*yin*) and which are traditionally counted from bottom up. Numerologically, *yang* (like the pure *yang* hexagram *Qian* with six solid lines) is symbolized by the number 9, and *yin* (like the pure *yin* hexagram *Kun* with six broken lines) is symbolized by the number 6.

[40] *Li Zhi Wenji* 李贄文集 2000, *Jiuzheng Yiyin* 九正易因 (First part 卷上), p. 111.

statements. Yang Wanli was also one of the representative practitioners of the method of using historical materials to prove the *Yijing*. In *Jiuzheng Yiyin,* Li Zhi referred to Yang's remarks on the following nine hexagrams, *Zhun* 屯 (䷂), *Tai* 泰 (䷊), *Dayou* 大有 (䷍), *Fu* 複 (䷗), *Dazhuang* 大壯 (䷡), *Jin* 晉 (䷢), *Jiaren* 家人 (䷤), *Xun* 巽 (䷸), and *Jiji* 既濟 (䷾). Some references were used to define concepts, such as "if you hesitate to act until the conditions are ripe, this is called *Jilu*; if you act rashly with no result, this is called *Wuyu* [妄意濟屯之功，所謂即鹿。妄動而無無上應，所謂無虞]."[41] Other references were used to emphasize the self, such as "believe their own inclination, according my integrity to inspire your integrity [信以發志，以我之誠信發彼之誠信也]."[42] Some references were to be used to highlight *Rouzhong* 柔中 (*The Soft Mean*). He said: "With the virtue of meekness, one meets the civilized lord [以柔順之德逢文明之君]."[43] In the hexagram *Jiaren* 家人 (䷤), Li Zhi cited Yang Wanli's historical references, using the stories of King Wen of Zhou 周文王 (1152 BC-1056 BC) to illustrate what the *yang* fifth line (or 9-5th line) 九五爻 means. "King Wen as lord, Tai Si as concubine, Wang Ji as father, Tai Ren as mother, Wu Wang as son, and Yi Jiang as wife. They differ from each other in rank, but they love each other [以文王為君，乙太姒為妃，以王季為父，乙太任為母，以武王為子，以邑薑為婦，其不交相愛乎]."[44] Whether it is family or country, it leads to prosperity and harmony if they love each other. Obviously, by making use of the results of Yang Wanli's work, Li Zhi had validated Yang's contributions to *Yixue*.

3.2. The "Six Classics are all histories" 六經皆史

Having consulted and learned from the works of other scholars, Li Zhi later developed a method of using history to investigate the *Yijing* which was characteristically his own. In his main historical work *Cangshu* 藏書 (*A Book to Hide*), Li Zhi mentioned a lot of people who studied the *Yijing* and he grouped them under the sub-category *Yijing* (*Book of Changes*) which he ranked first under the category *Jingxue* 經學 (*Confucian Classics*). Among them were Tian He 田何 (birth and death unknown), Jing Fang 京房 (78-37 BC), Wang Bi 王弼 (226-249), Cheng Yi 程頤 (1033-1107), and Zhang Zai 張載 (1020-1077). Besides providing general introductions to these scholar-specialists on the *Yijing,* he also introduced scholars who were not only proficient in history

[41] *Li Zhi Wenji* 李贄文集 2000, *Jiuzheng Yiyin* 九正易因 (First part 卷上), p. 102.
[42] *Li Zhi Wenji* 李贄文集 2000, *Jiuzheng Yiyin* 九正易因 (First part 卷上), p. 128.
[43] *Li Zhi Wenji* 李贄文集 2000, *Jiuzheng Yiyin* 九正易因 (Second part 卷下), p. 184.
[44] *Li Zhi Wenji* 李贄文集 2000, *Jiuzheng Yiyin* 九正易因 (Second part 卷下), p. 190.

but also accomplished in the study of the *Yijing*. Among them, Wei Xiang 魏相 (?-59 BC), a prime minister during the Western Han Dynasty, "understood the *Yijing* very well, developed a systematic method of teaching, and was fond of reading Han Dynasty stories and memorials [相明《易經》有師法，好觀漢故事及便宜章奏]."[45] Ma Shu 馬樞 (522-581) of the Liang Dynasty, known for his "vast knowledge of the Classics and history, and for his expertise in Buddhist scriptures and the *Yijing* [博極經史，尤善佛經、《周易》]."[46] Wang Ji 王績 (ca. 590-644), a poet in early Tang Dynasty, "seldom read anything beyond his bedside collection of the *Yijing,* the *Daodejing,* and the *Zhuangzi* [以《周易》、《老子》、《莊子》置床頭，他書罕讀也]."[47] Seng Yixing 僧一行 (683-727), a Tang Dynasty astronomer who was "very well-read in the Classics and history, and particularly well-versed in the study of the calendar and the theories of Yin-Yang and Five Elements [博覽經史，尤精曆象陰陽五行之學]."[48] and Chen Tuan 陳摶 (871-989), the famous Daoist scholar and hermit of the Five Dynasties and early Song Dynasty period, said to be "very conversant with the Classics, a master of *Yixue*, had the ability to judge people and things and to distinguish between saints and mortals [先生經史浩博，尤精《易》學，鑒人察物，辨別聖凡]."[49]

In addition, his other work, the *Xu Cangshu* 續藏書 (*An Addendum to A Book to Hide*), also mentioned historical figures of similar background, e.g. Wang Shenzhong 王慎中 (1509-1559), a Ming Dynasty writer and official who "mastered the imperial examination, read widely on works of the ancients, and taught the *Book of Changes* [盡通舉子業 且多讀古人書。時授學《易》時中]."[50] Huang Zicheng 黃子澄 (1350-1402), an official in the early Ming Dynasty who "studied the *Yijing* from Ouyang Zhen, the *Book of Documents* from Zhou Yuxue, and the *Spring and Autumn Annals* from Liang Yin [少受《易》歐陽貞，《書》周與學，《春秋》梁寅]."[51]and so on. Furthermore, in the *Xu Cangshu* 續藏書 (*An Addendum to A Book to Hide*), Li Zhi often also used the hexagrams to explain history just as he did in *Jiuzheng Yiyin*. The most famous example of this was his essay *Shige Xuzhu* 史閣敘述 (*Narrative of Historical Cabinet*)[52] where he discussed the Way of the Sovereign and Minister by referring to the *yang* sixth line (9-6th line) of the hexagram *Gu* 蠱 (䷑) to confirm the sayings of Confucius: "It is difficult to be a emperor and it is also not easy to be a minister

[45] *Li Zhi Wenji* 李贄文集 2000, *Cang Shu* 藏書, 13: 257.
[46] *Li Zhi Wenji* 李贄文集 2000, *Cang Shu* 藏書, 67: 1273.
[47] *Li Zhi Wenji* 李贄文集 2000, *Cang Shu* 藏書, 42: 815.
[48] *Ibid*.
[49] *Li Zhi Wenji* 李贄文集 2000, *Cang Shu* 藏書, 67: 1279.
[50] *Li Zhi Wenji* 李贄文集 2000, *Xu Cangshu* 續藏書, 26: 579.
[51] *Li Zhi Wenji* 李贄文集 2000, *Xu Cangshu* 續藏書, 5: 97.
[52] *Li Zhi Wenji* 李贄文集 2000, *Xu Cangshu* 續藏書, 10: 179.

[為君難，為臣不易].”[53] As Li Zhi pointed out, the inner trigram (the lower three lines) of Gu 蠱 (䷑) is wind and its outer trigram (the upper three lines) is mountain, which means that when the wind meets the mountain, it is trapped by the mountain. In other words, the circumstances facing this hexagram are very difficult if someone’s concern is “not to serve kings and princes but rather to pursue lofty goals [不事王侯，高尚其事].”[54] But Li Zhi went on to take the Ming Emperor Taizu as an example, if he could be diligent and serious in handling state affairs, he would be able to overcome the difficulties. As examples of how to be a minister, he cited the cases of Liu Zhongxuan 劉忠宣 (also named Liu Daxia 刘大夏, 1436-1516)’s loyalty and Li Wenzheng (also named Li Dongyang 李东阳,1447-1516) 李文正 morality, calling them irreplaceable. However, in the case of Yang Xindu 楊新都 (also named Yang Shen 杨慎,1488-1559) who served the court but was not very obedient to the emperor, very clever but unwilling to learn, he was most unfortunate.[55]

Regarding Li Zhi’s views on the Confucian Classics, it is possible to make the following conclusions. First, insofar as he was concerned, the Confucian Classics had been whitewashed and distorted by *Lixue* 理學 scholars of the Song and Ming Dynasties and had already lost their original meaning. They had become “a pretext for the learning of the Way and a hotbed for the hypocrite [道學之口實，假人之淵藪].”[56] Second, Li Zhi believed that the Classics and the other historical works were of the same value. There was nothing sacred about the Classics. They were all subject to historical scrutiny and could be used like any ordinary book. While rejecting the Neo-Confucian ideas of the Cheng-Zhu School of *Lixue* (程朱理學), Li Zhi readily adopted the view of Wang Yangming 王陽明 (1472-1529), who stated that “the Five Classics are all histories (五經皆史)”,[57] by also declaring that “the Six Classics are all histories (六經皆史)”.[58] In Li Zhi’s view, “the Classics and history mirror each other (經史相為表裡)”.[59]

> The Classics and histories are one and the same thing. If a history is not of the same value as the Classics, then it is a mere salacious story, how can it provide lessons for the people? If the Classics are not histories, then they are mere empty words, how can they reveal the facts? Therefore the *Spring and Autumn Annals* is the history of the Spring and Autumn Period. The *Book of Poetry* and the *Book of Documents* are histories of ancient suzerains. As to the *Yijing*, it

[53] Yang Bojun, 1980, p. 138.
[54] *Li Zhi Wenji* 李贄文集 2000, *Xu Cangshu* 續藏書, 10: 179.
[55] *Li Zhi Wenji* 李贄文集 2000, *Xu Cangshu* 續藏書, 10: 180.
[56] Li Zhi 1975a, 3: 91.
[57] *Wang Yangming Quanji* 王陽明全集 1992, 1: 10.
[58] Li Zhi 1975a, 5: 214.
[59] Li Zhi 1975a, 5: 214.

> reveals how the Classics and histories came into being. The Dao changes constantly and cannot be pinned down. That is why we say the Six Classics are all histories.
> 經史一物也。史而不經, 則為穢史, 何以垂戒鑒乎？經而不史, 則為說白話矣, 何以彰事實乎？故《春秋》一經, 春秋一時之史也。《詩經》、《書經》，二帝三王以來之史也。而《易經》則又示人以經之所自出，史之所從來，為道屢遷， 變易匪常， 不可以一定執也。故謂六經皆史可也。[60]

So, it was history which decided the meaning and style of the Classics. The Classics were the main thread of history. In Li Zhi's *Chutan Ji* 初潭集, he cited the example of the Daoist Liu Daoguang 劉道光 who diligently studied *Xuanxue* 玄學 (Mysterious Learning) and the *Yijing* but did not like to read history books. Liu Daoguang believed that history books were all exaggerated. Li Zhi asked: "Who knows that history is nothing but the *Yijing*? [誰知史即《易》也？]."[61] In this passage, Li Zhi was criticizing Liu for not knowing that history is nothing but the *Yijing*. By equating the two, he differed significantly from the Neo-Confucians who venerated the Classics as superior to history. In the eyes of the Neo-Confucians, "the Classics are fine while history is coarse, and the Classics are orderly (orthodox) while history is disorderly (heterodox) [經精而史粗也, 經正而史雜也]."[62]

3.3 The relationship between the hexagram of the Yijing *and history*

Because of his understanding on the *Yijing* provided the textual medium for the reproduction of history, and history provided the *Yijing* the mirror to the past, so in the *Jiuzheng Yiyin*, Li Zhi applied his method of citing history for certain hexagrams,[63] in order to make his explanation more persuasive, or to illustrate a

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[60] Li Zhi 1975a, 5: 217.
[61] Li Zhi 1974, 7: 98.
[62] Zhao Yi 2008, 1.
[63] Li Zhi cited historical personages in 27 hexagrams, namely: Zhun 屯 (King Yue of Qian 錢越王; Tang Dynasty Emperor Gaozu 唐高祖); Shi 師 (Yu Chaoen 魚朝恩; Li Guangbi 李光弼; Guo Ziyi 郭子儀); Lü 履 (Zhou Dynasty King Wen 周文王); Pi 否 (Western Han Emperor Xiaoyuan 西漢孝元帝; Eastern Han Emperor Xiaozhang 東漢孝章帝); Tongren 同人 (Yao 堯, Shun 舜, Confucius 孔子, Yan Yuan 顏淵, King Wen of Zhou 周文王); Dayou 大有 (Duke Tai of Qi 齊太公; Fan Li 範蠡; Zhang Liang 張良); Qian 謙 (Tai Bo 泰伯, King Wen of Zhou 周文王, Confucius 孔子); Yu 豫 (Wang Mang 王莽; Sima Yi 司馬懿; Liu Shan 劉禪); Sui 隨 (King Wen of Zhou 周文王, Confucius 孔子); Lin 臨 (Zhou Dynasty King Wen 周文王); Shike 噬嗑 (Confucius 孔子); Bi 賁 (Confucius 孔子); Yi 頤 (Qi, Huang 齊、黃之輩); Kan 坎 (King Wen of Zhou 周文王; Chen Shu 陳束; Ouyang Che 歐陽澈; Li Gu 李固; Chen Fan 陳蕃); Li 離 (Miao Ming, Ge Bo 苗民、葛伯); Zhi 遯 (Kou Zhun 寇准; Ding Wei 丁謂; Zhang Jun 張浚; Qin hui and his two sons 秦檜及二子; Li Linfu 李林甫; Li Shizhi 李適

personal point of view. The figures cited come from different periods of Chinese history, from as early as the Xia, Shang, and Zhou Dynasties to the Ming Dynasty, and represent a wide cross-section of traditional feudal society. Below is the table of the hexagrams to which Li Zhi attached historical references.

Identity	**Representative Historical Figures**	**Hexagrams which involved historical figures**
Sages 聖人	Yao 堯	*Tongren* 同人 (䷌) *Huan* 渙 (䷺)
	Shun 舜	*Tongren* 同人 (䷌) *Huan* 渙 (䷺)
	Yu 禹	*Huan* 渙 (䷺)
	King Wen of Zhou 周文王	*Lü* 履 (䷉) *Tongren* 同人 (䷌) *Qian* 謙 (䷎) *Sui* 隨 (䷐) *Lin* 臨 (䷒) *Kan* 坎 (䷜) *Jin* 晉 (䷢) *Mingyi* 明夷 (䷣) *Jiaren* 家人 (䷤)
	Confucius 孔子	*Tongren* 同人 (䷌) *Qian* 謙 (䷎) *Sui* 隨 (䷐) Shike 噬嗑 (䷔) *Bi* 賁 (䷕) *Mingyi* 明夷 (䷣) *Jiaren* 家人 (䷤)

之; Di Renjie 狄仁傑; Feng Changle 馮長樂; Tao Hongjing 陶弘景; Chen Tuan 陳摶; Li Mi 李泌; Liu Bingzhong 劉秉忠; Yao Guangxiao 姚廣孝); Dazhuang 大壯 (Han Dynasty Emperor Wen 漢文帝; Li Guang 李廣; Jia Sheng 賈生); Jin 晉 (Zhou Dynasty King Wen 周文王; Lu Jia 陸賈); Mingyi 明夷 (Shang Dynasty King Zhou 商紂王; Confucius 孔子; Zhou Dynasty King Wen 周文王; Jizi 箕子); Jiaren 家人 (Yao 堯, Shun 舜, King Wen of Zhou 周文王, Confucius 孔子); Kui 睽 (Song Dynasty Emperor Taizu 宋太祖; Zhao Pu 趙普); Jie 解 (Han Dynasty Emperor Wen 漢文帝); Guimei 歸妹 (Sister of Diyi 帝乙之妹); Huan 渙 (Yao 堯, Shun 舜, Yu 禹); Jie 節 (Confucius 孔子); Xiaoguo 小過 (Chen Fan 陳蕃; Dou Wuran 竇武然; Confucius 孔子, Cheng Tian 乘田, lu Sikou 魯司寇); Weiji 未濟 (Tang Dynasty Emperor Xuanzong 唐玄宗).

			Jie 節 (䷻) *Xiaogu* 小過 (䷽)
	Yan Yuan 顏淵		*Tongren* 同人 (䷌)
Kings and Emperors 君	Benevolent ruler 明君	Song Dynasty of Emperor Taizu 宋太祖	*Kui* 睽 (䷥)
		Emperor Wen of Han 漢文帝	*Dazhuang* 大壯 (䷡) *Jie* 解 (䷧)
	Tyrant 暴君	King Zhou of Shang 商紂王	*Mingyi* 明夷 (䷣)
	Fatuous ruler 昏君	Liu Shan 劉禪	*Yu* 豫 (䷏)
Ministers 臣	Loyalists 忠臣	Li Guang 李廣	*Dazhuang* 大壯 (䷡)
		Li Guangbi 李光弼	*Shi* 師 (䷆)
		Guo Ziyi 郭子儀	*Shi* 師 (䷆)
	Traitors 奸臣	Qin Hui 秦檜	*Zhi* 遯 (䷠)
		Yu Chaoen 魚朝恩	*Shi* 師 (䷆)
	Others 其它 — Counselors 謀士	Zhang Liang 張良	*Dayou* 大有 (䷍)
	Politicians 政治理論家	Jia Sheng 賈生	*Dazhuang* 大壯 (䷡)
	Talents of eloquence 辯才	Lu Jia 陸賈	*Jin* 晉 (䷢)
	Wise scholars 賢士	Di Renjie 狄仁傑	*Zhi* 遯 (䷠)
	Merchants 商人	Fan Li 範蠡	*Dayou* 大有 (䷍)

The above table with the hexagrams to which Li Zhi provided historical references shows that Li Zhi's study focused on social and political history, in particular on the political and moral aspects of the relationship between rulers

and ministers, both civilian and military.[64] In the field of politics, he had high praise for rulers who were wise and enlightened and satirized those who were tyrannical and idiotic. On the part of ministers, he respected loyalty and despised duplicity. In all, he attempted to derive lessons from the actual events and experiences of the past. For Li Zhi, the relationship between ruler and minister was of great importance. As to how the two can get along, Li Zhi thought that there should be no hierarchy distinction. As an example, he cited the Song Emperor Taizu 宋太祖 (who paid a visit one night to his prime minister Zhao Pu 趙普) in the *yin* fifth (6-5th) line 六五爻 of the hexagram *Kui* 睽 (䷥), "as Song Emperor Taizu paid a visit one night to his prime minister Zhao Pu's house to enjoy hot wine and coal grilled meat together with Zhao Pu and his wife. So they talked very happy and gained a lot [若宋太祖雪夜幸普家，然普妻行，酒熾炭燒肉，所謂遇主於巷，而厥宗噬膚者非邪]."[65] That Taizu, as emperor, could visit his prime minister at night and discuss state affairs, and that Zhao Pu, as minister, could offer sincere suggestions, reflected a close relationship that can be mutually beneficial. Also, in the hexagram *Dazhuang* 大壯 (䷡), Li Zhi cited the relationship between the Han Emperor Wen 漢文帝 and two of his ministers, the general Li Guang 李廣 and Jia Yi 賈誼 to illustrate how rulers and ministers should behave toward each other. "Even if the Han Emperor Wen was perfect, he did not reward Li Guang a noble title, and allowed Jia Sheng to die in disappointment. He did not value talent enough [若漢文之君，非不美矣，卒使李廣不得封侯，賈生抱恨以死，何其太不惜才也]."[66] Kingship is judged by (the degree of) its virtuousness. Kings/emperors, therefore, should not abuse their power. The quality of the relationship between sovereign and minister is an important manifestation of the virtuousness of the King/Emperor.

Aside from the wise rulers and loyal ministers of past dynasties, Li Zhi also mentioned certain sages, that is, both legendary and historical figures considered to be paragons of wisdom and virtue. The three most cited were as follows: first, King Wen of Zhou, then Confucius, and finally Yao and Shun (often cited as a pair), especially in the hexagrams of *Tongren* 同人 (䷌), *Huan* 渙 (䷺), and *Jiaren* 家人 (䷤). To Li Zhi, the *Yijing* depends on history to provide the time and space for realizing the virtues, and to the sages to serve as paragons of the virtues that lead to moral transformation. There were also religious and spiritual figures, such as the Daoists Tao Hongjing 陶弘景 (456-536) and Chen Tuan 陳摶 (871-989) in the hexagram *Zhi* 遯 (䷠), as well as the eminent Buddhist monk Yao Guangxiao 姚廣孝 (1335－1418). In addition to his familiarity with the figures just mentioned above, Li Zhi also

[64] Ren Guanwen 2000, p. 17.
[65] *Li Zhi Wenji* 李贄文集 2000, *Jiuzheng Yiyin* 九正易因 (Second part 卷下), p. 192.
[66] *Li Zhi Wenji* 李贄文集 2000, *Jiuzheng Yiyin* 九正易因 (Second part 卷下), p. 180.

demonstrated familiarity with classical literary and historical works. For example, he cited *Hunli* 昏禮 (Wedding etiquette) from the *Zhouli* 周禮 (*Rites of Zhou*) in the hexagram *Shike* 噬嗑 (䷔). And regarding the hexagram *Daxu* 大畜 (䷙), Li Zhi remarked that: "Truly, the time of *Daxu* is the time of Yao and Shun [誠哉，大畜之時，其當唐虞之際與]!"[67] In other words, he regarded the hexagram *Daxu* as representing the age of the legendary sages when sage-kings ruled and virtue reigned. Li Zhi cherished a genuine desire to benefit the world and society. He cited historical events to show real problems, and he did so in ways that were both enlightening and thought-provoking.

4. The influence of the Yijing *in historical thought*

4.1. The Yijing *and the history of the Way* (Dao 道)

In the *Yijing*, each hexagram contains three key elements: Heaven, Earth, and Humanity, called collectively as the "Three Poles of the Dao (三極之道)"or the "Three Powers of the Dao (三才之道)". The *Yijing* is comprehensive and all-encompassing. There was the Dao of Heaven, the Dao of Humanity, and the Dao of Earth. Heaven was above, Earth was below, and in between, Humanity came into being. Humanity was divided into male and female who together generated descendants. Li Zhi attached great importance to the Three Powers of the Dao. His notion of the Dao was rather novel. The Dao between Heaven and Earth possessed the sense that allowed for human history and personal destiny to intersect and blend.

First of all, Li Zhi defined the Dao as "that which by following human nature extends by itself and is one with the world order, that is called the Dao [夫以率性之真，推而廣之，與天下為公，乃謂之道]."[68] The Dao means following human nature, and nature does not refer only to that of the natural world but also to that which belongs to all human beings. Therefore, Dao is the Dao of nature, the Dao of history.

Secondly, Li Zhi also proposed the following view: "Humanity (in the collective sense of 'human beings') is the Dao and the Dao is humanity; outside humanity, there is no Dao, and outside the Dao, there is also no humanity [人即道，道即人也，人外無道，而道外亦無人]."[69] Humanity is the creative subject of history, and the Dao is its creative object. Li Zhi thus put together the subject and the object of history. In his view, the Dao contains two meanings: the first is

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[67] *Li Zhi Wenji* 李贄文集 2000, *Jiuzheng Yiyin* 九正易因 (First part 卷上), p. 59.
[68] Li Zhi 1975a, 1: 17.
[69] Li Zhi 1975a, 1: 15.

that the Dao is inseparable from humanity and humanity from the Dao, or that the Dao of history is inseparable from humanity; the second is that "humanity is the Dao and the Dao is humanity [人即道，道即人]."[70] This means that men in history themselves are the Dao of history.

In the *Jiuzheng Yiyin*, Li Zhi discussed the Dao from the point of view of social history. For example, Li Zhi defined the hexagram *Qian* 乾 (䷀) as the Dao of self-directed action (自用之道) and that of *Kun* 坤 (䷁) as the Dao of other-directed action (人用之卦). We can use the hexagram *Qian* 乾 (䷀) to regulate our own behaviour and the hexagram *Kun* 坤 (䷁) to deal with issues of interpersonal relationships. The Dao within humanity was formed in the process of the development of human society. For this reason, Li Zhi paid great attention to the real world and emphasized the Dao of government. Knowledge should be applied, words should be put into action in the real world, and books should also be useful in real life. Referring to his work, he commented that: "This book of mine is a book for governing and promoting peace for all ages. It can teach students knowledge that can be useful for the imperial examination. In saying this, I am not exaggerating [蓋我此書，乃萬世治平之書，經筵當以進讀，科場當以進士，非漫然也]."[71]

Li Zhi talked repeatedly about practicality (現實性). For example, he said that: "Learning needs to be somewhat true and useful, otherwise how terrible it would be if it remains just an empty talk [學問須要有些真實受用，不然, 只在道理上纏縛, 如何了得]."[72] "governance value timeliness, knowledge must be of relevance to public affairs [治貴適時，學必經世]."[73] And in Li Zhi's view, it is not only secular mortals who pay attention to practical matters, "sages were pragmatic beings; they were full of practical knowledge [聖人務本，惟知務實其腹而已]."[74]

In short, Li Zhi favored a strategy of practicality and advocated "practical knowledge" (*Shixue* 實學), "genuine speech" (*Shishuo* 實說), "useful action" (*Shixing* 實行), effective politics (*Shizheng* 實政), and so on, that reflect and respond to the true nature of things.

4.2 The Yijing *on equality*

In Li Zhi's eyes, human beings are by nature equal. This is because the Dao of Heaven, the Dao of Humanity, and the Dao of Earth were all formed during the

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[70] *Li Zhi Wenji* 李贄文集 2000, *Jiuzheng Yiyin* 九正易因 (Second part 卷下), p. 372.
[71] Li Zhi 1975b, 1: 45.
[72] *Li Zhi Wenji* 李贄文集 2000, *Jiuzheng Yiyin* 九正易因 (Second part 卷下), p. 332.
[73] *Li Zhi Wenji* 李贄文集 2000, *Cang Shu* 藏書, 35: 689.
[74] *Li Zhi Wenji* 李贄文集 2000, *Laozi Jie* 老子解 (First part 卷上), p. 6.

process of history's unfolding. For this reason, Li Zhi emphasized the principle of equality in the Dao, particularly in the Dao of Humanity. He believed, first of all, that there is no difference between sages and ordinary mortals. Li Zhi thought that people should live more freely and not overestimate the example of the sages. "Yao-Shun and ordinary people are the same; sages and mortals are one and the same human beings [堯舜與塗人一，聖人與凡人一]."[75] Here, Li Zhi stressed mainly what is characteristic of human nature. Respect for virtue is a common human behavior. That is why one can say that sages are the same as mortals. Rejecting the distinction between sages and mortals, he highlighted their equality (based on their shared human nature). Therefore, in the hexagram *Qian* 乾 (䷀) where he discussed the relationship between commoners and kings, if one wishes to see the sage, consider that virtue, compared to political status, is relatively more important. "If a commoner possesses kingly virtue, it will be easy to see his demeanor of great man. But if a king is without virtue, who would pay homage to him, even if he were seated on high [使庶人有君德，亦自然為利見之大人，使上焉者而無德, 則雖位居九五，其利誰見之哉]?"[76] In Li Zhi's time, society was characterized by well-defined and well-entrenched hierarchy distinctions. To this, he brought the idea of equality for everyone who served not only as a warning to the people of his time, but also as a contribution to the process of enlightenment of future generations.

Secondly, Li Zhi advocated equality between agriculture and commerce. In Chinese traditional culture, there had been a persistent view which favored agriculture over commerce and considered merchants as socially inferior to peasants (重農抑商). However, by the late Ming Dynasty, as the commercial economy in the coastal areas of China's southeastern region further developed, China experienced the beginnings of modern capitalism. Contrary to the traditional view, Li Zhi had a high regard for merchants. One reason is that he was from the southeastern coastal city of Quanzhou 泉州 (in today's Fujian Province), one of the places in Ming times where capitalism first developed and where the social status of the merchant class rose significantly as a result. Another reason is that six generations of Li Zhi's ancestors were all merchants who had travelled and traded throughout Southeast Asia as well as West Asia. One of them, Lin Nu 林鴞, "a sixth generation ancestor and extremely wealthy trader, had travelled as far as the Persian Gulf [六世祖林鴞是泉州的钜賈，以貿易往來於波斯灣]."[77] As far as he could remember, Li Zhi always had a favorable impression of merchants. He defended them and praised their commercial activities: "carrying their riches, they travelled through storms, suffered humiliations from officials, and meekly submitted to insults by tax authorities. Working very hard, they put more but get less [挾數萬之貲，經風濤

[75] *Li Zhi Wenji* 李贄文集 2000, *Jiuzheng Yiyin* 九正易因 (Second part 卷下), p. 351.
[76] *Li Zhi Wenji* 李贄文集 2000, *Jiuzheng Yiyin* 九正易因 (Second part 卷下), p. 94.
[77] Huang Renyu 2006, p. 177.

之險，受辱於關吏，忍詬於市易，辛勤萬狀，所挾者重，所得者末]."[78] Li Zhi was very sympathetic to merchants. Comparing merchants to hypocrites, he wrote articles criticizing the latter saying: "they are inferior to the ordinary man in the marketplace who seeks truth from facts, trades and say only that he is a merchant, labors and say only that he is a laborer [反不如市井小夫，身履是事，口便說是事，作生意但說作生意，力田作者但說力田]."[79] In the hexagram *Lü* 履 (䷉), Li Zhi cited Cheng Yi's statement to prove that "farmers, artisans, merchants and traders are all hard-working and enjoy what they earn, so they all have a clear and definite purpose [農、工、商、賈, 勤其事而所享有限，故皆有定志]."[80] Obviously, for Li Zhi, farmers, artisans, merchants and traders stood on equal footing. Therefore, there existed different trades and people engaged in different occupations, each in pursuit of excellence. In the hexagram *Lü* 旅 (䷷), Li Zhi made use of Fang Shihua 方時化's talk to explain the inside (lower) three lines of the hexagram: "These three lines refer to merchants, scholars, and commoners. They are the hexagram *Lü*'s constants [內體三爻, 同為商賈、士、庶人之旅, 是旅之常]."[81] He classified merchants, scholars, commoners into one class. Li Zhi gave merchants a distinct social class, which shows his progressive thinking and his readiness to keep pace with the times.

Thirdly, it is worth mentioning that Li Zhi also paid attention to the status of men and women. He advocated equality between men and women since the male and female together originated humanity (human race), even all things. "Heaven and Earth is a couple [天地，一夫婦也]." "the couple is the origin of humanity [夫婦，人之始也]." [82] On the one hand, Li Zhi used the hexagram *Qian* 乾 (䷀) and the hexagram *Kun* 坤 (䷁) to promote the proposition "all things in the world were born of the Two [天下萬物皆生於兩]."[83] In the beginning, the 'Yin' *qi* 陰氣 and the 'Yang' *qi* 陽氣 came together (coupled), thus giving birth to humanity, both male and female. *Qian* 乾 (Heaven) was male while *Kun* 坤 (Earth) was female. On the other hand, Li Zhi cited living examples to demonstrate the universality of the "Two", pointing out that everything has two aspects. Since they correspond to each other, they cannot be separated from each other. The origin of all things can be traced back to the Two, such as "the binaries of good and evil, *yin* and *yang*, soft and hard, male and female, for only if there are two is a binary possible [善與惡對，猶陰與陽對，柔與剛對，男與女對。蓋有兩則有對]."[84] The Ming Dynasty monk

[78] Li Zhi 1975a, 2: 62.
[79] Li Zhi 1975a, 1: 30.
[80] *Li Zhi Wenji* 李贄文集 2000, *Jiuzheng Yiyin* 九正易因 (First part 卷上), p. 117.
[81] *Li Zhi Wenji* 李贄文集 2000, *Jiuzheng Yiyin* 九正易因 (Second part 卷下), p. 235.
[82] Li Zhi 1975a, 3: 90.
[83] Li Zhi 1975a, 3: 90.
[84] Li Zhi 1975a, 1: 22.

Zhu Hong 祩宏 said that: "Zhuo Wu (Li Zhi) thought that all things in the world began with the Yin and the Yang. He stated that the notion by some that the Supreme Ultimate (Taiji 太極) generated the *yin* and the *yang* is nonsense. According to the Commentary of the Classic of Changes, Heaven and Earth came first, then the ten thousand things. Heaven-Yin, Earth-Yang, Male-Yin, Female-Yang – this is the primordial origin at the very beginning. Nothing came before them [卓吾以世界人物俱肇始於陰陽，而乙太極生陰陽為妄語。蓋據易傳，有天地然後有萬物，而以天陰地陽、男陰女陽為最初之元本，更無先之者]."[85] On the basis of this Heaven-Earth, male-female binaries, Li Zhi determined the nature of things and regulated their proper place in the world. The hexagrams *Qian* and *Kun* determined the binary nature of things. Therefore, some are strong and some are submissive, some are male and some are female. In the hexagram *Jiaren* 家人 (䷤), it says: "The stability of the world depends on the family, and the order of the family begins with the male and the female [天下之定, 觀乎家人。家人之正，始於男女]."[86] Clearly, from the natural order to civilized society, everything came into being on the basis of the Yin-Yang, male-female binary relation and is of the same nature.

It should be mentioned that Li Zhi's studies on the *Yijing* were recognized by many scholars. Qian Qianyi 錢謙益 (1582-1664) once said: "Recent discussions on the *Yijing*, except for those by Li Zhuowu and Guan Dongweng, seem like popular explanations or the children's textbook *Tuyuan Cezi* [近世之談《易》者自李卓吾、管東翁之外，似未免為時文講章、兔園冊子]."[87]

To recapitulate, Li Zhi, in his *Jiuzheng Yiyin*, combined tradition and history and, following the methodology of citing history to elucidate the *Yijing* pioneered by Xiong Guo and Yang Wanli, did his own investigation of the *Yijing* and its relationship to history. He did so by using the hexagrams to record history, and in turn by using history to confirm the *Yijing*. By emphasizing the influence of the *Yijing* on historical thought, using the hexagrams to bring together the Dao of history, and highlighting ideas on equality, Li Zhi developed a theoretical framework characteristically his own.

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[85] Zhu Hong 1983, pp. 3958-3959.

[86] *Li Zhi Wenji* 李贄文集 2000, *Jiuzheng Yiyin* 九正易因 (Second part 卷下), p. 188.

[87] *Qian Muzai Quanji* 錢牧齋全集 2003, p. 1322. Here the famous scholar and poet Qian Qianyi 錢謙益 expresses his praise for the studies on the *Yijing* by Li Zhi and Weng Guandong, while criticizing at the same time the low quality of the commentaries produced during the Ming Dynasty. The *Tuyuan Cezi* 兔園冊子 was a textbook used by children in private schools during the period of the Tang and the Five Dynasties. Due to the superficiality of the content of this and similar books, scholars tended not to take them seriously or value them highly.

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WAS FUJIAN A FRONTIER?
STATE POLICIES AND SEAFARING CULTURE FROM THE HEYDAY OF PIRACY TO THE MING-QING WARS

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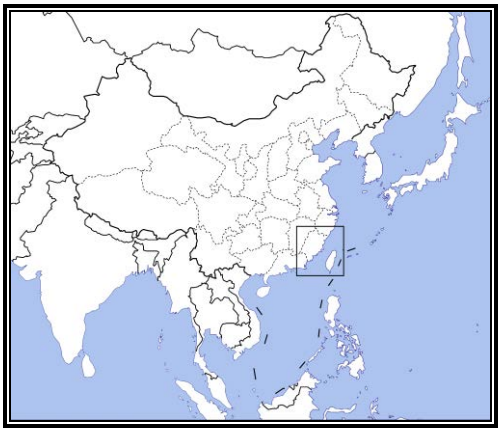
In Fujian, mountains and sea crisscross, and the folkways of her People make them bold and fierce by nature. I fear that some desperado may appear amongst them and stir up trouble.

Huang Shijian[1]



One exciting development in the China field in recent years has been the rise of frontier and borderland studies. Particularly fruitful have been the advances in our understanding of the Central Asian lands in relation to Chinese civilization, and how they impacted one another. From the works of scholars like Nicola Di Cosmo, James Millward, and Peter Perdue (to name a few), more and more we have come to appreciate the porous and dynamically shifting borders of Chinese

[1] Memorial of General Huang Shijian 黃仕簡 (*Qianlong* 35.1 [1770 Jan.-Feb.]), 651/24, in *Gongzhong Zhupi* 宫中朱批, *Nongmin Yundong* 农民运动, 67.

civilization.[2] Frontier studies have enriched the field such that—to borrow the title of Valerie Hansen's masterful textbook—China reveals itself as "The Open Empire" as much as it was the "Central Kingdom."[3]

This frontier wave has also rippled into the study of China's literally more "fluid" boundaries. Today, it is increasingly common to hear talk of "maritime China" and historic interactions along its "ocean frontier"—to say nothing of current controversies over the Diaoyu/Senkaku or South China Sea islands (a dicey arena where a historian might get popped with a bloody nose). The growth of maritime studies has helped bring China into global debates about early-modernity, commercialization, and transnational commodity flows in the Age of Sail. Ideas about China's legendary insularity (or Chinese exceptionalism) are yielding ground to a vital appreciation for the seafaring traditions of maritime provinces like Fujian and Guangdong and their role in shaping China's cultural and economic boundaries.[4] This is particularly true for one popular area in Ming-Qing studies: a gilded window of time from the Treasure Ship voyages (1405-1433) up to the eve of the Opium War.

As a lover of maritime history and Fujian province in particular, I am pleased by the synergies in studies of China's terrestrial frontiers and the littoral regions. The concept of a Chinese maritime frontier has a nice ring to it. However, I do wonder if "frontier" becomes a catch-all to explain everything, or a buzzword that becomes fuzzy because all manner of local differences are ascribed to it. What makes a frontier, anyway? Surely it is not merely a matter of geographical location; the fact of being located on the coast does not necessarily make a place frontier-like. It would be odd to think of coastal regions like Tianjin (about as close to the Beijing metropole as one can be) and the rich Yangzi Delta (imperial China's economic & literati heartland) as frontier outposts in the Ming-Qing context. Such places would certainly not be confused for Fujian province, which for much of early Chinese history was considered a malarial region beyond the pale of civilization, and which by Ming times was still reputed to be an unruly land of smugglers and deviants. Fujian's gazetteers were replete with local officials' unflattering portrayals of a territory that was *chong* 衝 (militarily strategic), *fan* 繁 (arduous to administer), *nan* 難 (fiscally difficult), and *pi* 疲 (laborious to litigate), even before it was overrun by pirates in the mid-16th century.

If Fujian was a maritime frontier, it was not due to geography alone, despite the words of the ancient text *Shan Hai Jing* that "Fujian is in the sea"

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[2] *Ancient China and Its Enemies* (Di Cosmo 2002); *Beyond the Pass* (Millward 1998); *China Marches West* (Perdue 2005).

[3] *The Open Empire: A History of China to 1600* (Hansen 2000).

[4] Xing Hang's forthcoming book, *China among the Waves: The Zheng Familial State in Maritime East Asia, 1623-1683*, is one such promising work on how maritime organizations challenged notions of "Chineseness" and political identities.

(*Min zai hai zhong*).[5] Rather, there seemed also to be a performative aspect to Fujian's frontier wildness, as Qing officer Huang Shijian noted in the epigraph above. As Huang saw it, the folkways (culture) of the place contributed to Fujian's volatile character as much as the hard terrain of mountains and sea—the inference being that Fujian was lawless because its people were naturally "bold and fierce." By pinning his finger on geography and a supposedly innate culture, however, Huang only caught part of the truth, for he neglected to mention the role of state policies in creating the violent conditions of Fujian's seafaring culture. I believe that culture consists broadly of two components: one is a set of shared beliefs or values; the other is shared knowledge and practice of doing things. Culture is not just what people believe they should do, but also what they do and how they do it. State policies could influence or compel locals to act or respond in certain ways; and historically, the Ming and Qing states both criminalized various seafaring activities, thus legislating into existence the categories of "outlaws" that peopled Fujian's supposedly outlaw frontier. A frontier is not a given natural feature: it is something that can be constructed through policies and human activity, as Arthur Waldron has shown in his history of the Great Wall of China.[6] State interventions and local resistance deserve careful study in a coastal province like Fujian much as they do for the Central Asian borderlands.

Was Fujian a frontier? In this paper, I would like to raise some preliminary questions by examining the bloody century from the heyday of piracy (c. 1550s) to the wars of the Ming-Qing transition (c. 1640s-1683), the most intense period of militarization in Fujian's history. It is my hope that the issues raised here can contribute to larger discussions about frontiers and how we can effectively study China's maritime regions, as well as understand how cultures of violence were generated and perpetuated on China's southeast coast in the early-modern period.

Two Cases and a Question

The word "frontier" most commonly conjurs an image of a vast, sparsely populated, and ethnically distinct region that lies on the margin of settled or developed territory. In the case of China's frontiers, one is immediately drawn to deserts and mountains: Mongol steppes, Uighur oases, Tibetan highlands. It seems almost ridiculous to apply the term to a densely populated and highly commercialized zone like Fujian: a proper province of China and home to a predominantly Han Chinese population. Ethnically and culturally, Fujian was hardly foreign—in fact, as Lucille Chia has shown, since the 11th century Fujian

[5] From this classical reference, scholar Yang Guozhen derived the title of his book on Fujianese maritime history: *Min zai hai zhong* 闽在海中 (Yang 1998, Preface).
[6] Waldron 1990, particularly Ch. 1-2, 4.

boasted a thriving printing industry,[7] and intellectual hubs like Putian city produced many elite *jinshi* and high Confucian scholar-officials in the Ming period—nor was Fujian geographically an island, being contiguous to rich, cultured provinces like Zhejiang and Guangdong.

On the other hand, cut by a mass of mountains and wooded hills that covered 90% of the land area, leaving only a narrow and crowded coastal plain, the province was bipolar. Coastal Fujianese, especially the Hokkien of the south, moved easily between multiple worlds, and they often seemed to have more in common with seafaring peoples in other countries than with the peoples of Fujian's mountainous interior. While producing Confucian scholars, they maintained violent traditions of clan warfare (*xiedou* 械鬥); while in theory celebrating the agrarian ideal, the landed gentry poured their resources into great trading ships, legal or not (mostly not). Fujianese religious life, too, was a heterodox agglomeration, from local worship of the virgin sea goddess Mazu to the deification of pirates and the varied historical influences of Muslims, Christians, Jews, and Manicheans who had called at Fujian's ports. Despite the strictly-worded Ming bans against private sea trade, roving seafarers defied state efforts to limit their mobility, and most coastal residents subsisted or profited from trades like fishing, salt-making, trading, and raiding. Shipwrights, sailors, usurers, and hoodlums were in ample supply, especially in times of the strictest prohibitions on maritime commerce. (There was no such thing as an unemployed pirate.)

The Fujianese were thus boundary-crossers, but the real boundary was not the sea itself, for the littoral peoples used the land-to-sea continuum in their daily lives as a habitat, a resource, and a supra-national economic and social space—it was not a barrier. The real and tangible barriers were those of state policy, for Fujian frustrated the authorities who tried to simplify and to rule it.[8] Fujian did share three major characteristics with the northern steppes or the northwestern deserts that made it frontier-like: (1) a highly mobile population with multiregional commercial and social ties with foreign lands; (2) heavy state attempts to restrict mobility or forcibly relocate a geographic or occupationally defined population; and (3) tariffs and trade barriers enforced by military garrisoning along the perimeter of state power projection. Forced relocation and mobility barriers by the Chinese state are most often encountered as expedients applied to lands distant from the core, as with the Ming building of the Great Wall in the 16th century, the Qing state's fixing of Mongol pasturelands, the Turfani deportation, and state-sponsored colonization of Xinjiang in the 18th century.[9] As we will see, the case of Fujian reveals that such policy-mandated barriers and coercive population movements could be applied even to a core

[7] Chia 2002.

[8] As Owen Lattimore (the patriarch of Chinese frontier studies) advised, we must carefully discriminate between the natural environment and the *social emphasis* applied to the environment in the course of history (Lattimore 1962 [1940], p. 25).

[9] Perdue 2009, pp. 21-45.

macroregion with a Han majority population. In practice, both the Han rulers of the Ming Dynasty and the Manchu rulers of the Qing Empire applied state techniques of nomad containment to divide and control coastal dwellers and pirates in the south.

At what times did the state treat Fujian like a frontier in these ways? Specifically, two eruptions of violence demand our attention: the pirate wars of 1540-1574 and the forced depopulation of the Chinese coast (1661-1683), two events that book-ended a century of bloodshed on Fujian's coast. Consider the following two cases of extreme violence at different times, but in the same place: a city called Putian in central coastal Fujian (circled in Map 1). Putian had been a refined intellectual and cultural center, famous for its academies, Confucian scholar-officials, and the sweetest lychee fruits in the land. Not so after these events.

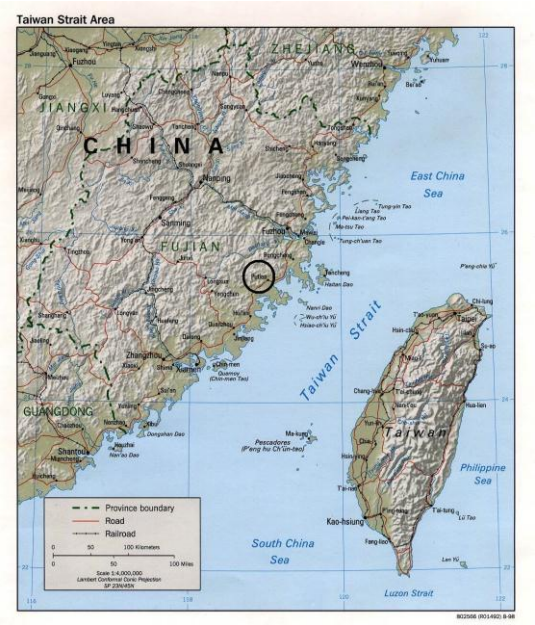

Fig. 1: Putian, map

Case 1: in 1562, 4000 pirates captured Putian. They robbed and butchered the inhabitants. The pirates stayed in the city for over sixty days, until the stench of rotting bodies forced them to leave. One local scholar donated money to bury more than 10,000 corpses.[10] Censor Lin Run wrote on the turmoil that engulfed the prefectures of Xinghua (Putian), Quanzhou, Zhangzhou: "Those who have died beneath the knife number 2 or 3 out of every 10; those who have been kidnapped for ransom number 4 or 5 out of every 10. […] In a family with

[10] Chang 1983, pp. 242, 247.

several dozen members, 7 or 8 out of every 10 are dead, and there are even cases of families being completely exterminated."[11] Survivors were stripped of what little means they had left. A witness, Shi Lishou of Putian, recalled: "Ransoms had to be paid to recover the living; money had to paid to recover the corpses of the dead. Bodies and skeletons lay scattered in the wilds; dwellings were burnt down."[12] Fujian was ravaged by both pirate armies and the counter-pirate armies that the Ming government sent to subjugate the coastal areas. Li Ying of Haicheng wrote these harrowing words on the pirate wars: "There has been such a slaughter in the towns that for a hundred *li* no hearth smoke can be seen […]. Men cry and ghosts weep; the sun and moon are dimmed; even the wild grasses are crying."[13]

Case 2: Putian was devastated again a century later. In 1662, Qing government troops torched Putian to burn people out of their homes. This was not a battle, as Putian had already been conquered by Qing forces; rather, it was a deliberate policy of scorched earth and coastal depopulation, aimed leaving nothing behind for the sealord Koxinga. Those who did not move within ten days were killed on the spot. Witness Yu Yang wrote that Qing troops terrorized the Putianese countryside: "The people were thrown into turmoil; following the official order to leave the boundary, their homes were razed—some folks were crushed to death [as their houses burned down]. It was truly a wasteland."[14] A witness recorded: "All over was heard the mournful call of wild geese […], there were lanes with no residents and roads on which no one walked."[15] The homeless refugees began plundering villages in gangs to survive. The city wall collapsed and, with no one left to maintain them, the sea dikes broke and flooded thousands of hectares of farmland. The Qing troops used the ruins to construct a fortified wall to cut off access to the sea and enforced a tree-cutting order on the new boundary: thousands of trees, including fruit orchards and big timbers of pine and cypress as wide around as a person's arms, were axed. Then patrols came back to mow down the rest of the crops and flora, so that "not an inch of grass remained on the ground."[16] It is estimated that by the mid-1660s at least half the population of Putian had died or fled.[17]

These two cases were separated by exactly 100 years. The city of Putian, caught in the middle, was a double victim. The first disaster was part of the pirate wars that were set off by the Ming enforcement of the Seaban policy (*Haijin* 海禁) in the 1540s—wars that mobilized a motley crew of Japanese, Portuguese, Korean, Southeast Asian, and mostly Chinese (especially Fujianese)

[11] Zheng Zhenman (trans. Michael Szonyi) 2001, p. 203.
[12] Ibid., p. 204.
[13] Ibid., 202.
[14] *Pubian Jishi* 莆变纪事, p. 128.
[15] Zheng Zhenman (trans. Michael Szonyi) 2001, pp. 212-215.
[16] *Pubian Jishi* 莆变纪事, p. 128.
[17] According to Eduard Vermeer, the 1661 count of Putian gave a total of 60,886 people, compared with 148,756 in 1612. Vermeer 1990, p. 120.

seafarers masquerading under the misleading blanket term of "Japanese pirates". The second was the notorious scorched earth policy (*Qianjie* 遷界) with which the Qing empire tried to crush all maritime resistance to its Great Enterprise. From 1661 to 1683, Fujian was the center of perhaps the world's most devastating and sustained scorched earth campaign. A thousand-mile stretch of coast lay in wreckage, and the smoke of burning towns darkened the sky for days. Hundreds of thousands were killed, and hundreds of thousands more were uprooted and forced to flee to Southeast Asia, to inland provinces, or eastward to islands like Taiwan. The pirate wars and the coastal depopulation are two key cases where Fujian's provincial system gave way to forced relocations and punitive restrictions on mobility.

The question thus becomes one of causes and correlations: how did we get from pirates killing people to the state killing people in this period of 100 years? That is to say, what does this shift from criminal violence to state violence have to tell us about the place of Fujianese border-crossers in the larger picture of the fall of the Ming, the rise of the Qing, and the arrival of Europeans in maritime world dominated by Chinese and Japanese networks of trade and piracy? Something big happened between these two cases, with grave implications for Fujian's maritime economy and seafaring culture. These were not a "hundred years of solitude", but rather a hundred years of the most active maritime trade in early modern East Asia. Japanese Red Seal Ships, Chinese smuggler-pirates and sealords, Portuguese fidalgos, Spanish treasure galleons, and Dutch VOC rogues, officers, and gentlemen were involved in this trade. To understand the shift of state policy from fighting pirates to deliberate slaughter of coastal inhabitants, we must trace why maritime violence had escalated to the point of pushing the state to take extreme measures.

Outlaw Coast: Fujian, the Seaban, and the Pirate Wars

Fujian was the Portugal of imperial China. This southeastern province (with a land area about 11,000 square miles larger than the country of Portugal) was home to China's finest sailors and shipwrights. If we look closely at a map of Fujian, its complex coastline is full of coves, bays, and great protective harbors. Only extending about 300 miles as the crow flies, the coastline in fact meanders in and out and around covering over 1,800 miles. There are also about a thousand islands big and small off its shores. A hundred miles across the sea lies the great island of Taiwan, which the Portuguese called "Ilha Formosa" (the beautiful island), and which today is the namesake of the straits that separate the island from the mainland.

Historical Fujian, too, was beautiful and green, but life was hard even in the best of times. Fujian had very little farmland (only 7-8% arable land, including hill terraces) and was densely populated in a narrow strip along the coast. 90% of Fujian was covered by mountains and hills that disrupted

landward communications. Thus the people of coastal Fujian had a long history of depending on the sea for food and livelihood. The province's two great resources were timber and human resources: Fujian produced the finest mariners, shipbuilders, navigators of their day. It was a great transshipment center for maritime trade in China and all over East and Southeast Asia. There are some 40 million Overseas Chinese around the world today (diaspora), and Fujian is the ancestral home of about one-third of these, as a direct consequence of its great seafaring history.[18]

Fujianese mariners built and navigated the largest wooden ships in history: the Ming Treasure Fleets that sailed from China to India and Africa from 1405-1433. After the Ming Dynasty (1368-1644) canceled its great ocean voyages in the 15th century, Fujian became known as a rogue province of smugglers and pirates. The coastal Fujianese, especially the Hokkiens of the south, were fiercely independent and defied government efforts to limit their mobility. Most coastal residents made a living from seasonal patterns of fishing, salt-making, trading, and raiding. Ming author Zhou Qiyuan wrote of his people: "The mariners view floating on the huge waves as just like standing on a high hill; they gaze on foreign lands as if they were just stepping outside their doorsteps."[19] It was a world of earth and water and unfixed boundaries. They did not simply sail across the sea—they lived on it until the land came home.

In the mid-1500s, Fujian became known as a rogue province and a nefarious breeding ground of pirates: those "coastal treacherous subjects who had intercourse with barbarians", in the words of Ming official Tu Zhonglü. Censor Tu was so distraught about the pirate crisis that it seriously affected his arithmetic—he identified the composition of the pirate swarm as consisting of 10% barbarians, 20% Ryukyu islanders, 50% people from Zhejiang province, and 90% (sic) the people of Fujian![20]

This dour assessment of the Fujianese as the single biggest source of the pirate problem was consistent with one of the prevailing stereotypes about the Fujianese people during late imperial times. "These imbeciles compete for petty profits", records one High Qing gazetteer, "[…] and profit-hungry young men from all quarters stake everything at sea regardless of capital punishment, flocking to wealth like wild birds. They compete in luxury and deceit, drinking up vices and breaking the law, all beyond the pale of decency. Everyone in Fujian crowds into the merchant's trade, and the local custom is to grub for money and to cheat with pleasure."[21] Historian Felipe Fernández-Armesto writes

[18] Most of the overseas Chinese diaspora is concentrated in countries along the historical maritime trade routes in Southeast Asia, where they make up a majority of the population of Singapore and significant minority populations in Indonesia, Malaysia, Thailand, the Philippines, and Vietnam.

[19] *Dong Xiyang Kao* 东西洋考 (1618 [1981]), Zhou Qiyuan's Preface, p. 17.

[20] So 1975, p. 26.

[21] (Qianlong) *Fuzhou Fuzhi* (乾隆) 福州府志, *Juan* 24, *Fengsu* 风俗, cited in Chen Zhiping 1995, p. 26.

that: "Before its elevation by commerce, the country which became Fukien had long borne an evil reputation as a fatally inhospitable land: a narrow malarial shore, backed by mountains full of savages."[22]

In reality, it was never so easy to assign statist identities to the men and women who populated or worked the Chinese coast and beyond. In the maritime world, who was a loyal subject and who was not? The Ming state, like its Qing successor, created its own fair share of enemies, and as much effort was expended in trying to identify them as it was in destroying them. Here one day and gone the next, Chinese and non-Chinese, and honest crooks all, the maritime peoples were inscrutable and exasperating to the imperial authorities. The key obstacle to the Ming state's control of the littoral was the inability to distinguish pirates and smugglers from merchants, fishers, and common folk—these were fluid identities in a world of apolitical survival strategies. As Robert Antony says in his study of late imperial Chinese pirates and seafarers, "violence and crime, like typhoons, taxes, and official squeeze, were undeniable parts of the seaman's daily life."[23] Predation and brigandage on the seas and along the coast were a matter of course—as were, of course, local government squeezing and palm-greasing. The hard facts of survival meant that many coastal Fujianese carried on their ways of life without reference to the Confucian political system—a people must first live before it can philosophize.

The Ming maritime prohibitions or Seaban policy (*Haijin* 海禁), however, turned Fujianese seafarers into smugglers. This policy has sometimes been referred to as a "closed-door" policy, but I literally translate the Chinese term Haijin as "Seaban" by its component terms *hai* (sea) and *jin* (ban) both to preserve the economy of the term and to point out that it was not a general isolationist policy, but specifically the prohibition of one kind of economic activity: private maritime trade.

The policy dates back to the founder of the Ming Dynasty, the Hongwu Emperor, or Zhu Yuanzhang (r. 1368-1398), whose social vision for the realm was of agrarian, self-sufficient communities firmly under his autocracy. The most stable type of society (and therefore the one least likely to threaten his dynastic line), he believed, was one in which communities produced what they consumed and consumed what they produced. Mobility and greed, which could generate as well as feed on commercial activity, were the greatest threats to Zhu's bucolic vision. Contrary to popular belief, Zhu Yuanzhang did not cut China off from the world; however, he did seek to restrict mobility and limit and control foreign trade and intercourse. The Seaban forbade Ming subjects from building ships to travel abroad and trade (though fishing remained legal), and foreign trade was restricted to official tribute missions under the government's watchful eye. Enforcement of the Seaban was the task of the coastal garrisons that Zhu Yuanzhang ordered constructed as part of an elaborate military system

[22] Fernández-Armesto 2001, p. 342.
[23] Antony 2003, p. 12.

known as *wei-suo*. *Wei-suo* acted as the Ming eyes and arms in the form of Battalions (*suo* 所) of 1120 men, four battalions combining to form a Guard (*wei* 衛), which were stationed at strategic locations across the empire.[24]

Such was the theory of how things were supposed to work in the Everlasting Empire of the Great Ming, as envisaged by its founding monarch. The reality was that, as Timothy Brook has pointed out, "the Hongwu vision—one part arcadian and two parts draconian—had attenuated to nothing more than a textual memory" by the 16th century.[25] China's population had doubled during the peace and prosperity of the early to middle Ming period, and the rapidly growing Ming economy produced the commercial products (e.g., porcelain, silks, tea, and luxury goods) that became a lure for Japanese and Spanish silver. Merchants across the realm made fortunes in regional and international trade, much to the disgust of conservative Confucian gentry like Zhang Tao, who decried the commercial boom as a physical and moray decay of the Ming empire. "The lord of silver rules heaven and the god of copper cash reigns over the earth", Zhang wrote. "Avarice is without limit, flesh injures bone, everything is for personal pleasure […]. Fights have turned into pitched battles; pounding waves wash over the hills; torrents flood the land."[26]

Even if we discount the hyperbolic tone of Zhang Tao's warnings, it was indeed the case that commercialization and vast quantities of foreign silver generated deep social changes throughout Ming China. Private maritime trade exploded in spite of the Ming Seaban policy, and indeed because of the Seaban such trades had to be carried out illicitly and under the threat of state suppression. Fujian in particular felt the brunt of state attempts to enforce the Seaban, which resulted in the criminalization of people engaged in maritime enterprises. The pattern of violence that escalated on the Fujian coast can perhaps be explained as the integral of two forces: militarization and marketization. We can think of these as the "bloody hand" and the "invisible hand", to use the words of Kenneth Pomeranz and Steven Topik—the two hands were attached to the same body, so that the one cannot be understood without the other.[27] And they were locked together, so that state violence and piratical violence were formed in the tug and tension between the bloody and invisible hands.

The mining of rich veins of silver in the western regions of Japan in the early 1500s, along with the arrival of the Spanish and Portuguese bearing New World silver, offered Ming China a new and reliable source of precious metal at a time when China's silver mines were depleted and paper currency was devalued.[28] Silver thus took on an increasing role in the Chinese economy.[29]

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[24] Cao Yonghe 1994, pp. 41-70.
[25] Brook 1998, p. 9.
[26] Ibid., p. 4.
[27] Pomeranz and Topik 2006, p. 154.
[28] Even at its peak, Chinese domestic silver output amounted to no more than 3000-4000 kilograms annually, less than a tenth of what was illegally imported from Japan and Spanish

However, due to the Seaban there were few legitimate channels by which Chinese goods and foreign silver could be exchanged, and with private trade outlawed, the official government monopoly (the tribute trade) was not able to provide enough bullion to feed silver-hungry China. International smugglers built an extensive network of trade to bypass the official restrictions. From the 1530s to the 1570s Japan was the major supplier of silver to Ming China. Japanese silver flowed into China through the illicit trade channels, mainly in exchange for Chinese silk, porcelain, and copper coinage. The scale of the silver trade was very large: between 1560 and about 1600, silver exports from Japan to China averaged between 33,750 and 48,750 kilograms per year.[30] Despite the risks, such illegal dealings were far more profitable for Chinese merchants than the official tribute trades, and the number of smugglers grew.[31] As Alan Karras has argued, smugglers as a criminal class were literally legislated into existence by the state: "it was the act of violating the law that defined smugglers by assigning them to a criminal status. Without prohibitive laws, they would have been free traders."[32]

Smuggling was lucrative but carried with it the threat of guilt by association. Here, I have translated some samples from the Ming Code and provide them here in enumerated fashion to provide a sense of the terms of the Seaban laws.

Samples from the Ming Code:[33]

Year 1501 (Ming Hongzhi 13)

THOSE WHO:

1. Build ships with more than two masts;
2. Or ship banned goods to foreign countries;
3. Or guide pirates into coastal areas to rob and loot;

WILL BE PUNISHED AS FOLLOWS:

America (via Manila) each year. See Lin Man-houng 2004, 78-80; also Von Glahn 1996, Ch. 4-5 on the mid-Ming importations of silver.

[29] Failed early Ming experiments with paper money (known as Great Ming Precious Scrip) created a demand for a more stable unit of value, and the Ming economy evolved into a bimetallic system with copper coins for everyday purchases and silver for larger transactions. By 1436, the Ming government began a grudging concession to the hegemony of silver by converting some of its levies into silver payments; this experiment culminated a century later in the drastic fiscal reforms of Zhang Juzheng in 1581, which required all taxes to be paid in silver. See Brook 2010, p. 120; and Huang 1974.

[30] Twitchett and Mote, eds. (1998), p. 398.

[31] Chang 1983, pp. 198-203.

[32] Karras 2010, p. 7.

[33] Shen Shixing 申时行, et al., eds., *Da Ming Huidian* 大明会典, *Juan* 132 兵部十五, GJK 古籍库检索第 1246/2073.

1. The outlaw himself will be executed [NB: decapitated];
2. His entire family will be sentenced to lifetime servitude in military camps on the frontiers.

THOSE WHO:

1. Rent a three-masted (or larger) ship to others;
2. And profit from the trade of banned foreign goods;

AND THOSE WHO:

1. Do not own big ships;
2. But assist in the buying and selling of banned foreign goods (sappanwood and pepper specifically) of one thousand *jin* or more;

WILL BE PUNISHED AS FOLLOWS:

1. The outlaw will be sentenced to lifetime servitude in military camps on the frontiers;
2. The goods will be confiscated.

THOSE WHO:

1. Sail in small boats;
2. And stay close to the coasts;
3. And fish for a living or cut timber for daily use;

SHOULD NOT BE VIOLATED BY GUARDS AND SOLDIERS.

Year 1525 (Ming Jiajing 4)

ORDERS TO THE COAST GUARDS:

[Notice posted in all coastal towns in Fujian and Zhejiang]

1. Destroy all two-masted ships built without official supervision and arrest those who sail the ships.
2. During the inspection, the guards should carefully record the quantity of all cedar boards, pine tree boards, tree trunks, rattan ropes, and indigo.
3. If the guards find a quantity of sulfur [NB: raw material for gunpowder] of more than fifty *jin*, the sulfur must be sold to the government immediately.

THOSE WHO dare to trade more than one thousand *jin* of sappanwood or pepper:

ARE SENTENCED, whether leader or accomplice, to lifetime servitude in military camps on the frontiers;

THOSE WHO helped coordinate the trade or who provided storage space:

ARE ALSO SENTENCED to lifetime servitude in military camps on the frontiers.

THE FOLLOWING PEOPLE:

1. Those who helped attend to the goods;
2. Their neighbors who did not report their crimes;
3. The gentry headman of his community;
4. And the officially designated military headman of his community:

WILL BE PUNISHED AS FOLLOWS:

1. They will all be sentenced to lifetime servitude in military camps on the frontiers (in accordance with the codes on illegal off-border hunting of leopards and deer and the codes on the definition of accomplices);
2. In exile, the gentry headmen will toil as lifetime laborers, while military headmen may keep their ranks and receive salaries.

Such laws as these threatened harsh punishments for illegal trading and, in theory, held entire families liable for crimes of violating the Seaban. This was in keeping with the structure of seafaring enterprises in places like Fujian. To finance a large undertaking such as an overseas trading venture, families would often pool together funds to build or buy a ship and crew it. In South China, and particularly Fujian, clan organizations acted as the primary conglomerations of social and economic capital that would finance these voyages. This had to do not only with the strength of southern Chinese clan organizations and limited capital, but also the pressing need for extra-legal safety nets. "In the absence of a sufficiently strong legal framework for the creation of long-term share-holding companies", writes Eduard Vermeer, "the family as a more or less permanent institution provided an alternative in which risks could be shared, business expanded, profits reinvested, [and] experience accumulated over many years."[34] Most injurious to the development of legal protections for maritime trade was the fact of the Seaban itself: since private trade was illegal, there could be no recourse to Chinese courts in the event of a dispute. To meet the threat of coercion between unequal trading partners, security in numbers and in family ties had to suffice.

The Seaban also promoted a particular form of corruption and market cannibalism that favored the dominance of big families or syndicates.[35] Transaction costs increased with requisite bribes, and the bigger players with money and connections (i.e., those who could evade or bribe soldiers and government officials to look the other way) could drive their smaller competitors out by pressure or by brute force. Prominent merchant families and gentry elites also sponsored smuggling operations in cahoots with local officials. They were equivalent to the English gentry "land pirates" who abetted piracy at about the same time in Britain.[36] Realizing that the Seaban contributed to the power of these merchant-gentry and helped provoke the pirate crisis, Ming pirate fighter Tang Shu observed, in the 1550s: "Pirates and merchants are the same people. When trade is open, the pirates become merchants; but when trade

[34] Vermeer 1999, p. 66.

[35] We might also consider the history of Prohibition (the attempt to prohibit alcohol) in the United States from 1919-1933, which contributed to a dramatic rise in smuggling and organized crime.

[36] Senior 1976, pp. 124-125. According to Senior, the English at the beginning of the 17th century had a reputation for piracy that extended beyond just seamen. In foreign eyes, the whole population was sympathetic to piracy and actively supported pirate activity. These land-bound accomplices were called "land pirates".

is illegal, merchants become pirates. To start by prohibiting merchants is to end by struggling to contain pirates."[37] Even more bluntly, Grand Coordinator Zhu Wan stated that it was "easy to get rid of China's coastal pirates, but particularly difficult to get rid of China's pirates attired in caps and gowns (i.e., the gentry)."[38]

A common practice was for gentry families to adopt a poor but trustworthy-looking young man to lead trading voyages instead of sending their own sons to sea. Such a man was known as an "adopted son" and in some cases received due honor within the family, but it was common as well for the adoptee to function more or less like a bondservant, being inferior to the real sons and heirs of the clan; only by proving his worth could such a glorified slave earn the right to be a real member of the family. This practice offered some degree of social mobility for poor young men and allowed the gentry to keep their own heirs close to the land, wealth, and cultivated intellectual lifestyle to which they were accustomed. It was these "adopted sons" who would serve as brokers and do the everyday wheeling and dealing with wholesalers, pilots, sailors, rowers, and haulers, as well as facing the physical dangers of eluding Ming patrol ships.[39]

Scholars have long argued about the enforcement of the Ming maritime ban, and indeed Ming enforcement was sporadic (sometimes harsh and sometimes lax). But I would argue that whether or not it was consistently enforced, the maritime ban had at least one important effect: because maritime trade was illegal, disputes among trading parties could seldom be resolved by any other means than force.[40] Smugglers could not exactly take their partners to court for violating a contract. Piracy and violence to settle disputes (as a form of debt collection) thus became an extension of trade, and as the scale of trading enterprises grew, so did violent disputes.

Of course, there had always been some form of predatory violence on the China coast: small-scale piracy was practiced as an economic survival strategy. Petty pirates were mostly poor fishermen who were young and single, and such piracy tied in well with fishing, which was a seasonal occupation that lasted 120-150 days a year. During the summer when fishing was bad, fishermen would take advantage of the monsoon winds and sail north. Ships in distress or weakly defended towns sometimes offered themselves as easy prey for a lightning heist.[41] Then, with the changing of the monsoon in the fall, the fisherfolk would sail south and return to their homes and fishing grounds. As a feature of Fujian's seafaring culture, the cycle of petty piracy was predictable and most often attracted little attention from the Ming government, for it posed

[37] *Chouhai Tubian* 籌海圖編, *Juan* 11 (上): 673.
[38] So 1975, p. 53.
[39] Cui Laiting 2005, pp. 92-98.
[40] Chang 1983, p. 237.
[41] Such heists were usually modest, yielding maybe 10-15 silver taels, or about 3 months' earnings for a wage laborer. The gangs would dissolve after splitting the shares.

no great threat to state authority or coastal stability.

The commercial advances of the early 1500s, however, raised the stakes, and even the Ming military garrisons (which were supposed to enforce the Seaban) became heavily involved in illicit trading. Large numbers of officers, soldiers, and their families (hereditary military households, or *junhu* 軍戶), were involved in smuggling on the coast of Fujian.[42] Guards in coastal garrisons would literally "jump ship" and go smuggling, which was infinitely more profitable than serving as cannon fodder in the Ming army. Poor rations, the abuses of military officers (who often padded the rosters, sold the allotted military lands for selfish profit, and failed to pay the soldiers), and the lure of illegal trading took their toll on garrison strength, while payments of silver in lieu of required militia service became common as more and more military households paid silver to the government to exempt their sons from military service.[43]

Desertion became such a problem in Fujian that many garrisons along the coast were half empty and thus unable to provide basic patrols for coastal defense. Mercenaries and recruits-for-hire (*mubing* 募兵) became necessary to staff the coastal military installations, but the resulting drain on Ming finances led officers of the state to pursue more aggressive tactics against coastal Fujianese residents. Commoners, neighbors, and relatives began to be forcibly drafted into the army to fill the ranks of deserters, and military quotas were squeezed out of the local population by combinations of torture, blackmail, and thuggery. Zheng Ji, a prominent local gentryman from Xianyou (a county neighboring Putian city), recorded the brutal tactics of a certain Guo of the Imperial Bodyguard, who zealously fulfilled the Ministry of War's orders to replace 30% of desertions with fresh bodies:

> In carrying out this order, he beat anyone who had held the position of Village Elder (*lilao* 里老) in the last ten years nearly to death. He beat them incessantly from morning to night, insisting that the 30 percent quota be met. Some households of old men and women had no adult males able to serve in the army. Their sons-in-law were made to report [for service]. These were called soldiers by virtue of being a son-in-law (*nüxu jun* 女婿軍). […] There were cases of people who had purchased the land of soldiers who had left no posterity, and other people who wanted to acquire their land reported them. These were called soldiers by virtue of having acquired an estate (*deye jun* 得業軍). People were

[42] Michael Szonyi's new work on the *junhu* will open new vistas on the role of military garrisons in driving Ming maritime trade despite the Seaban. A selection of his project, entitled "Soldiers, Smugglers, and Pirates on China's Southeast Coast: Military Households (junhu) and the Maritime Asia Trade in the Ming", was presented at the annual Association of Asian Studies conference in March 2012.

[43] Such cash payments eventually became a staple of Ming revenues, and in 1637 when reactivation of the mandatory militia system was proposed at court, it was rejected because the state could not afford the loss of revenue. Struve 1984, p. 3.

> beaten from morning till night, until the quota was met. […] The village elders' families had no more adult males in their household, and all their property was gone before they heard the end of it.[44]

Scholar Zheng Zhenman notes that the upshot of such village brutalization was that peasant households were converted into military households, and consequently population figures for taxable commoners dropped in coastal regions. Fujian was particularly hard hit: "In Fujian, as the proportion of military households was very high to begin with, and the authorities repeatedly forced peasant households to convert to military ones, the phenomenon of declining numbers of ordinary households must have been even more serious."[45] One can imagine the morale and quality of these troops, who were by some accounts scarcely better than pirates themselves.

As silver and guns flowed from foreign lands into the smuggling coves of Fujian and Zhejiang provinces, they laid the grounds for the militarization of littoral society. Portuguese merchants had introduced the arquebus to Japan in 1543, and smugglers plied the new guns across the trading networks of East Asia. This proliferation of firearms coincided with the breakdown of the symbiotic relationship between sea smugglers and their erstwhile gentry financiers on land. The profits of foreign trade had become big enough to cause internal conflicts between seamen and their gentry allies, and the illegality of the trade also created many opportunities for abuse and general coercion. When pressed for payment, the gentry sponsors used the Seaban as a tool to bully their creditors into silence. To make their threats more credible, they occasionally urged the authorities to enforce the Seaban and threatened to report the smugglers to the government for violating the law.[46] The flashpoint of just such an incident was to be the fateful spark that set off the explosion of piracy and predatory violence in the mid-1500s.

There are many theories about the origins of the Wako pirate wars, and some scholars have pointed to the escalation in Ming enforcement of the Seaban following tributary violence in Ningbo in 1523 and the arrival of Portuguese ships.[47] But I also believe that the origins of the conflict lie in the Seaban's conversion of Fujian and the Chinese littoral into a frontier-like zone of dubious legality, a region both militarized and lacking in institutional means to resolve local conflicts or the increasing complexity of exchange and bribery without resort to violence. After all, the Seaban laws were intended to be prophylactic by sealing places like Fujian from foreign trade, but ultimately the laws served to heighten the very conflicts that they were designed to avert.

The war began (as most wars do) with a small dispute. In 1547, members of the Xie clan, a prominent gentry family in Zhejiang province,

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[44] Quoted in Zheng Zhenman (trans. Michael Szonyi) 2001, p. 290.
[45] Ibid., 291.
[46] So 1975, p. 5.
[47] A representative sample can be found in Wan Ming 2000.

cheated their smuggling partners for the last time. As the Ming court record later summarized the situation: "The Xie clan estimated their debts [to their merchant partners] to be too much to repay, so they tried to threaten them by saying: 'We will inform on you to the government.' The treacherous merchants became bitter and fearful, so they banded together with foreigners and attacked the Xie clan by night, killing several men and women and burning the estate."[48]

This event, though by no means the only conflict between sponsors and smugglers in those years (for there had been sporadic fights since the 1530s), nevertheless shocked the Jiangnan gentry into calling for government troops. The gentry soon got more than they bargained for. In November 1547, the Ming government sent in Zhu Wan, a hard-liner who insisted on crushing the illegal trade completely—including the gentry who connived at it. With so many vested interests threatened by this government intervention, the coast exploded into a melee. The gentry betrayal of their smuggling partners, the government crackdown, and demands to open foreign trade would spark a decades-long war between the Ming government, the gentry, and the smugglers themselves, who would now turn into pirates.

A full analysis of the chaotic two decades of pirate attacks (1547-1567) is beyond the scope of this paper, but here we may note that the trend of local militarization continued. Fujian bore the brunt of pirate attacks in later phases of the war as smuggler-pirate bases shifted from their bases near the Jiangnan (Yangtze Delta) region down to offshore islands in southern Fujian. Between 1555 and 1563, virtually no major city, town, or coastal fortification escaped pirate attack, and at least one prefectural capital, eleven county seats, four guard garrisons and four battalion garrisons were sacked by pirates.[49] People were slaughtered for their property or taken captive for ransom, and as the assaults continued, local communities in Fujian took matters into their own hands. Private forts called *sai* 塞 or *tulou* 土樓 mushroomed throughout Fujian as measures of self-defense; along with building fortifications, local residents bought weapons and formed defensive militias to cover swaths of territory.[50] These territorial (and often clan-based) fighting forces were useful for local defense, but Zheng Zhenman observes that they also contributed to inter-village or inter-lineage feuding, thus exacerbating local rivalries and edging toward violence in land disputes, conflicts over water rights, or simply clan bragging rights. Even after the pirate threat had subsided, such territorial lineage militias continued to quarrel, and from the late Ming onwards, this area was characterized by violent feuds and the oppression of weaker clans by strong

[48] *Ming Shilu: Shizong (Jiajing) Shilu*, 350: 1-2; Zhang Zengxin 1988, pp. 120-122.
[49] Zheng Zhenman (trans. Michael Szonyi) 2001, p. 202.
[50] Late Ming writer Gu Yanwu commented: "Walled forts in Zhangzhou used to be very uncommon. Since 1561, the people have built walled forts and walled buildings in ever-increasing numbers, especially in the regions along the coast". Additionally, in 1560 in Tong'an County in southern Fujian, within a few weeks of a pirate attack, 103 forts were constructed, and 60 militia groups assembled. Ibid, p. 209.

ones.[51]

Thus, in the late Ming period, we can see that a number of factors contributed to a cycle of local violence in Fujian's seafaring communities: marketization and the rise of international maritime commerce; the Ming Seaban policy along with the breakdown of the coastal garrisons; the role of foreign elements that collaborated with seafaring border-crossers like the Fujianese; and finally local clans in rivalry, militarized and caught between these forces, while manipulating them for personal gains. Due to the Ming policies of restricting maritime mobility, Fujianese seafarers became deeply involved in a culture of smuggling as boundary crossers who ran the risk of the law while engaging in a perilous world of unregulated trades, where conflict resolution through legal channels was not possible, and where violence became the recourse to address grievances. Fujian under the Seaban may have been a province securely within the stock Chinese *tianxia* or "all under heaven", but it was also the outer rim of a vaster world of maritime spaces where state control was weak, an outlaw frontier where the not-so-invisible hand of domestic commercialization and foreign silver joined the bloody hand of coastal frontier life in the buildup of autonomous smuggler-pirate bands and militarization of the coast beyond the purview of the state.

It took the Ming twenty years to bring the pirate crisis mostly under control (1547-1567) through a combination of military action, negotiations, and finally the legalization of trade at the port of Yuegang in southern Fujian in 1567, which helped to appease the independent traders in Fujian province. However, the two decades of maritime revolt had paved a path for the later development of large maritime organizations in Fujian. Initially, the Ming state had a hard time fighting the pirates, for at any given time, the authorities found it impossible to distinguish between fishermen, merchants, pirates, and smugglers—these were fluid identities and apolitical survival strategies for the sea peoples. The more the central government tried to enforce the Seaban, the more that seafaring groups armed themselves, and the different occupational categories ceased to have real meaning. At the peak of the pirate crisis, several tens of thousands of smuggler-pirates had banded in a loose confederacy—(the so-called Wako or "Japanese" pirates, who were in fact mostly Chinese from Fujian, Zhejiang, and Guangdong)—to terrorize the coast and demand a lifting of the Seaban to free trade. The Ming state broke up the pirate federation in 1557, resulting in scattered and uncontrollable pirate groups attacking all over the coast. The number of separate pirate groups decreased as they fought amongst themselves and swallowed each other, each surviving group growing larger in the process.

The outcome of the pirate wars was thus not an unqualified success for the Ming, for the social evolution of private seafaring on the shores of Fujian had grown in scale and power. John L. Anderson has described such a trajectory as a "piracy cycle" where "piracy is initially conducted by small and

[51] Ibid., pp. 210-212.

independent groups of individuals […] as desperation of poverty dictates or as the opportunity presents. Success in this venture equips the groups with more and larger vessels, and an organization can emerge to coordinate their activities." In other words, pirate groups would fight and merge from smaller ones into progressively larger ones, until, as Anderson says, "with further success the pirates' strength becomes such as to make them a virtually independent power […] and to form part of an organized society if not of a state."[52] Although the Ming had apparently pacified its shores with the defeat of the last great pirate leaders Lin Feng and Lin Daoqian by the mid-1570s, the stage was open for the rise of another set of maritime overlords to take their place. This pirate cycle that had begun in the mid-1500s would culminate in the formation of large-scale mercantile-cum-military organizations that challenged state authority in the 1600s.

Private trade was so nested in the littoral that even the government's belated opening of the single port of Yuegang was merely recognition of a *fait accompli*: Yuegang was already operating as the primary smuggling port prior to its legalization in 1567. What the new law said was that only Yuegang could be a legal entrepot, and people needed permits to trade—the Ming government still tried to direct trade to a single point and did not permit a full liberalization.[53] This partial lifting of the Seaban was a window of opportunity for a potential Fujianese monopolist. The decade from the 1620s-1630s saw the rise of Zheng Zhilong, who dominated the Fujian coast and the Taiwan Straits as a sealord (combining military, political, and economic power). For the state to truly penetrate and police the littoral, it had to strike at the maritime trade system itself: either by legalizing and thus bringing it into the open, or by destroying the social basis for the extralegal shadow economy. "Army commanders who were sent in to fight the Japanese or Chinese 'pirates' looked in vain for their enemies, as the latter were usually sheltered and supported by the local people", as Eduard Vermeer writes. "Local guerillas and opposition could not be conquered short of destroying much of the Fukien coastal area with its population."[54] We will see in the next section the terrible true story of how the Qing Empire did just that, by literally creating a military frontier in Fujian.

Blood on the Sand: The Coastal Depopulation of Fujian

The Qing Coastal Depopulation policy of 1661-1683 was the single most extreme case of frontier building in Fujian's history and the starkest instance of

[52] Anderson 2001, pp. 88-89. The Ming attempt to crack down on "petty parasitic piracy", as Anderson points out, was the catalyst that helped transform what had been a local bureaucratic irritant into a dangerous internationally connected wave of piracy (pp. 96-97).
[53] Xu Xiaowang 2004; Chen Wei 2006, 7-9; Lin Tingshui 1995.
[54] Vermeer 1999, p. 71.

demarcating Fujian as a maritime frontier. The physical manifestation of this maritime frontier was the scorching of coastal towns and the forced removal of the population behind a fortified wall where mobility could be controlled. In an even more severe case than the Ming Seaban, the coastal Fujianese were subjected to the reality of their frontier as the militarized policy of the state rather than natural features of land or sea. But even this artificial land frontier in Fujian province, which was built against autonomous powers at sea, finally had to be destroyed to re-centralize and convert Fujian back into a regular province. This section attempts to explain the reasons behind the construction and destruction of a frontier boundary during one of the most traumatic periods in Fujian's history.

From 1661-1683, the newly established Qing state, locked in war with pirates and the sealord Koxinga, ordered all coastal residents to abandon the sea on pain of death and scorched a thousand miles of coast into a wasteland. Observers wrote of smoke from burning towns darkening the sky for days; according to Robert Antony, "the Qing government officially severed contacts with the rest of the maritime world for the next twenty years."[55] In the end, more than a hundred thousand people would lay dead and millions more touched by the trauma of the Coastal Depopulation.

Piratical violence may have been the inescapable companion to seafaring in the Age of Sail, and of course it provoked manifold institutional responses in China as in all early-modern states—but why so cruel, why so extreme? What scale of piracy could criminalize the coast of China? How, and why, would an empire scorch its own shores?

One of the persistent myths that has been invoked to explain why the Qing state chose scorched earth rather than a more outward-looking naval policy is that its Manchu rulers, as semi-nomadic horsemen from Northeast Asia, were afraid of water. As the story goes, the Manchus were incapable of understanding the ocean frontier and thus resorted to building a maritime 'Great Wall' and so "encouraged the conquered Chinese to share in their fear and ignorance of the sea."[56] It has also been suggested that the Coastal Depopulation was simply a logical extension of native Chinese isolationism: a maritime "closed-door" mentality dating back to Ming times (1368-1644).[57] It might seem that the Qing Depopulation was a foregone conclusion by the supposedly hydrophobic Manchu emperors who inherited the Chinese state.

However, such generalizations about mentality alone are unsatisfactory. The Manchus may not have been well schooled in seafaring, but they did understand the problems of dealing with highly mobile frontier populations.

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[55] Antony 2003, p. 36.
[56] Clements 2005, p. 182.
[57] Wu Chengming and Xu Dixin 2000, eds., p. 397. The maritime policies of both Ming and Qing China, according to one study, consisted solely of words like "prohibit" (*jin* 禁), "guard against" (*fang* 防), "remove" (*qian* 遷), and "kill" (*sha* 殺). Lin Renchuan 1987, pp. 421-432.

They also relied on Han Chinese collaborators, many of whom were former pirates and coastal warlords. In fact, Chinese collaborators initiated the scorched earth policy and waged the bulk of the coastal war on behalf of the Qing: their leadership shaped the Depopulation policy and its extreme implementation.

This section will describe the Coastal Depopulation and assess the harsh realities of Qing state-building efforts in Fujian province. Three basic arguments are worth enumerating: (1) The Depopulation was not a hasty or impulsive terror policy of the Qing emperors—it began as a local response to fifteen years of horrific warfare and social upheaval on the Fujian coast. (2) Beyond being a mere scorched earth campaign, the Depopulation was also a political act aimed at constraining formerly mobile coastal populations by forcibly relocating them and restricting their movements. As a larger attempt at social engineering on the coastal population, it was not identical to previous anti-pirate campaigns such as the Wako or "Japanese" pirate wars of the mid-1500s.[58] (3) To combat the pirates and the sealord Koxinga (an autonomous maritime power), the Qing state 'outsourced' coastal control to its own autonomous allies, the Feudatories of Fujian and Guangdong, who exploited the Depopulation to build their own regional satrapies. This sort of semi-privatized and incomplete state-building accounts for the policy's longevity and some of its severest abuses.

Ultimately, the Qing state was compelled to destroy all of the autonomous powers on land and sea (including its former allies) and recentralize coastal control in 1684. These experiences may have contributed to the Qing state's wariness of coastal military buildup and maritime autonomy until the modern period. To understand the disastrous maritime policy of 1661-1683, we must begin with the rise of its great enemy, the sealord of Fujian, circa 1633.

The Sealord of Fujian

As noted in the first section, Fujian was ravaged in the mid-1500s, both by pirate attacks and by Ming troops sent to the rescue. Thanks to the industry and ingenuity of the maritime population, however, the province soon rebounded as a trading hub, and Fujian was enmeshed in the flows of silver, guns, tea, and spices that transformed the early-modern world. No family better represented the possibilities of 17th century maritime Fujian than the Zheng clan, led by the sealord Zheng Zhilong (c. 1604-1661).

Zheng Zhilong was a Fujianese smuggler and pirate, a man of the sea who huckstered, bribed, and battled his way to become maritime overlord at the

[58] The Wako or so-called "Japanese pirates" (who were mostly Chinese pirates mixed with international freebooters) ravaged the coast of China in the 1540s-1560s. During the Wako crisis, the Ming state did not adopt a wholesale depopulation of the coast. See Geiss 1988, pp. 490-505. Local deportations had been applied to select island populations in the early Ming, but never a full-blown scorched earth campaign like the Qing Depopulation of 1661-1683 (Lin Renchuan 1987, p. 428).

end of the Ming Dynasty and one of the realm's richest men. In his lifetime, he was known variously as Nicholas Iquan, Nicolas Gaspard, Tei Shiryû, Ytcuam, or even Chinchillón. Around him lay the dizzying world of maritime East Asia in the 1600s. Portuguese fidalgos, Spanish galleon captains, Jesuit priests, and Dutch rogues, officers, and gentlemen were trying hard to break into this water world dominated by Chinese and Japanese networks of trade and piracy. The Europeans soon met their match.

Dominican priest Victorio Riccio described Zheng as "Nicolas the apostate, a marvel of human fate, who rose up by most despicable chance to challenge kings and emperors."[59] As a teenager, Zheng ran away from his home of Anhai, Fujian, hustled around the docks in Macau, and probably first visited Japan around age 18 (c. 1622), when he fell in with pirates. By age 27, he was popular with the Dutch in Taiwan, who, strangely enough, called him "Daddy".[60] He clawed his way up from pirate to sealord, defeating Ming fleets in 1627, a Dutch fleet in 1633, and smashing his last major rival Liu Xiang in 1635. The Ming state was forced to buy him out with honors and admiralty. By 1640, Zheng Zhilong was a lord of the sea: the military commander of Fujian and ruler of a powerful trading empire that was the envy of the Dutch VOC (East India Company). Hundreds of ships flying the Zheng flag plied the trading routes from Japan to Southeast Asia; outsiders paid Zheng's protection fees or suffered the consequences.

However, this rich and corrupt world came crashing down in 1644 with the fall of the Ming Dynasty in the throes of the 17th century general crisis.[61] As rebels and warlords feasted upon the carcass of the Ming empire, the Manchus (a vigorous transfrontier people from beyond the Great Wall of China) and their Chinese allies invaded and built a new empire: the Qing.

The nascent Qing state faced many opponents, including Ming loyalists and powerful armies of bandits and pirates. Zheng Zhilong at first supported the Ming loyalist movement, but he quickly became disaffected. When in 1646 Qing Prince Bolo offered to spare Fujian from war and appoint him Viceroy of Guangdong and Fujian in exchange for his fealty, Zheng took the dare—but at this juncture his own son Koxinga and other key family members betrayed him and refused to travel to Fuzhou to pledge their allegiance. Prince Bolo suspected the sealord of playing both sides in the war and ordered him taken to Beijing in chains. Zheng would never see his homeland or the sea again.[62]

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[59] Extracts from *Hechos de la Orden de Predicadores en el Imperio de China* (1673) by Fr. Victorio Riccio, O.P., in Borao Mateo [et al.] 2001, pp. 586-587.

[60] Blussé 1981, p. 99.

[61] On China's 17th century crisis in comparative world context, see Goldstone 1988; and Atwell 1986.

[62] Zheng would finally be executed in Beijing along with eleven family members, including two sons, on November 24, 1661. *Haishang Jianwenlu Dingben* 海上见闻录定本, p. 47; Tang Jintai 2002, p. 229.

The sealord's eldest son, the half-Japanese Koxinga (Zheng Chenggong, 1624-1662), overpowered his rivals within the clan, pledged loyalty to the Ming cause, and rebuilt his father's organization into a war machine against the Qing. This was no mean feat for a man who was only 22 at the time of his father's fall, but Koxinga was a zealot who literally whipped his men into shape. Trained by Zheng Zhilong and prodded by Koxinga, the seamen of Fujian were nearly indomitable in their own element. From 1651-1654, Koxinga's forces attacked major ports and blockaded the cities of central and southern Fujian.

The Qing government repeatedly tried to negotiate with Koxinga and his kinsmen from 1647-1654. A non-combative solution was desirable because the Qing armies were tied down fighting Ming loyalists in southwest China, but ultimately no agreement was reached. While the Qing state was willing to concede coastal territories, substantial autonomy, and a monopoly on maritime trade, it balked at Koxinga's demands for three coastal provinces and a suzerain kingdom on the level of tributary states like Annam (Vietnam) or Korea.[63] Meanwhile, Koxinga used the cease-fires of the negotiation period to pillage the coast and extract more supplies.[64] In 1655, after the talks faltered, the Qing resumed its attacks on the sealord.

In 1657, Koxinga sent a flotilla of some 5,000 ships and 60,000 men to probe the northern coastal defenses of Zhejiang and the Yangzi Delta. And then, in the campaigns of 1658-1659, Koxinga's armada burst out of southern Fujian and struck north for Jiangnan, the economic heartland of the Qing empire.[65] However, due to some fatal miscalculations, Koxinga's army was routed at the siege of Nanjing, and the embattled sealord retreated to his base at Amoy in September 1659. It was Koxinga's turn to send an envoy to Beijing to negotiate—but the Qing court was no longer willing to compromise. Defectors and former pirates swelled the Qing forces, and on June 17, 1660, the Qing navy attacked Amoy, hoping to crush Koxinga in one swoop.

In what one eyewitness called "the fiercest and most dreadful battle ever fought in the Orient seas", over a thousand ships clashed in the narrow strait separating Amoy Island from the coast.[66] Koxinga's navy shattered the Qing assault, and for weeks, the beaches of Amoy were covered with rotting bodies and splinters. Unfazed, the Qing began to prepare a new assault with the help of Chinese defectors like Ma Degong, Huang Wu, and Shi Lang.[67] Clearly, the Qing state was determined to achieve victory whatever the cost (and three

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[63] From 1652-1659, in total 46 missives or proposals were exchanged: 17 from Koxinga and 29 from the Qing side (eleven of them edicts from the Qing Shunzhi Emperor himself). Wu Zhenglong 2000, pp. 213-226.

[64] Struve 1984, pp. 161-162.

[65] Ibid., pp. 182-189.

[66] Extracts from *Hechos de la Orden de Predicadores en el Imperio de China* (1673) by Fr. Victorio Riccio, O.P., in Borao Mateo [et al.] 2001, p. 597.

[67] On these prominent defectors, see Arthur W. Hummel, ed. (2002 [1943]), pp. 559, 355, and 653.

years later, in 1663, it would succeed in capturing Amoy). But driving the sealord and pirates from the coast was not the only problem. Fifteen years of military quagmire in Fujian had brought no security for the Qing, and the coastal upheaval pushed the Qing commanders to consider more radical measures.

Fujian in Turmoil: The Uncivil War, 1646-1661

In the hellish conditions of the Ming-Qing war from 1646-1661, Fujian was soaked in blood. Primary sources reveal horrific stories of wartime depredations that behoove us to consider the Qing Coastal Depopulation as a response to fifteen years of killing and failed negotiations, not a kneejerk reaction of Manchu aquaphobia. Beyond the two mortal combatants of the Qing and Koxinga lay maritime societies in which war and rebellion had ignited the most murderous instincts.

The atrocities had begun as early as 1647, soon after Prince Bolo's capture of Zheng Zhilong left a power vacuum for rebels and pirates. Putian resident Chen Hong left a rare eyewitness account of how his hometown turned into a killing field. As the ships of competing Zheng clansmen recruited and pillaged on the coast, poor tenant farmers, miners, and laborers rose in rebellion, and a throng of Fujianese insurgents besieged the coastal city of Putian.[68] The Qing garrison of about 3,000 battled the rebels unsuccessfully and then holed up with the populace inside the city walls. People in Putian began to starve as prices for rice, barley, and wheat skyrocketed thirty times from 3 copper coins to 100 coins per measure.

Cannibalism broke out and found its victims in close formation. In December, after a raid outside the city, the Qing authorities rounded up four farmers from Siting and beheaded them in the city. "As soon as the heads rolled to the ground, the flesh of the four victims was carved up by starving bystanders", wrote Chen Hong. "If any bones remained on which there was still a bit of flesh, those who had arrived late would scrape off the scraps. From that point onward, when a person was executed, he/she would be reduced to bones in the blink of an eye. Women, too, partook in the cutting of bodies."[69]

Hysteria gripped the community as the siege continued through the winter. Qing troops ripped down houses nearest the city and stockpiled the wood for bonfires. Pirates and rebels attacked by night and retreated by day. Outside the city was a no-man's land: villagers who wandered in open country were seized by Qing patrols, stripped naked, and had their hands and feet cut off.

From that point on, anyone captured outside the gates was charged as a spy. They were subjected to a new kind of crucifixion known as *chazhu* 插燭, which translates horribly to "candle-sticking". "A wooden pole as long as 5-6

[68] *Qingchu Pubian Xiaocheng* 清初莆变小乘, p. 66.
[69] Ibid., 66-68.

meters was planted firmly into the earth, then sharpened at the tip", Chen Hong recorded. "The captives were stripped naked; then each was lifted high by two men and, with legs forced wide apart, placed anus-first on the sharp tip. The two men pushed down simultaneously as if they were planting a candlestick. Sometimes the stake stabbed out right through the ribs, other times all the way through the body to the victim's shoulder."[70] Such shocking executions were only the beginning of Fujian's hellish descent.

Another local survivor, gentry man Yu Yang of Putian, wrote his own grim accounts of floods followed by droughts and epidemics, and starving people selling their wives and children, robbing graves, and murdering each other.[71] Yu Yang also raised his own local militia. Chen Hong mentioned Yu Yang as but one of a multitude of local rebels: "Outside the city, the village gentry and *juren* degree holders raised their own rebel armies. […] Regardless of rank, they all claimed to be commanders."[72] The rebels battered Putian with field guns and also fought each other for power.

Eventually a Qing counterassault put the assorted rebels to flight. Starving city dwellers followed the army out on raid and looted their rural counterparts. Villagers from all quarters, defending their homes, stabbed and kicked to death some 400-500 of these city marauders. No longer was it a war of Ming and Qing, but a war of city and countryside. The army proceeded to kill them all: "In Xin'gou, a village of 100 people, all but 7 were butchered." But the damage had been done. "That night, weeping could be heard throughout the city."[73]

A newly married couple that lived close to the route of the rebels' retreat was arrested. The Qing officer in charge killed the husband on the spot and tried to rape the wife. The brave woman fought for her chastity, and for this act she was skewered alive on a pole as a human candlestick. She survived the immediate impalement but screamed in pain. The vice-commander, Chen Xinyu, felt pity and did her a favor by cutting her head off.[74]

These are but a few examples from the inhuman wars in Fujian. Carnage, cannibalism, and total war even engulfed Fuzhou, the provincial capital, where the Qing position should have been most secure. Interminable rains from April to June 1647 drowned the crops. By August, the long-suffering countryside rose up in arms. Such rebels had little or nothing to do with the Ming, Qing, or Koxinga—they fought only for themselves. Paranoid that they were surrounded by enemies, Qing troops burned villages to the ground and enforced the population registers with random house-to-house searches. [75]

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[70] Ibid., 69.
[71] *Pubian Jishi* 莆变纪事, pp. 125-136.
[72] *Qingchu Pubian Xiaocheng* 清初莆变小乘, p. 69.
[73] Ibid., 70-71.
[74] Ibid., 71.
[75] *Rongcheng Jiwen* 榕城纪闻, pp. 6-7.

Villagers suspected of treachery were nailed to the city gates, and after being stabbed or burned to death by troops, they were carved into pieces by starving men and women who carried them away.[76]

Meanwhile, Koxinga's sailors continued to loot, burn, and rape along the coast up through 1660. Koxinga's officers, such as pirate Guo Erlong, murdered and kidnapped thousands of people for taxes and ransom; consequently, private stockades and forts mushroomed along the coast as villagers tried to defend their homes.[77] The war between Koxinga, the Qing, roving pirates, and rebels left coastal residents in social anarchy. They were triple-taxed and slaughtered by all sides for alleged disloyalty. What began as violence at sea cast its shadow on all who dwelled on land: all were suspect, all were targets for extortion. None of the butchers deserves apologies.

The mass killings revealed that the struggle for the coast was no mere battle between two armies—it was a totalizing war with no clear line of sovereignty. As Lynn Struve argues, "no ameliorative social policies could have been instituted by either the Ming or the Ch'ing until one side or the other took and held communities by force, not only from the other, but also from all the forces of armed conflict that abounded."[78] Fifteen years of butchery and rapine in the bogs and bays of Fujian had failed to accomplish this. By 1661, even far southwestern China was largely subdued, and the Ming loyalists were in retreat—yet on the southeast coast, neither the Qing nor Koxinga could secure a line of sovereignty, let alone hold the coastal population as subjects.

The Qing response was to create a brutally simplified frontier that would remove the population from contact with the sealord regime and also attempt to destroy the sources of maritime trade on which pirates and seaborne powers like Koxinga had built a trading empire. As early as October 14, 1660, Fujian Viceroy Li Shuaitai, one of the ablest Qing officers in Fujian, began to experiment with removing coastal towns in Tong'an and Haicheng counties.[79] Even Fujianese natives like Huang Wu, a former officer of Koxinga, recommended the Depopulation on the grounds that the sealord would quickly fall without access to coastal supplies.[80]

In 1661, the Qing state began to apply these policies more broadly to the southeast coast and build an artificial land boundary to restrain its subjects. Let us examine the process.

The Construction of a New Frontier

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[76] Ibid., 7.
[77] *Pubian Jishi* 莆变纪事, pp. 126-127; *Qingchu Pubian Xiaocheng* 清初莆变小乘, pp. 78-79.
[78] Struve 1984, pp. 13-14.
[79] *Qing Shizu Shilu Xuanji* 清世祖實錄選輯, p. 185 (*Shunzhi 17.9.11*).
[80] Lin Renchuan 1987, p. 429.

The Coastal Depopulation, which lasted from 1661-1683, began as a series of localized deportations and grew in scale until five coastal provinces were ordered to depopulate some or all of their coasts: Guangdong, Fujian, Zhejiang, Jiangnan (Nan Zhili), and Shandong. Fujian and Guangdong were the hardest hit; the others only lightly so. An original placard from Guangdong province in 1662, the first year of the Depopulation, reads as follows:

> *Proclamation of Removal [posted March 8, 1662]* [81]
>
> *Based on the seashore inspections of the Feudatory, officials, imperial commissioners, and commanders, the area starting from Chenghai to […a long list of place names follows…] is now designated as the boundary line. All villages outside the boundary, all places on the seacoast, must obey and move inland. Let this serve notice of Our imperial will. All villagers and residents outside the boundary, hearing this, must spread this order and move immediately inside the border; no hesitation or resistance will be tolerated.*
>
> *Once you have removed behind the borderline, you shall not cross it to farm the land. You shall not cross it to build houses in which to live. Violators will be executed for treason. Our imperial order is severe. If you commoners linger, delay, or wait and see, you will be exterminated as rebels. Those who have removed to the interior will wait for the viceroy and governor to investigate and provide land and housing. Obey this.*

And so, in fall 1661, the Qing began to scorch and wall off the coast. Earth and stone yielded to their designs; the land-to-sea continuum was broken; and the frightened fishermen of Dadeng Island saw a mermaid standing on the water, smiling.

The timing of the forced evacuations varied from place to place but generally seemed to take the following method: 1) first, lines were drawn; 2) then, a clean sweep was performed to force the population behind the lines; 3) trenches and light walls were built; and 4) the walled line was fortified with troops.

To draw the lines, Qing soldiers fixed poles in the ground and connected them with ropes. The exact placement of the line varied according to topography. The figure of 30 *li* (approx. 10 miles) from the sea is often given, but in practice the border varied from 10 *li* to some 20-30 or even 50 *li* (1 Chinese *li* = ⅓ mile or ½ km) from the coast—the major exceptions to this were the walled county and prefectural cities, which were themselves defensible and thus not ordered to evacuate.

Once the lines were drawn, coastal residents were given a terrifying ultimatum, usually as little as three days. Many people were still locked in

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[81] *Zhanglin Xiangtu Shiliao* 樟林乡土史料, p. 21 (document held in Chenghai county museum), cited in Bao Wei 2003, pp. 63-64.

indecision or disbelief when the troops returned to burn down their homes. As one witness from Fuzhou wrote, "men carried their wives and children onto the open roads as the fires were lit, leaving nothing behind them. The greater half of the refugees died on the roadside. Of the few that made it to the interior, not a scrap of food was to be had, and starved corpses lay before their eyes."[82] Nothing was to be left to give comfort; in Putian, thousands of trees, from fruit orchards to woods of pine and cypress, were axed. Then patrols came back to mow down the rest of the crops and flora, so that "not an inch of grass remained on the ground."[83]

The terrible burning prepared the lines for the next crucial phase: wall building. Big ditches known as *jiegou* 界溝—boundary trenches—were scooped beneath the rope lines. A typical trench measured some 7.1 m or 23.3 feet (2 *zhang* 丈) in width. Above them rose border walls that were generally at least some 11.7 ft. high and 4.7 ft. thick (in Chinese: 1 *zhang* high and 4 *chi* 尺 thick).[84] The labor and materials came from former homes of the now homeless coastal residents themselves, who were drafted into corvée labor gangs. The timing of these constructions differed in each county—some local walls came as late as 1668, years after the initial evacuation and multiple burnings and clearings of the boundary. Map 2 pictures the boundary's location.

Fig. 2: The Coastal Depopulation Boundary, map[85]

[82] *Rongcheng Jiwen* 榕城纪闻, pp. 22-23.
[83] *Pubian Jishi* 莆变纪事, p. 128.
[84] Wei Qingyuan 2002, p. 199.
[85] The settlements affected by the Depopulation number well over a thousand and cannot all be named here, so I have plotted the boundary on a modern map as close to the geographic coordinates as possible.

Killing at the lines intensified in the last major phase of building: the fortification of the boundary. Gun platforms and signal towers were built every few miles. Yu Yang painted a dismal picture: "Although the boundary was set, [the state] worried that border-crossers would be uncontrollable, so four forts and ten blockhouses were ordered to be built along the wall and stationed with troops. The people outside the city were forced to pay a household quota and conscripted into corvée labor. […] One fort cost some 3000-4000 silver taels, the blockhouses half as much. I cannot count the number of people flogged or beaten to death or driven to ruin. […] The movement of people inside the boundary was controlled by the troops, and so was the flow of goods from outside the boundary. Those without an official pass from the forts were killed on the spot."[86]

The Qing emphasis on surveillance and restricting movement suggests that the Depopulation was not simply a military policy aimed at Koxinga, nor was it identical to the Ming anti-pirate campaigns of the 1500s, which relied on negotiation and militias to fight pirates rather than attacking the coastal population.[87] As Xing Hang has shown in his research, Koxinga and his successor Zheng Jing, far from being mere pirates, were hybrid rulers who forged a maritime state structure that fused Zheng Zhilong's commercial-military organization with Ming institutions and ideology.[88] Combating this rival regime, the Depopulation was a political act of competitive state-building, the first step of which was to control movement across boundaries. No middle ground was to be shared with the Zheng state, nor would the Qing state tolerate the easy boundary crossing that had made it impossible to distinguish between ordinary traders, fishermen, and pirates. Signs by the coastal fence in Funing contained just five words of warning: "Dare to cross: and die" (*gan chu jie zhe: zhan* 敢出界者斬).[89]

A second step in this competitive state-building was to raise the state's power to suppress groups within the newly demarcated spaces. The act of forcibly relocating the population and restricting them behind a line struck at basic livelihoods and their autonomy from the state. Relocation was particularly devastating in Fujian, given the geography of the province: 90% of the land was mountainous, with a narrow and crowded coastal plain. Being forcibly evacuated ten miles inland, into hill country and without access to coastal polders, salt fields, and fisheries, impoverished the coastal Fujianese and put them at the mercy of the state. As one local source revealed, even proud coastal clans were reduced to "scattering like a flock of birds and scurrying away like

[86] *Pubian Jishi* 莆变纪事, pp. 128-129.
[87] See, for example, Hucker 1974.
[88] Hang 2010.
[89] Li Bo 李拨, *Funing Fuzhi* 福宁府志, cited in Zhu Weigan 1986, p. 403.

animals. The rich families that were stripped down to nothing were beyond counting."[90]

As a scorched earth policy, the Depopulation was generally successful at preventing the Qing state's maritime enemies from reestablishing a large base on the mainland coast. In this respect it was comparable to the scorched earth policies of the Mamluk Sultanate on the Syro-Palestinian coast in the 13th-15th centuries to deter the return of the Crusaders.[91] Unlike the Mamluks, however, the Qing sought not just to move the line of defense inland, but also the entire coastal population with it.[92]

Also unlike the Mamluk case, the Qing Depopulation was never conceived as a permanent fixture of Qing policy. The question remains why the Qing chose to continue to the Depopulation after the initial crisis had passed, and after the harsh measures had largely curbed sealord influence on the coast. By 1662 and 1663 (the second and third years of the Depopulation) the Qing was already fighting from a position of strength, not weakness. The Southern Ming resistance was crushed in May 1662. Koxinga, in the face of dwindling access to coastal supplies, departed from the mainland to attack the Dutch colony of Taiwan as a new base, and he suddenly died there of illness on June 23, 1662, shortly after conquering the island.[93] Koxinga's eldest son Zheng Jing succeeded him as sealord, but only after a crippling power struggle that caused thousands of Zheng officers and clansmen to defect to the Qing with their ships.[94]

The Dutch, who had lost Taiwan to Koxinga, allied with the Qing to enforce the Depopulation and attack Zheng Jing.[95] On November 20, 1663, the Qing and its Dutch allies routed the Zheng forces in the battle of Amoy Bay and drove the sealord from the shores of China. Zheng Jing retreated to Taiwan, where it would take years to rebuild his demoralized forces. Thus, the sealord threat was severely diminished, while the Qing gained in naval strength. Why, then, did the Qing continue to block the coast and restrict the population for *twenty more years* after the death of Koxinga and after the fall of Amoy—all the way until 1683?

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[90] *Jinjiang Shibi Yushan Linshi Zongpu* 晋江石壁《玉山林氏宗谱》, *Juan* 4, cited in Wang Lianmao and Zhuang Weiji 1984, p. 427.

[91] Fuess 2001.

[92] Albrecht Fuess notes that the Syro-Palestinian coastal dwellers continued to live in dilapidated towns and were under constant threat of Frankish pirate attack, as the coastline was left unfortified. Ibid., 47-49.

[93] On this conquest, for which Koxinga is best known in Chinese history, see Andrade 2011.

[94] *Qing Shengzu Shilu Xuanji* 清聖祖實錄選輯, pp. 9-11, 14.

[95] In July 1663 the VOC dispatched the strongest fleet it had ever sent to Chinese waters: 17 ships, 440 cannons, 1,382 sailors, 1,234 soldiers, and trade goods valued at 161,370 florins. Wills 1974, pp. 93-94.

Entrenchment and Abuses on the Frontier

Part of the answer lies in the failure of two planned naval invasions of Taiwan in 1664 and 1665 and the rapid breakdown of the Qing-Dutch alliance against the Zheng sealords, as well as Zheng Jing's successful regime reconsolidation on Taiwan.[96] However, the larger part of the answer lies in the conduct of the Depopulation policy itself.

A Qing edict of February 6, 1662 summed up the new strategy: "Now that the coastal populace has been moved inland, investigation should be easy. Officials cannot be as careless as they were before."[97] In his book *Seeing Like a State*, James Scott has written that one of the classic problems of statecraft is "a state's attempt to make a society legible, to arrange the population in ways that simplified the classic state functions of taxation, conscription, and prevention of rebellion."[98] To a certain degree, I believe that the Coastal Depopulation served a similar "simplification" function: the artificial boundary and its chokepoints starkly defined the bounds of Qing sovereignty against the jagged coastline. Where there had been no clear political frontier in the maritime province of Fujian, the Qing state created one.

However, the Qing was not a high modernist state committed to ever-increasing legibility and powers of surveillance, nor was its early state-building entirely consistent with the goals of centralization and simplification. While the Qing centralized its control over the bulk of North and Central China, on the coastal and western frontiers it delegated major powers to military satraps known as the Three Feudatories (*sanfan* 三藩), who built up private armies of 10,000-35,000 troops.[99] In practice, the Feudatory Princes of Fujian and Guangdong acted as the major regional authorities and the enforcers of the Depopulation. They (and the officials who connived with them) monopolized the coast during the Depopulation and carried on lucrative maritime trade despite the prohibitions.[100] In this way Geng Jimao, the Feudatory of Fujian, built himself a magnificent palace even as coastal evacuees starved to death.

Geng Jimao moved to Fuzhou in August 1661 and quickly exploited the Coastal Depopulation to make himself master of the local economy. As coastal villages burned down and refugees swarmed into the Fuzhou, his brute squad evicted city residents from their homes. More than half the city was confiscated by Geng's brokers and rented back to the locals at rates of 3 silver taels per month (a large sum). It only got worse. To get the silver, the cityfolk had to

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[96] See Wills 1974, Ch. 2-3; on Zheng Jing, see Hung 1981 and Hang 2010.
[97] *Ming Qing Shiliao* 明清史料, *Ding Bian* (4), Vol. 3: 257 [*Shunzhi 18.12.18*].
[98] Scott 1998, pp. 1-2.
[99] Wu Sangui, Shang Kexi, and Geng Jimao were three mercenary generals from the northeast whose assistance had been essential to the Qing conquest and who arrogated enormous sovereign powers to themselves in exchange for services rendered.
[100] As an example, see Viceroy Li Shuaitai's participation with Feudatory Geng Jingzhong in illegal trades with the Dutch, as described by Wills 1974, Ch. 2-3, *passim*.

borrow from Prince Geng's loan-sharking business at interest rates of 5-6 percent. Borrowers had the names of their entire family recorded in the books. If they repaid the loan on time, they were forced to take out another loan. If they could not repay in time, the entire family was driven into labor and prostitution.[101] Geng's loop had an entrance but no exit; the Feudatory had created his own savage brand of trickle-up economics.

The trickle became a torrent after 1663, as Zheng Jing retreated and turncoat captains abandoned the sealord, swarming ashore to surrender to the Qing. Thousands of houses in Putian were confiscated to billet the troops of former Zheng captains like Yang Fu. In 1666, Yang Fu and his thugs banded with the troops of Prince Geng to kidnap children and sell them.[102] Never mind that Zheng Jing had not posed much of a threat for years—Geng's patrols still roved around for loot, and Yang Fu's men raped the countryside; later, Yang was promoted to the provincial command of Zhejiang, and Geng's men came back for more.[103]

The attempts of the Qing central government to check such local abuses were slow and ineffectual, and all of this occurred in the context of a huge loss of revenue from the point of view of the Qing state. In Fujian, over 430,000 acres of prime coastal farmland were abandoned, and each year nearly a million Dutch guilders (the sum of 228,226.35 silver taels ≈ 912,905.40 florins) of land tax revenue were lost, plus the loss of over 2,000 metric tons of staple grain.[104] These losses may have comprised a fifth to a quarter of the province's total annual land tax collection.[105] This does not include miscellaneous revenues like conscription taxes, liquor taxes, and fishery taxes, which scholar Zhu Weigan has documented at just under 23,500 taels (94,000 florins) for Putian county alone.[106] Considering that Fujian had nineteen coastal counties, the total must have been immense. This still leaves out a lot: shipping losses, customs, salt fields, and other important maritime industries, which are difficult to estimate. Even these figures may underestimate the situation.

But by all accounts the number of soldiers in Fuzhou and surrounding regions was increasing, not just from Geng Jimao's private army but all of the former Zheng seamen who defected to the Qing and needed to be resettled. If coastal revenue was crippled by the Depopulation, then who was paying for all of these troops and squadrons of irregulars, thugs, and surrendered rebels?

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[101] *Rongcheng Jiwen* 榕城纪闻, p. 23.
[102] *Qingchu Pubian Xiaocheng* 清初莆变小乘, p. 83.
[103] Ibid., 83, 85.
[104] (Qianlong 33) *Fujian Xuzhi* 福建续志 (清乾隆卅三年纂修), *Juan* 11-12, cited in Zhu Weigan 1986, pp. 418-419. The exchange rate was 1 tael ≈ £ 3.5 or f4 [4 Dutch florins] in the 1660s, according to Wills 1974, p. 51. The rate rose to an estimated f4.125 per *tael* in the 1680s.
[105] By comparison, neighboring Guangdong province experienced losses of nearly 25% annual land tax. Li Dongzhu and Li Longqian 1999, p. 50.
[106] Zhu Weigan 1986, pp. 420-421.

An ugly truth emerges: the Depopulation was exploited by agents of the local state for their own ends. New monopolists like Geng Jimao siphoned off a fortune through the systematic impoverishment and forced dependency of the population within the boundary. Both the villagers who had been forcibly moved behind the wall, and the city people locked into poverty and debt, became 'clients' of the Feudatory and his henchmen. The surrendered Zheng pirates formed an important side clientele who greased the racketeering and human trafficking machine. In Guangdong province, Feudatory Shang Kexi built a similar extortion racket that owed its existence to the artificial boundary.[107] With the coast closed, Geng Jimao and Shang Kexi also monopolized secret trades with the Dutch VOC and the Portuguese in Macau.[108] Should the coast be reopened, their monopolies would be lost. The Feudatories and local accomplices were literally invested in the Depopulation—and it was they, I argue, who really kept the policy going for so many years.

Concluding Thoughts

A century of violence, from the pirate wars of the mid-1500s to the terrible Coastal Depopulation of 1661-1683, had ravaged Fujian almost beyond recognition. When would it end? Only a war or a plan of rehabilitation could have ended this frontier period of Fujian history, phased out the special military satrapy of Fujian, and ushered in a period of regular provincial governance. Ending the Depopulation would require the subordination of the military to civil control and Qing recentralization: the end of the Feudatory Princes as "virtual emperors in their respective domains."[109]

On December 28, 1673, Feudatory Prince Wu Sangui in southwestern China launched the last great challenge to Qing rule: the Rebellion of the Three Feudatories (1673-1681). In this climactic war, when the Qing state was fighting for its life against its three monstrous satraps, sealord Zheng Jing attacked China's shores, and the Qing was compelled to destroy him along with every one of the autonomous powers that threatened central rule. Stretches of the coast were repopulated and depopulated multiple times in the bloody seesaw war. In 1680, Zheng Jing was again driven off the mainland and back to Taiwan, where he soon died in despondency. In July 1683, Admiral Shi Lang led a Qing fleet of 300 ships and 20,000 men across the Taiwan Strait and smashed the Zheng forces in the Pescadores. 38 years of seaborne resistance to Qing rule ended on

[107] Gu Pan 2006.
[108] Macau was one of the few exceptions to the Coastal Depopulation in that the Portuguese were allowed to stay and eke out a meager existence, although reversals of Qing leniency threatened them at times. See Wills 1984, esp. Ch. 3.
[109] Oxnam 1975, p. 142.

October 8 with the surrender of Zheng Jing's teenaged son Zheng Keshuang, and Taiwan was annexed as a territory of China for the first time.[110] In 1684, the Coastal Depopulation was finally repealed, and the coast reopened for settlement and trade.

Numbers tell only part of the story. By the time the Depopulation ended in 1684, Qing surveys recorded that it had destroyed or abandoned 1,840 settlements in Fujian province and its surrounding prefectures, and local gazetteers recorded the loss of some 437,150 acres (about 1,769 square kilometers) of farmland in Fujian.[111] The death toll is harder to assess, for it is difficult to separate the innumerable deaths the Ming-Qing wars (1644-1662) from those caused by the Depopulation itself (1661-1683). From my research I would estimate conservatively that in Fujian and Guangdong perhaps 150,000-250,000 died directly from the Depopulation and from the rampage that shadowed it, and that of the millions of civilians affected, we cannot be entirely certain of their fates. We may imagine—and some sources indicate—that not a few of those brave men and women found ways to survive: by vanishing from tax records, by carving inland mountains into terrace farms, and by taking to sea: some to Taiwan, others to build those hardy communities of Hokkien and Teochew peoples that today are millions strong in Southeast Asia. The calamity of the empire's scorched shores marked the great dispersion of the maritime peoples of China in the Age of Sail.

Fujian and China's southeast coast would slowly rebuild their productive industries, farms, and maritime activity after the coastal ban was lifted, a recovery that is beyond the scope of this paper. But no amount of healing—not even the courageous pluck with which Fujianese seafarers bootstrapped themselves into a new golden age of trade from 1683-1735 (what Chin-keong Ng has called "The Amoy Network"[112])—could make us dismiss or forget the carnage we have surveyed. The Qing state took its own lessons from nearly forty years of conflict and was thereafter wary of sustained coastal military buildup or autonomous maritime organizations, especially in Fujian. Even the annexation of Taiwan (designated a subsidiary of Fujian) was handled with a frontier approach of quarantine and caution.[113]

The search for a boundary-crossing perspective on local histories, such as that of Fujian's mariners, demands that we look at common problems in widely divergent contexts. I hope that this article will invite comparative research. The explosion of maritime violence in Fujian and China's southeast coast from the mid-1500s to the mid-1600s deserves further scrutiny in light of international trade flows, the coterminous coalescence of autonomous regional

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[110] Wong 1983, pp. 183-184.

[111] Du Zhen 杜臻, *Yue Min Xunshi Jilüe* 粵閩巡視紀略 (c. 1684), *Juan* 3-5; (Qianlong 33) *Fujian Xuzhi* 福建续志 (清乾隆卅三年纂修), *Juan* 11-12, cited in Zhu Weigan 1986, pp. 418-419.

[112] Ng 1983.

[113] See Khu 2001 on the Qing military in Taiwan.

powers (in Fujian as in Japan and Manchuria), and state policies that marginalized, criminalized, and sought to constrain mobile populations. Such factors created new frontiers that became battlegrounds in Asia as elsewhere in the 16th and 17th centuries. Piracy has in all states and societies prompted varied institutional responses, some public, some private: as Robert Antony and others have shown, these can range from naval expeditions to embargoes to insurance contracts.[114] But the Qing Depopulation seems extreme by any standard. Apparently, in Ming-Qing China seaborne and littoral violence was organized and politicized enough to trigger a crushing state response against maritime activity as a whole. Was Qing China aberrant in the scale of its response and in the use of land frontier building to draw a boundary against an outlaw sea?

The case of the Mamluk Sultanate's scorched earth policy, cited earlier in this article, suggests a possible counterpoint to Qing violence against coastal installations. However, we may also consider the roughly contemporaneous case of the Barbary pirate attacks in the Mediterranean in the 1500s and 1600s: similarly brutal, similarly politicized, in some cases openly sponsored by the Ottoman Empire against its enemies, and yet in the European and North African cases such pirate attacks did not induce such massive state-sponsored dislocations of the coastal populations as we have seen in the Chinese historical example. Questions about relative state power, and how maritime violence shaped relations between the state and the coastal populations that it attempted to rule, may inform such debates and future research.

The story of the Zheng sealords and the Coastal Depopulation also impacted the geopolitical configuration of East Asia, both with regards to Koxinga's seizure of Dutch Taiwan and the closure of the Chinese coast. China's closure in 1661 and reopening in 1684 happened to coincide with other major acts of maritime legislation in what turned out to be a protectionist and mercantilist period—examples include the Sakoku (or "closed door") policies of Tokugawa Japan, the British Navigation Acts of 1660, and the Dutch East India Company's decision in 1690 to end direct trade with China.[115]

Investigating such connections in Qing and world history may reveal comparative processes of disciplining *space* as well as disciplining people by means of boundaries and forced relocations. As unique as the scale of the Qing Coastal Depopulation may be in maritime history, its underlying imperatives were shared by other early modern states: a desire to establish sovereignty, impose subjecthood, and constrain the mobility of peripheral populations. Further study of Qing coastal policies, Ottoman practices of forced resettlement or population transfers (*sürgün*)[116], and state-sponsored migrations in the Indian Ocean, for instance, could lead to the discovery of historical commonalities and useful comparisons in continental and maritime state-making.

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[114] Antony 2010.
[115] Laver 2011; Harper 1939; Blussé 1996.
[116] Kasaba 2009; Inalcik 1998.

It is worth asking, after all, how and why different states at different times come to "see like a state", and to prefer stark lines. It seems to me that one mark of early modernity is that states come to see a group of people, socioeconomic classes, or even a coast as objects of social engineering. One way to patiently decompose the myth of Chinese isolationism and exceptionalism is to integrate China more fully into the global discussions on early-modern economic and state formation and frontier-building.

Ultimately, Fujian's frontier experiences seem to suggest the moral that the life of a frontier is finite: it is something created and eliminated by the interactions of state and local agency. Fujian was a frontier not by virtue of being on the "edge" of the empire or far from the metropole, but by virtue of state policies aimed at containing and restraining, dividing and ruling the province. If Fujian was a world of boundary-crossers, it was not that the ocean itself was a barrier, but rather because the imperial state (with its political imperatives) attempted to draw borders of legality and illegality, and marked them in blood and destruction.

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FUJIAN COAST: THE HOME OF BOUNDARY-CROSSERS IN THE LONG EIGHTEENTH CENTURY

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Angela Zito has suggested that anxiety about boundaries in eighteenth-century China caused the Manchu emperors to be obsessed with controlling and adjusting the boundaries between ethnic groups, social classes, and gendered spheres.[1] Shifting the research focus from the heartland of the Lower Yangzi region, which has been the focus of most research on the high Qing period, this paper examines China's southeast coast under the lenses of ethnicity and gender. The Fujian coast society consisted of at least three types of boundary-crossers: traveling merchants, migrating She 畲 peoples who made up an important ethnic minority, and maritime seafaring men. By contrast to the Manchu emperors' controlling role, this study analyzes their unruly subjects' cross-boundary movements, including single-male travel and migrant family resettlement.

While China's southeast coast (the provinces of Fujian and Guangdong) had a long maritime tradition with a legacy of overseas connections, the Fujian coast meanwhile became a significant destination of internal overland family migration from mountainous areas downward toward the ports of trade. In this migrant network, women of the She ethnic group, positioning themselves as desirable brides and exemplary wives, played a crucial role in integrating minority households into the Han majority population. Only when we examine Fujianese migration through the lenses of gender and ethnicity are we able to understand the relationship between the flow of people and the society nourishing that flow.

Recent scholarship on the new Qing history (described by Joanna Waley-Cohen) has shed light on the oversimplified sinicization thesis through the new lenses of ethnicity and gender. The new approach "favored paying more attention to Qing difference", which brought identity politics into the Qing studies.[2] First, scholars stressed the ruling house was Manchu. Different from a native Chinese dynasty, the Manchu emperors showed great interests in expanding territory and presenting a multitude lordship to different subjects among Manchu, Chinese, Mongol, and Tibetan. The ruling house also propelled a Manchu civilizing project to transform the customs of the borderland population groups. In the civilizing process, Han women played a significant

[1] Zito 1997, p. 39.
[2] Waley-Cohen 2004, p. 196.

role transmitting proper cultural values and behaviors, such as the famous woman poet Yunzhu 恽珠, who married into a Manchu family and joined the celebration of the Manchu civilizing project through her compilation of women's anthologies in "Our Dynasty" (*guochao* 国朝).[3] The anthropologist focus on intermarriage between the Han and other borderland peoples has led highly gendered examination of cultural encounters at the ethnic frontier.[4] Similar to the gender and ethnic perspectives, class cast new light on the Qing history. In the eighteenth century the Manchus began a series of campaigns to secure their rule by broadening the base of compliance among the population. One of its notable achievements was the Yongzheng Emperor's campaign in the 1720s to "liberate" the pariah peoples (*jianmin* 贱民). The 1723 "Emancipation" edict granted commoner status to previously debased groups, such as *yuehu* 乐户 (music households) and *danhu* 蜑户 (boat people).[5] His benevolence towards pariah peoples and marginal ethnic groups aimed to civilize them with moral education (*jiaohua* 教化). The redrawing of ethnic, gender, and class boundaries under the Qing presented a complex picture of the Manchu cultural universalism through the lens of new Qing history.

Then, how did the Manchu cultural universalism affect people who lived on the Fujian coast? In what sense was the coastal Fujianese different from the old generalized narrative of the Qing Empire? To answer these questions, this research places its subjects—the coastal Fujianese—into the larger historical context of the Manchu civilizing process and Fujian elites' embrace of the Manchu universalism in favor of its great potential of extending the benevolent governing to the "barbarian islands" in Nanyang (today's Southeast Asia) through maritime trade.

China's southeast coast sustained a long maritime tradition with a legacy of overseas connections across the South China Sea. However, that tradition was severely impacted by Qing government policies, which banned maritime trade and forcibly evacuated the coastal population following the Manchu defeat of Ming loyalists in the 1660s.[6] It was not until 1727, in response to the recommendations of advocates to restore maritime trade, that the court finally lifted this ban. The reopening of the coast again created opportunities for the Fujianese to seek their fortunes overseas, while Fujianese scholars and officials returned to positions of prominence and influence in the imperial government, and a general economic revival ensued. Focusing on the recovery period, this paper examines three groups of boundary-crossers in Fujian from the perspectives of ethnicity, gender, and class. This research attempts to argue, while the Manchu emperors managed controlling and adjusting the boundaries between ethnic groups, social classes, and gendered spheres, the coastal

[3] Mann 1997.
[4] Harrell 1995.
[5] Sommer 2000.
[6] Ho 2011.

Fujianese were skilled at crossing the boundaries as being self-empowered as agents by both the Manchu cultural universalism and the bourgeoning maritime world.

Imperial Sojourners and Their Families

Fujian is covered with mountains and faces the Pacific Ocean along a lengthy coast, which stretches for more than 3,000 kilometers. On the coast there are a number of good ports, including Quanzhou and Xiamen, capable of harboring large ships. This was an enormous advantage for Fujian's maritime trade. According to Wang Gungwu, Chinese trade in the South China Sea developed over ten centuries between the earliest evidence of trade from the first century B.C.E. and the founding of the Song Dynasty in 960.[7] Real prosperity for the ports of Fujian began during the 900s, when a mission from Srivijaya (in Sumatra) visited the independent kingdom of Min in Fujian in 904. In the late tenth century, during the Southern Tang (940-975), two of the most important ports of later Chinese maritime history, Quanzhou and Zhangzhou, emerged. These Fujian ports gradually developed into competitive centers for Chinese trade in the South China Sea. A southern Fujian pattern of regional prosperity and institutions, well described by Billy So, took shape.[8]

Zhang Han's 张瀚 (1511-1593) description of the late imperial interregional trade networks has impressed many of us: numerous items traded in the capital including priceless jade from Kunlung, pearls from the island of Hainan, and gold from Yunnan. In central China, Kaifeng acted as a transportation center, hosting merchants along the Grand Canal and Yellow River. In general, no matter in the southeast or northwest area, there would be its own greatest profits in some items that attracted merchants all over the empire.[9]

In Fujian, the greatest profits were in its specialized cash crops such as tea, sugarcane, indigo dyes, tangerines, narcissus, and deer fur and rice from the large island of Taiwan. The Wuyi Mountain area has long been famous for its Oolong (black dragon) tea production. Various versions of the folktale about the Red Robe tea (*da hong pao* 大红袍) reflect its fame rooted both in its own magic and the imperial household's favor.[10] The Fujian made indigo dyes dominated the Lower Yangzi Valley for its unapproachable quality so that Jiangnan farmers had to give up planting their own indigo plants. Similarly, the Zhangzhou area had become a specialized location for planting narcissus and its

[7] Wang 1998.
[8] So 2000.
[9] 张瀚 1993, p. 216.
[10] *Imagining Women*, 1995, pp. 30-35.

merchants traded narcissus to the Lower Yangzi Valley.[11] By the 1720s, Taiwan, counted as a prefecture of Fujian, exported 60,000 tons of sugar to the mainland, shipped to Suzhou, Ningbo, Shanghai, and Tianjin. Some of the Taiwanese sugar destined for the international market was also re-exported to Guangdong.[12]

In eighteenth century Fujian, 60 to 70 percent of farmland was converted to tobacco cultivation. Limited land remained for growing rice and wheat. Thus, the Fujianese were dependent on food imports from Jiangnan and Taiwan.[13] Another Qing source claimed that only 20 percent of Fujianese worked on farmland, and another 40 percent were divided between the mountains and the seas, which left about 40 per cent who were traders.[14] Fujian's economic situation was quite different from that of the Jiangnan or north China regions. Most Fujianese made their living from trade or commercial agriculture in non-grain products, while in Guangxi and the Yangtze River valley most people were farmers, and grain production still dominated the agrarian economy.[15]

In search of profits, Fujianese made trading voyages on the seas, traveling north to Jiangnan and Manchuria, and south to Canton and the South Seas countries. In a memorial, the Fujian pragmatist Lan Dingyuan 蓝鼎元 (1689-1733) described the ease of traveling to trade from Amoy to north China: "I was raised along the coast and grew accustomed to the convenience of ocean-going travel. Merchants built their ships and bought commodities, set off from Amoy on the winds, and in about ten days, they might arrive in Tianjin (close to the capital). Then they continually went up to Manchuria, or down to Jiaozhou [on the Shandong peninsula], Shanghai, Zhapu [in Zhejiang province], and Ningbo. Fujian and Guangdong commercial ships are used to go back and forth every year."[16] Lan's description was seconded by an early nineteenth-century Amoy gazetteer (*Xiamen Zhi* 厦门志), which recorded that commercial ships, including trans-oceanic ships, sugar boats, and grain boats (*caochuan* 漕船), departed from Amoy. The role of the grain boats was primarily to transfer the tax grains (*caoliang* 漕粮) to the North. Trans-oceanic ships sailed across the strait to Taiwan, and other ships sailed along the coast toward Wenzhou, Ningpo, Shanghai, Tianjin, Denglai [in Shandong province], and Jinzhou [in Manchuria].[17]

As the Fujian area could not supply its own needs for food staples, especially grain, Fujian merchants carried soybeans from north China and rice from Jiangnan on the return voyage to Fujian. The cross-regional circulation of

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[11] 文震亨 1966, 2.11-12, s.v. "shuixian".
[12] Mazumder 1998, p. 300.
[13] 郭起元 1972, pp. 1305-1306.
[14] 谢章铤, *Wen* 1. Also, see 梁章钜, 8: 8b-9a.
[15] Brandt 1989, p. 170.
[16] 蓝鼎元 (a): 15a-20b.
[17] *Xiamen Zhi*, *Juan* 5: 166.

commodities benefited people all over the empire. Fujian merchants made their profits through this cross-regional exchange.

In a similar manner, Fujian degree candidates and scholar officials traveled on the same journey with their native merchants. The successful *juren* degree holders took their examination trip up north to the capital for a higher level test seeking the highest *jinshi* degree and its follow-up official appointments in the imperial administrative system. According to Ping-ti Ho's research on the geographic distribution of *jinshi* degree holders in the Ming civil service, Fujian ranked fourth among provinces, with a total of 2,116 *jinshi*. The top three provinces were Zhejiang, Jiangsu, and Jiangxi, with totals of 3,280, 2,721, and 2,400 respectively.[18]

In the course of the long eighteenth century, Fujian produced a few of prominent Neo-Confucian (*lixue* 理学) scholars, such as Li Guangdi 李光地 (1642-1718), Cai Shiyuan 蔡世远 (1682-1733), Cai Xin 蔡新 (1706-1799), Lan Dingyuan, and Lei Hong 雷鋐 (1696-1760). Together with Fujian Governors Zhang Boxing and Chen Hongmou, they promoted Zhu Xi's 朱熹 learning or Fujian school of Neo-Confucianism in the local and all over the empire. One of its core concepts is managing the world (*jingshi* 经世), which made these scholar officials a group of pragmatists with their deep concerns about commoners' livelihood and local community's well-being.[19]

Accompanying sojourning merchants and scholar officials, Fujian women (the female component of the Fujian school of Neo-Confucianism) were on the road frequently. We find them venturing into Manchuria in the northeast, settling in a border town close to present-day Macao in the far south, crossing the Taiwan Strait, and traveling throughout Taiwan. As they traveled, these women made detailed poetic records of their experiences which are preserved in two extant versions of Fujian *guixiu* 闺秀 poetry collections.[20] Even though these women sat behind the curtain of the carriage, sheltered under the boat roof, or stayed in the inner quarters of the official residence, they definitely crossed the gendered boundary of inner and outer spheres and changed the stereotype of "cloistered ladies" described by Confucian ideals. Not only did they physically step outside the inner quarters, some of these women also boldly expressed their recognizing of the polity, their understanding of the dynastic history, and their ambition to serve the country.

While elite women were on the road with their families, ordinary Fujian women were also allowed to migrate to the frontier settlement of Taiwan for the first time in the eighteenth century.[21] Lan Dingyuan advocated family migration instead of migration by single males to Taiwan, since he thought once men

[18] Ho 1962, p. 227.
[19] Li 2007, Chapter One.
[20] Li 2010, pp. 315-338.
[21] Li, forthcoming.

settled down with their households, they would not be easily to make troubles at the risk of losing their family. Crossing the Taiwan Strait, Fujian women resettled in the frontier community, being used as a mediator against the continued revolts among the settlers and the role model of proper behaviors for aborigine women to emulate. While the Han settlers developed the new frontier in Taiwan, back to their home on the Fujian coast there were a few ethnic She families resettled down in their new home.

Migrating Ethnic She People

She people once called themselves "*Shanha* 山哈", which means "migrant guests living in the mountains." The first known use of the term *She* 畲 to refer to this group of people was made during the Song by the scholar Liu Kezhuang 刘克庄 (1187-1269), who classified the "barbarians" who lived in the peripheral mountain areas into Man, Yao, Li, Dan, and She.[22] Prior to the written record from the Song, the "Admonition to the She People in Zhangzhou" by Liu Kezhuang,[23] we have little evidence for the history of the She. There is a debate about the origins of the She ethnic group among Chinese scholars.[24] In brief, the She did not comprise a single racial group; rather the term She was a cultural concept, like Hakka. Literally, *She* meant slash and burn, or swidden, cultivation. Slash and burn cultivation was seen as a "primitive" way to fertilize the soil and create an arable field, or an open hilly "wasteland".[25] In the eyes of Han people, She swidden cultivation was a backward practice that most Han had abandoned long before in the Han Dynasty.

Specializing in indigo and ramie, She people mostly engaged in agriculture, and had a long tradition of planting indigo. Indigo's significant position in the trade between Fujian and Jiangnan was one factor that affected the changing life pattern of the She people who planted the dyestuff. As they gradually abandoned their old swidden cultivation, they adapted to tilling

[22] 刘克庄, *Juan* 93.
[23] 刘克庄, *Juan* 93.
[24] Some suggest that they are the indigenous people living in the periphery mountain areas of Fujian, Zhejiang, and Jiangxi. Others disagree with this suggestion and insist that the She belong to the *Wuling man* (barbarians of Wuling), who migrated from Hunan to South China in the late Tang period. The third opinion is that the She is a multiple ethnic group, which included the migrant *Wuling man* from Hunan, indigenous mountain people in the peripheral areas of Fujian, Guangdong, and Jiangxi, and some Han people escaping chaos in the north.
[25] James C. Scott disagrees with the stereotypy view of swidden cultivation. See Scott, 2009, pp. 9, 18.

rented farmland. In the early seventeenth century, She people started settling down near the coast communities.[26]

Similar to the important role that Han women played in Taiwan frontier settlement, She women adjusted and adapted to the host culture while trying to preserve their own cultural values. The Confucian economic ideal was men farming and women weaving. Women's work was their household chores and weaving at home. The inner and outer gendered spheres were prescribed clearly in moral tracts for women. The significant contribution of Jiangnan women's textual production to household economy is evident in many established literature.[27] She women overstepped the inner and outer gendered boundary everyday not to let the host cultural value confine their energy and free mobility. In some cases of Han women married into She households, we can see that they had to fulfill the dual roles requested from differing cultures. "*Furen wei shi* 妇人为市" or "women trading in market" was a typical She custom. For example, Lan Dingyuan's mother, a literate Han woman, married into a She family. She sold sweet potatoes in market during day time as other She women, and taught his two sons at home in the evening as other Han educating mothers. Not only did Lan's mother overstep the prescribed gendered spheres, she also crossed the ethnic boundaries as well as bridged the Han and She cultures. While in reality there were also some Han women peddlers supported their poor families, it may be safer to say that this is the class nature of ethnicity.

These observations draw our attention to the critical issue of the cultural interaction between minority groups and Han Chinese. Both Segawa Masahisa 瀨川昌久 and G. W. Skinner have suggested that patterns of inter-ethnic marriage between Han Chinese and minorities might have been one of the more important channels through which the Han adopted elements from the minority cultures.[28] In place of generalizing about ethnicity, it would be more appropriate to think about the intermarried Han or She women as boundary-crossers in a fluid society.

While some of the She acculturating themselves with Confucian cultures, ordinary She families preserved their culture values in marriage practice against the Confucian ideal of widow chastity promoted by the Manchu state in borderlands. The cult of female marital fidelity prevailed on southeast

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[26] "Zengcheng Shi Pan Lan Lei Shi Zupu", "Huidong Xian Duozhu Xiang Pen Pan Lan Lei Li Lan Zupu", in 朱洪 and 李筱文, 2001, pp. 21, 27.

[27] Mann 1997, and Bray 1997.

[28] Accounts of She ethnic minority women stress endurance, physical strength, and diligence. However, reflecting on current scholarship that draws comparisons between the She and the Hakka, we need to pay close attention to any generalization about the characteristics of She ethnic minority women. G. William Skinner, in his introduction to Leong Sow-Theng's *Migration and Ethnicity in Chinese History: Hakkas, Pengmin, and Their Neighbors*, points out that we need to trace the historical development of the Hakka gender system back to its incubation period when the Hakka settled together with the She. See Skinner 1997: 1-18. See, Segawa Masahisa 瀨川昌久 1995, pp. 191-203.

coast in the late imperial period, and Fujian was infamous for its public performance of female suicide. Weijing Lu has suggested that the most dramatic suicides, "in the fashion of *benxun* 奔殉 (hastening to mourn a fiancé and follow him in death) and *datai sijie* 搭台死节 (setting up a platform to perform suicide for chastity)", took place exclusively in Fujian.[29] "In the Min custom half of the baby girls are not raised, those who grow up are expected to become *lienü* 烈女 (martyred girl)."[30] Lu argued that this local practices were rooted in parents' thirst for fame and the lineage's longing for glory, which were stimulated by the imperial state's award system (*jingbiao* 旌表). T'ien Ju-K'ang noted that this cult appeared first among scholar-official families and was later adopted by commoners.[31] She family genealogies consistently kept detailed records of She widows' remarriages. Unlike Han chaste women's suicides, which brought glory or economic benefit to their families,[32] a Han widow's suicide caused trouble for the entire She family, and the compiler(s) clearly expressed disgust at the suicide in the genealogy.

Despite class differentiation, both T'ien Ju-Kang and Helen Siu have described a pattern of commoners' acculturation to the practices, such as footbinding and female marital fidelity, of elite families in south China. Yet, despite the efforts of the frustrated scholars depicted by T'ien who were forced to be transmitters promoting the cult of marital fidelity to the local populace, it seems that the She family women did not bother with Confucian notions of sexuality and marriage. We cannot simply treat the She family's migration from the uplands to the coast as a process of assimilation or acculturation to Confucian culture. During the long eighteenth century, Manchu emperors and Confucian scholar-officials were certainly enthusiastic about using Confucian moral education to transform these ethnic groups into loyal subjects, along with integrating them into the regular household registration system. However, it is difficult to see any effect of these efforts to promote Confucian culture upon the She families' views of gender, sexuality, and marriage. They were more attracted by the economic opportunities rather than the government's promoted Confucian culture.

Seafaring Men and their Families

Unlike the farming migrants to Taiwan, Fujianese overseas sojourning during the long eighteenth century was highly gendered: only males were allowed to leave the coast sojourning in the Nanyang countries. One of the reasons for this

[29] Lu 2008, p. 135.
[30] Cited in Lu 2008, p. 116.
[31] T'ien 1988, p. 82.
[32] T'ien 1988, p. 85.

gendered phenomenon was that overseas sojourners' extended families and even their clans wanted them and their remittance to return home eventually. Women who left behind by overseas sojourners served as an anchor to tie these seafaring men to the Fujian coast.

Wang Gungwu's study of the South China Sea's commerce trade traces Fujian's maritime trade with Southeast Asia back to the period before the Song dynasty.[33] According to a noted Song gazetteer, *Three Mountains Gazetteer* (*Sanshan Zhi* 三山志),[34] Fujianese could easily reach the Zhejiang coast in the north and Canton's waterways in the south in three days' time. During the Yuan Dynasty, the Fujianese Wu Jian 吴鉴 recorded the maritime trade of his contemporaries. Wu explained that, beyond the middle kingdom, there were "four oceans", and tens of thousands of foreign countries. Avoiding the north ocean's severe and strong winds, people could go to the east, west, and south for thousands of *li* 里, and reach those countries one after another. If the traveler had a translator, he could communicate with people in those barren regions at the margins of all under heaven.[35] Yuan Dynasty records also attest that Quanzhou merchants sought profit overseas, thousands of *li* away from their native place.[36] At roughly the same time, Arab and Indian merchants sailed to China on Chinese junks, in order to trade.[37] Exchange of commodities such as fish, jade, metal, textiles, cotton, rice, opium, timber, books, and edible birds' nests linked China and Southeast Asia for centuries. Other less expected commodities, such as human labor, the Bible, and coins used in regional trade, also circulated through this exchange.[38]

The Qing registration system attempted to pin down mobile seafaring men by attaching them to their boats.[39] There were two subcategories of boat households, merchant ship households (*shangchuan hu* 商船户) and fishing boat households (*yuchuan hu* 渔船户), and Qing policies for registering households in coastal areas differed for the two types. For fishing boats, only the ship owner was registered. For merchant ships, the ship owner and his shipmates registered their ages, distinguishing characteristics, and native places. Before going to sea, they showed the list to the officers at the seaport.[40] The ship owners who rented

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[33] Wang 1998.

[34] A gazetteer compiled in 1182, originally including 40 *Juan*; today's version has 42 *Juan*. Sanshan is a nickname of Fuzhou. This gazetteer includes nine branches, such as geography, revenues, military security, civil administration, people, temples, customs, etc.

[35] Wu Jiank 吴鉴, "Xu", in *Dao Yi Zhi Lüe* 岛夷志略.

[36] Wang Yi, "Quanzhou Liang Yi Shi". See 陈高华, 2001, p. 429.

[37] 田汝康, 1957, pp. 3-4.

[38] Tagliacozzo and Chang 2011.

[39] Due to the limited sources about the seafaring men, this section attempts to discuss the cross-state's border movement by examining the government's controlling policies.

[40] "Shihuozhi, Hukou", *Qingshigao*, *Juan* 120, *Ce* 13: 3482. "Chuanzheng", in *Xiamen Zhi*, *Juan* 5: 166-175.

their ships to other shippers or merchants were responsible for any crime and malfeasance by the leaseholders. This suggests that imperial control over coastal merchant-ship households was careful and thorough.

In contrast to local scholars' examination trips and officials' transfers within the empire which absorbed them into a larger polity, overseas merchants' sojourning and returning brought prosperity to local communities. But memorials circulating between the emperor and his officials focus on their concerns about the illegal activities of merchant-ship households: piracy[41], smuggling rice to foreign lands[42], and sojourning in foreign lands. After the defeat of the Zheng forces in Taiwan, the Qing government did attempt to restore maritime trade along the southeast coast. However, because of its concern about suspect activities and the priority it gave to coastal security, the government continually limited the trading areas permissible to merchant-ship households. In 1717, it was recommended: "Merchant ships should be forbidden to trade with Luzon, Sunda [present Indonesia] and other places. They should be stopped at strategic places such as Nan'ao. The marine defense fleet along the coast of Guangdong and Fujian should be patrolled and inspected. Anyone who disobeys this prohibition should be arrested and punished."[43] Local elites were unhappy with this Marine Ban. Lan's petition pinpoints the problem they perceived in the policy-making process. Certain senior ministers, who did not consider the opinions of the local men who understood the situation, made policy on coastal affairs. In their eyes, border security was more important than prosperity. Lan wrote: "During the time when the Marine Ban was instituted, the senior ministers had no personal knowledge of the situation overseas and were not familiar with the problems. And the men not holding official posts, who understood the situation, were unable to express their opinions to the court. Hence, from start to finish, the real situation was never discussed, and the ban on Nanyang trade was initiated." Furthermore, Lan criticized: "The present policy of banning trade with Nanyang is not helpful but only harmful. The ban can only impoverish the rich among the coastal inhabitants, and make the poor even poorer. It has driven craftsmen and merchants to become vagrants, and vagrants to become thieves and robbers."[44] In other words, Lan claimed that when the statesmen at the court established the Marine Ban to ensure their top priority of border security, they primarily damaged the prosperity of the coastal communities, which would eventually lead to chaos along the border coast.

After the Yongzheng Emperor lifted the Marine Ban in 1727, provincial officials issued a series of border security measures to control the sojourning and

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[41] A recent study of pirate ships along Fujian coast argues that they were the results of the Marine Ban, but not the reason for the Marine Ban. See Zhuang 庄国土, 2001, p. 62.

[42] Natural disasters affected Fujian rice production year after year. It even needed to buy rice from Taiwan prefecture and Zhejiang province. Hence, transporting rice to foreign lands was not allowed.

[43] "Shengzu Shilu", *Qing Shilu*, *Juan* 271, *Ce* 6: 658.

[44] 蓝鼎元 (b): *Juan* 3: 1a-6a.

returning of overseas crews. In 1728, Gao Qizhuo 高其倬 (Governor-general of Fujian and Zhejiang), Chang Lai 常赉 (Governor of Fujian), and Yang Wenqian 杨文乾 (Governor of Guangdong) submitted a joint memorial to the emperor on policies regulating overseas crews and merchants. Upset that quite a few overseas Fujianese had remained in foreign lands, the governors recommended: "Local officers should inspect the ship owners and their shipmates, require them to prepare documents certifying their identities in their neighborhoods, and order every three ships of the same trading fleet to be held responsible for the actions of the others. The local officers should collect the documents when they issue the permits. Ages and distinguishing characteristics should be registered in the documents, which will be used for inspection at the seaport. If [the officers at port] find any differences from the reported documents, the guarantor should be arrested. When they return, the officers should again investigate the number of people on the ship. If anyone is missing, the ship and the missing person's family will be arrested." They even recommended that fingerprints be recorded and reported to the governor.[45] However, Fujian Fleet *Tidu* 提督 (Admiral) Lan Tingzhen 蓝廷珍 (1664-1729), a distant cousin of Lan Dingyuan, thought the policy unreasonable. A report noted: "Lan Tingzhen stated that it is hard to inspect the fingerprints of helmsmen whose fingerprints were unidentifiable for they hold the helm all the time. With tens of people on a ship they set a sail without a fixed schedule. If someone is ill or has died, they have to change the roster. And usually passengers from other prefectures or districts are walk-in customers; if they are asked to go home and prepare the documents, the appropriate time for sailing will be missed." Hence, Lan disagreed with the policy of inspecting fingerprints and preparing for certification. The governors criticized Lan for local favoritism, as he came from the same region as did some of the arrested sailors and merchants. The emperor sided with the governors.[46]

While imperial policies attempted to regulate coastal merchant-ship households, they also turned a cold shoulder to Chinese returning from overseas who had stayed beyond the allotted time for sojourning in foreign lands.

One memorial noted that in Batavia alone there were more than ten thousand Chinese. Among these overseas Chinese, "six- to seven-tenths were from Fujian, three- to four-tenths from Guangdong and Zhejiang."[47] When some overseas Fujianese began to return home after the Marine Ban was lifted, concerns about loss of control increased. In 1728, Gao Qizhuo, the governor-general of Fujian and Zhejiang, reported to the emperor that from the tenth month in 1717 to the third month in 1728, twenty-one ships sailed from the Amoy seaport. Twelve ships returned to Amoy in the late sixth and seventh months of that year. Besides tons of rice, the shippers also brought back the

[45] QYZY, *Ce* 87: 99b-101b, n. 85b-89a.
[46] QYZY, *Ce* 87: 102a-103b.
[47] QYZY, *Ce* 87: 85b-89a.

overseas Fujianese who had remained in foreign lands prior to the Marine Ban.[48] Investigation showed that most of them still had wives and children (and even grandchildren) in their native places. They had stayed in *Jiao-liu-ba* (Batavia) for fifteen to eighteen years, becoming tea-merchants or farmers. Furthermore, they had changed their hairstyle by not shaving their heads in the prescribed Manchu style.

The governor suggested that in Batavia and Luzon, which were colonies of the Dutch and the Spanish respectively, overseas Chinese had to follow local custom and allow their hair to grow. There might be no connection between the hairstyle and rebellion in this case. Hence, he recommended they be allowed to return home.[49] But the emperor instructed: "Chinese who have sailed across the ocean and have remained in foreign lands for more than ten years, once they return, inhabit the coastal area and agitate people by demagogy. The ignorant people might be influenced and stir up trouble. Therefore, the local officials should inspect those returning from overseas. Do not allow them to inhabit coastal areas. Order them to move inland. All their followers should be dispersed. Thus, the inland areas will be peaceful and this will also serve as a warning to those remaining in foreign lands."[50] In this way the emperor sent a message to tens of thousands of overseas Chinese that their return was not welcomed. The Yongzheng Emperor was afraid that the returning Chinese might have collaborated with foreigners. In his opinion, they must have remained in foreign lands because they were disappointed by local officials. To that, the emperor responded: "What a shame!"[51] By contrast, local officials suggested that in foreign lands the price of rice was lower and making money was easier than in Fujian. The intent of the Fujianese was to make a living in foreign lands. In the future, local officials planned to secretly send experienced men to overseas Chinese communities to require the sojourners to return home. The Yongzheng Emperor responded negatively to this memorial, saying: "What is the use of asking them back? [...] I am afraid that they may have some scheme for secret collaboration [with foreigners]. In my opinion, those who have been gone for years should not come back. You did not understand my clear intention. It is outrageous."[52]

Imperial policy stressed the importance of controlling local people to ensure the security of the borders. The intensive sojourning and returning from foreign lands may have brought prosperity to local communities, but it was a threat to border security. The imperial position was that if local people traveled to foreign lands for an extended period of time, their loyalty to the empire was in

[48] According to the Emperor Kangxi's edict of 1717, should be sent back under guard from foreign lands and then executed.
[49] QYZY, *Ce* 87: 216b-218b.
[50] QYZY, *Ce* 87: 115-116a.
[51] QYZY, Ce 44: 13a.
[52] QYZY, *Ce* 87: 89a-b.

doubt. Therefore, the central authority preferred to close the door to long-term sojourners.

Merchant-ship households had planted their interests in foreign lands where making a profit was easy. During the period of the Marine Ban, they turned to piracy in order to make a living. Local elites understood the situation and recommended lifting the Marine Ban. For merchant-ship households, their identification with the empire was much more distant than their experiences across the ocean. At the port, as officials inspected their departures and regulated their return from foreign lands, a consciousness of their place at the empire's margins began to develop.

Concluding Remarks

The discussion of Fujianese cross-boundary movements articulates ways linking the coastal province Fujian to the Beijing-based, landed Qing Empire as well as the vast markets in a maritime world. Under the umbrella of the Manchu cultural universalism, Fujian pragmatic elites lobbied at the court for their local economic interest over the South China Sea and Taiwan Strait. The reopening of the Fujian coast in the early 18th century unleashed the accumulated coastal energies to the maritime world. Seafaring men, traders, and labors left the Fujian coast seeking their fortune overseas, which also transformed gender and ethnic relations in this migrant society.

Intermarriages between Han settlers and the aborigines in Taiwan frontier and between She migrants and Han natives in coastal Fujian demonstrated the gendered nature of ethnicity. The cultural encounter within intermarried families cannot be easily described by either assimilation or acculturation. While Han settlers transformed some of aboriginal culture, they also had to adapt themselves to aboriginal customs. In the similar manner, She ethnic migrants also transformed Fujian coastal society or enriched its ethno-culture. To some extent, women's roles in the family represented more of their fulfillment of the dual ethnic identities (i.e. the prescribed roles in both cultures).

Like Fujian *guixiu* who accompanied their male relatives on the road or those Fujian women settlers in Taiwan frontier societies, women left behind by overseas sojourners were anchoring and facilitating Fujianese overseas migration. As male sojourners overstepped the state's borders, Fujian women left-behind also had to overstep the inner-outer gendered spheres taking responsibilities for managerial works or labors in field. The continued cross-boundary movements in the coastal province of Fujian indicate that the prescribed boundaries in terms of gender, ethnicity, and class in early modern China were unstable or challengeable in reality.

The old narrative of China as an "agrarian society" oversimplified Chinese life styles and mindset without enough specifications of the coastal

regions and borderland areas. This study of the home of Fujianese boundary-crossers improves our growing understanding of the Manchu emperors' anxiety about identity control. While "moral governing" or "civilizing" was their political goal, they still wanted their people to "know their place and maintain their status (*anfen shouji* 安分守已)". However, coastal Fujianese, including ethnic She people, seafaring men, traders and merchants, scholars, *guixiu*, and women left-behind by overseas sojourners, all crossed the imperial controlled boundaries in many spheres. The redrawing of the boundaries by anxious Manchu emperors and the continued crossing of the boundaries by coastal Fujianese, together detailed a complex picture of early modern Chinese empire impacted by the bourgeoning maritime world.

Distinguished from macro narratives of imperial Chinese history, this micro survey of local history repositions the Fujian coast at both global and regional levels. Fujian coast moves from the empire's margin to a center of the early modern maritime world. This move was not stimulated by the government's policies but facilitated by individuals, families, and clans and motivated by their economic needs. Coastal Fujianese economic motivation was endorsed by the Manchu cultural universalism. They took advantage of the ruling house's cultural or political motivation to develop their own economic interests in a maritime world or ethnic frontier, not necessarily carrying out the "cultural mission" overseas. They de-centered the state's influence and made their home a center of the bourgeoning maritime world in the early modern time.

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TRANSFORMATION OF THE MIN (FUJIAN) *CAINÜ* CULTURE IN THE LATE QING REFORM ERA

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The formation of the Min *cainü* 才女 (talented women) culture can be traced back to the Ming-Qing transition in the mid-seventeenth century. This culture went through a substantial transformation in late Qing China through its connections and interactions with the Fuzhou Navy Yard culture. Resulted from the late Qing Self-Strengthening Movement, the Fuzhou Navy Yard culture continued Fujian's long maritime tradition but expanded its overseas connections from across the South China Sea to the West. Along with this spatial expansion came the modernization of the Chinese Navy and, more importantly, the exposure of the Chinese intellectual elite to Western knowledge. This unique change of the cultural landscape of the region and the ensuing reform era directly influenced the Min *cainü* culture.

This article will explore the significance of this transformation to late Qing social, political, and cultural life by examining the lives and works of three Min *cainü*, namely, Shen Queying 沈鵲應 (1877-1900), Xiao Daoguan 蕭道管 (1855-1907), and Xue Shaohui 薛紹徽 (1866-1911). Shen renovated the late imperial concept of a chaste widow. She died in protest to the Qing court's execution of six reform martyrs, including her husband Lin Xu 林旭 (1875-98), which bloodily terminated the 1898 Reform Movement. Xiao showcased how a conventional female scholar and housewife coped with late Qing turbulence. Xue exemplified a thorough yet seamless evolution from a traditional poetess into a future reformer. Each woman represented the transformation of Min *cainü* from a different aspect, and together they have enhanced and refined our appreciation of women's roles in an extremely important but incompletely understood period in modern Chinese history.

This article begins with a brief introduction to the Min *cainü* and the Fuzhou Navy Yard cultures. It then looks into the three women's lives following a sequence of the dates of their deaths (rather than births), for each death was linked to a crucial turning point of late Qing history: Shen Queying to the bloody termination of the Hundred Days in1898; Xiao Daoguan to the Eight-Joint Force invasion in 1900, and Xue Shaohui to the campaign of New Policies and the constitutional reform that the Qing court issued to avert its doomed collapse on the eve of the 1911 Republican Revolution.[1]

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I. The Min Cainü *culture and the Fuzhou Navy Yard culture*

The Min *cainü* culture emerged with the Guanglu 光祿 Poetic School in the Ming-Qing transition and prospered in the Qing Dynasty. It embraced this school as its literary institution and the Wei-Jin 魏晉 (220-420) spirit of *xianyuan* 賢媛 (virtuous and talented ladies) as its intellectual foundation; both had been disseminated through marital and communal ties and passed down through mothers' teaching.

The Guanglu School was founded by the Xu family, whose residence was located in Guanglu Alley, Fuzhou. From the late-Ming gentleman Xu Zhi 許豸 (js. 1631) and his son Xu You 許友 (1615-1663), to You's great-great-granddaughter Xu Chen 許琛 (1731-1789?), "for seven generations the Xus lived under the same roof", and they "glorified the clan with their accomplishments in poetry, painting, and officialdom."[2] The Xu women were all well versed in poetry and had frequent poetic correspondence with their female relatives. "They exchanged poems using bamboo containers delivered by their maids and nurses running up and down alleys. Frivolous young men would bribe them so they could open the containers and copy down the poems [詩筒往返，婢媼相接于道。輕薄子弟，恆賄賂而盜竊錄之]."[3] Poems so circulated were later known as those of the "Guanglu School (*Guanglu pai* 光祿派)".

Through marriages and other social connections, the Xus engendered and inspired the rise of a number of other poetic and artistic families and intellectual networks in the Fuzhou region. All these families shared certain common features: 1) a learned, talented matriarch, full of originality and creativity, who nurtured the younger generations both physically and intellectually; 2) poetic gatherings and correspondence, both among women and between genders, which became part of the household and local community routine; 3) publication of women's poetic collections and promotion of their literary activities by women and their supportive male relatives.[4] Meanwhile,

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their editorial help, and to Professor Richard J. Smith for his longtime guidance in late Qing studies.

[1] For a thorough study of women's participation in late Qing reforms, focusing on Xue Shaohui and her networks formed primarily upon a "marriage" between the Min *cainü* and the Fuzhou Navy Yard cultures, see my forthcoming book *Politics, Poetics, and Gender in Late Qing China: Xue Shaohui (1866-1911) and the Era of Reform*.

[2] *Minchuan Guixiu Shihua* 閩川閨秀詩話 (Criticism of women's poetry from Min Rivers), 1: 14b-16a.

[3] *Xiaodaixuan Lunshi Shi* 小黛軒論詩詩 (Poems on poetry from Little Black-Jade Studio), A: 5a.

[4] For the evolution of the Min *cainü* culture, see *Quan Min Shihua* 全閩詩話 (Criticism of Min poetry), 10: 2b-31b; *Minchuan Guixiu Shihua*; *Minchuan Guixiu Shihua Xubian* 閩川閨秀詩話續編 (Sequel to *Minchuan Guixiu Shihua*); *Fujian Tongzhi* 福建通志 (General

Min *cainü* embraced the *xianyuan* spirit to apply their talents to domestic responsibilities. Arising in the Wei-Jin period, *xianyuan* represented the earliest and perhaps the most admirable example of *cainü*—women of talent, knowledge, intellectual independence, moral strength, and, above all, good judgment. In these capacities, Wei-Jin *xianyuan* aptly managed their domestic affairs and advised their male relatives while encountering sociopolitical crises and inspired women in subsequent periods.[5] Late Qing Min *cainü* especially benefitted from the *xianyuan* spirit in dealing with the dual problems of "internal disorder and external calamity"—domestic uprisings such as the Taiping Rebellion (1851-1864) and the acceleration of Western imperialism after 1842.

Lin Zexu 林則徐 (1785-1850) and his family led the rise of the Min poetic clans amid the late Qing turmoil. The Opium Wars of 1839-1842 forced the Qing government to open five treaty ports to Western residence and trade, including Fuzhou. The city then became the site of China's First Navy Shipyard (*Fuzhou chuanzhengju* 福州船政局) and First Naval School (*Fuzhou chuanzheng xuetang* 福州船政學堂) affiliated to it in the early stages of the Self-Strengthening Movement. The marriage of Lin Zexu's daughter Lin Puqing 林普晴 (1821-1873) to Shen Baozhen 沈葆楨 (1820-1879), the future Director-General of the Yard and the School linked the Lin-Shen families directly to those active in the Fuzhou *cainü* and Navy Yard cultures, foreshadowing the union of the two.

Facing the late Qing turmoil, Min women carried on the *xianyuan* spirit by crossing the divide between the inner and the outer domains in dealing with sociopolitical crises with their learning and talent, extending their protection of the family to that of the region and the country. They helped fathers, husbands, or sons to manage offices, draft memos, and make decisions, often taking bold action based on good judgment. Lin Puqing exemplified this turning point of Min *cainü*. She and her sister-in-law, Lady Lu 陸, were characterized as the "Two Phoenixes of the Inner Chambers (*guizhong shuangfeng* 閨中雙鳳)". Lady Lu copied memos for her father-in-law Lin Zexu. Puqing must have helped her father in the same way as a young girl and was surely an able assistant to her husband after her marriage to Shen Baozhen.[6] In September 1856, when Shen Baozhen served as the prefect of Guangxin 廣信, Jiangxi province, the Taipings were about to attack the prefectural site. With Shen away on business and the soldiers and townspeople fled, Puqing held Shen's official

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gazetteer of Fujian), "Lienü Zhuan" 列女傳 (Biographies of women), "Biantong" 辯通 (Eloquence and Erudition); and *Min-Hou Xianzhi* 閩侯縣誌 (Gazetteer of the Minxian and Houguan Districts [of Fuzhou]).

[5] For the formation of the Wei-Jin *xianyuan* spirit, see Qian 2003, pp. 259-302. For its influence on Ming-Qing women, see Mann 1997, p. 91. See also Ko 1994, p. 161, p. 167.

[6] *Min-Hou Xianzhi*, "Lienü Zhuan", "Biantong" II, "Houguan", 101: 7a. Shen Baozhen's mother was Lin Zexu's younger sister. David Pong attributes Puqing's "devotion as a wife and as an assistant to Shen" to her relationship with Shen as cousins and childhood playmates; see Pong 1994, p. 30.

seal and sword, sitting by the well of the prefectural residence and vowing to die should the rebels break into the city.[7]

Yet, unlike a typical late imperial "martyr woman (*lienü* 烈女)" who killed herself to protect her own integrity, Puqing voluntarily shouldered the responsibility of protecting the people in her husband's absence. Puqing inscribed a letter with her blood to implore help from the Brigade General Rao Tingxuan 饒廷選 (1803-1862), who was then stationed at Yushan, some 50 kilometers away from Guangxin. This letter demonstrates Puqing's remarkable courage, broad historical and political knowledge, and persuasive rhetoric. In it, she understands that Rao has no responsibility to protect Guangxin. She argues, however, that Guangxin is "the barrier" of Yushan: "to protect Guangxin is to defend Yushan."[8] She then invokes heroes past and present, hoping to inspire Rao with righteousness and inflame him to quick action. She begins with her father Lin Zexu, who was sent by the court to pacify the rebellion but passed away before completing the mission. Vowing by her father's name, Puqing declares: "Now, if I die for Guangxin, blessed by my father's spirit in Heaven, I will become a fierce ghost to kill the rebels [今得死此，為厲殺賊，在天之靈，實式憑之]."[9] For Rao, the most inspiring hero is perhaps Lin Puqing herself. Indeed, what can be a more powerful image than a woman who is writing in her blood and determined to protect her people in life and in death? Rao arrived in time and fought alongside Shen Baozhen until the rebels fled.[10]

Lin Puqing's heroic spirit would become an intimate inspiration to Min *cainü*. Xue Shaohui, for one, composed a song-lyric in 1893, in the wake of foreign invasions that did, and would again, directly affect her hometown and family: the 1884 Sino-French War claimed China's South Fleet based in Fuzhou, and the Sino-Japanese War in 1894 later eliminated China's North Fleet. This lyric recorded a visit of homage Xue paid to the Roaring-Wave Garden (Taoyuan 濤園), the shrine of Shen Baozhen and his wife. In it, Xue compares Lady Lin to great women warriors in China's past,[11] celebrating her to have protected her people with courage and talent, "Writing on a shield, you sent out

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[7] *Minchuan Guixiu Shihua Xubian*, 2: 14a-15b.
[8] Ibid., 2: 15a.
[9] Ibid.
[10] Ibid., 2: 15ab.
[11] Including women such as the Eastern Jin General Zhu Xu's 朱序 mother Lady Han 韓, who helped her son guard Xiangyang by leading women to build a city wall against the attack by the Former Qin ruler Fu Jian 符堅 (r. 357-385); see *Jinshu* 晉書 (History of the Jin), "Zhu Xu Zhuan" 朱序傳 (Biography of Zhu Xu), 81: 2133; Princess Pingyang 平陽 of the Tang, who organized a troop of women to help her father, Li Yuan 李淵, the founder of the Tang, rise against the Sui regime; see *Xin Tangshu* 新唐書 (New history of the Tang), "Zhudi Gongzhu" 諸帝公主 (Princesses), 83: 3643; and the Southern Song General Han Shizhong's 韓世忠 (1089-1151) wife Lady Liang 梁, who "drummed up support for the campaign" (*qincao fugu* 親操桴鼓) to help her husband resist the invasion of the Jurchens; see *Songshi* 宋史 (History of the Song), "Han Shizhong Zhuan" 韓世忠傳 (Biography of Han Shizhong), 364: 11361.

a military letter, feather labeled, / And thus summoned the divine reinforcement [盾鼻軍書飛羽，援師神武]."[12]

Lin Puqing's influence extended even to younger generations. In 1903, Xue took her daughter Chen Yun 陳芸 (1885-1911) to revisit the Roaring-Wave Garden. This time it was the young girl who wrote admirably of Lin Puqing. Seeing the desolate Garden that once belonged to the founding Xu family of the Guanglu tradition,[13] Chen Yun laments its fading glory: "The chanting terrace of Guanglu is buried in dust [吟臺光祿已成塵]." Yet, "there are still withered branches not yet turning into firewood [剩有枯枝未化薪]." So these trees may regain lushness blessed by Lady Lin, whose heroic soul still lingers: "The wind blows waves on the half-receding river. / Bowing to my Lady, I seem to hear her drum roaring [風卷濤聲川半落，如聞桴鼓拜夫人]."[14] Indeed, Lin's spiritual legacy would pass down the Min *cainü* culture through her admirers as well as her own bloodline. Her granddaughters Shen Queying and Li Shenrong 李慎容 (1878-1903), along with Chen Yun and many other Min girls, would form yet another generation of Min *cainü*. These poet-prodigies were determined to adapt the poetic vitality and moral tenacity of the Guanglu tradition to the needs of the changing society.[15]

As Lin Puqing inspired her fellow Min women with her spirit and talent, her husband Shen Baozhen and the Fujian-Zhejiang Governor-General Zuo Zongtang 左宗棠 (1812-1885) embarked on a project to build China's first shipyard and its affiliated navy school in Mawei 馬尾, about ten miles from the Guanglu Alley down the Min River. The two began their planning of the Yard and the School in the summer of 1866.[16] In February 1867, the School opened its doors to students.[17]

Zuo Zongtang had previously aimed the construction of the Navy Yard for achieving "China's technological independence", and envisioned it "a comprehensive industrial complex for the triple purpose of shipbuilding, learning how to manufacture and operate marine engines, and navigational and naval training."[18] Shen Baozhen, however, went beyond Zuo's pragmatic orientation, intending "to forge a new, modernizing elite out of the scholar-

[12] Xue, "Taoyuan", to the tune "Flowers Bloom in Spring at the Qin Garden" ("Huafa Qinyuan Chun" 花發沁園春), *Daiyunlou Yiji* 黛韻樓遺集 (Posthumously collected writings from Black-Jade Rhythm Tower), *Ciji* 詞集 (Collected song-lyrics), B: 7a.

[13] See Shen Yuqing's preface to his poem "Taoyuan", in *Qingshi Jishi* 清詩紀事 (Biographic collection of Qing poetry), 19: 13124. Shen indicates that the Garden had been Xu You's villa, which he bought in 1880 to enshrine his father.

[14] Chen Yun, "Taoyuan", *Chen Xiaonü Yiji* 陳孝女遺集 (Posthumously collected works of Chen [Yun] the Filial Daughter), B: 18ab.

[15] For Lin Puqing's poetic legacy to her granddaughters, see *Xiaodaixuan Lunshi Shi*, A: 27a.

[16] For background, see Pong 1994, pp. 107-133; and Lin Chongyong 林崇墉 1987, pp. 241-282.

[17] Pong 1994, p. 226.

[18] Ibid., p. 113.

gentry class."[19] For this purpose, "the basis of navy management lies in the school."[20] The Fuzhou Navy School offered Shen such an experimental site to "set a personal example for the traditional educated elite" so that he could achieve his "earnest desire to change the civil service examinations and promote the study of science."[21] This vision of transforming the Chinese intelligentsia established the distinctive cultural basis for the Navy Yard.

The location of the Yard and School in the vicinity of Fuzhou also had an impact on the union of the two cultures. Located near the strategic port city Fuzhou, "high officials and people of distinction had it in their power to watch its [the Yard's] progress, and to take an interest in it."[22] Also interested in the Yard and the School were the local gentry, including women, especially those from the families related to the Yard and the School. These supporters and interested parties formed an unprecedented intellectual network with the navy students. On the one hand, the continuation of the traditional scholar/literati training of the curriculum kept the students within the local gentry society through local poetry clubs, companionate marriages, and scholarly connections. On the other hand, the Yard and the School helped spread Western learning and ideas among the local gentry, thus transforming its traditional knowledge structure. Equally important, the political and military turmoil that revolved around the Yard and often took place in Fuzhou provided the students and their local supporters with new topics for intellectual discussion.

The Min *cainü* and the Fuzhou Navy Yard cultures together nurtured a new generation of talented and virtuous women—expanding knowledge, promoting equal gender relationship, and encouraging political participation—and hence updated the concept of *cainü* to fit the current situation. A major contribution of this union was its exposure of the wider world to women. Navy School graduates' unprecedented experience of learning and warfare, in Fuzhou and in Europe, within the classroom and aboard the warship, all involved their wives and other female family members. New knowledge transmitted to Min *cainü* challenged them to reconstruct their talents and virtue, and so prepared them for the future Reform Movement.

Among the three Min *cainü* to be introduced below, Xue Shaohui's marriage was a union of the two cultures in its real sense, for her husband Chen

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[19] Ibid., p. 318.

[20] Lin Chongyong 1987, p. 273, p. 285; quoted from *Shen Wensu Gong Zhengshu* 沈文肅公政書 (Shen Baozhen on governing), "Chuanzheng Renshi Riqizhe" 船政任事日期摺 (Memorandum on assuming the directorship of the Navy Yard) (presented 18 July 1867), *Juan* 4.

[21] Pong 1994, p. 318.

[22] *The Foochow Arsenal and Its Results: From the Commencement in 1867, to the End of the Foreign Directorate on the 16th February, 1874*, p. 9; see also Lin 1987, p. 247; Pong 1994, pp. 120-121. Prosper Giquel was a lieutenant on leave from the French navy and then serving as the commissioner of customs at Ningpo when Zuo Zongtang invited him to help build the Fuzhou Navy Yard in 1864. He assumed the directorship in 1866. See Pong 1994, p. 110, pp. 134-136.

Shoupeng 陳壽彭 (1857-ca. 1928) and his elder brother Chen Jitong 陳季同 (1852-1907) both graduated from the Fuzhou Navy School and studied in Europe. Shen Queying grew up also at the center of the two cultures because her grandfather Shen Baozhen was the founder of the Navy Yard culture and her grandmother Lin Puqing a matriarch of Min *cainü*. Her father Shen Yuqing 沈瑜慶 (1858-1918) and her husband Lin Xu also associated closely with Navy School graduates such as the Chen brothers and Yan Fu 嚴復 (1854-1921). As for Xiao Daoguan, her husband Chen Yan 陳衍 (1856-1937) was a relative, a tutor, and a friend of the Shens [23] and had kept close ties in poetic correspondence and political cooperation with the Chen brothers and Yan Fu. A look at the lives of these three women and their relationships with their male relatives may shed revealing light on the late Qing transformation of the Min *cainü*.

II. Shen Queying: Chaste Widow or a Reform-Martyr's Soul Mate

Shen Queying appears in every aspect to bear a close resemblance to her grandmother Lin Puqing. She was "brilliant as a little child."[24] Seeing her interest in poetry, her father Shen Yuqing put her and her husband Lin Xu under the tutorship of two leading Min poets, Chen Yan and his elder brother Chen Shu 陳書 (1837-1905),[25] and invited her to join their poetry club. In this club, Queying discussed poetry with her father, husband, and mentors on equal terms. This self-confident young girl even called the icons of her fellow Min male

[23] An elder sister of Chen Yan's was married to Shen Baozhen's eldest son Shen Weiqing 沈瑋慶 (d. 1880); see Chen Yan, "Shu Zhongrong Liujie Shi" 書仲容六姐事 (Memories of my sixth elder sister, Zhongrong), in *Chen Shiyi Ji* 陳石遺集 (Collected works of Chen Shiyi [Chen Yan]), p. 461; see also Liu Jianping 劉建萍 2003, p. 84.

[24] "Shen Que[ying] Shilüe" 沈鵲[應]事略 (Biographic sketch of Shen Que[ying]), *Fujian Tongzhi*, "Lienü Zhuan", "Biantong", 6: 50b; *Minhou Xianzhi*, "Lienü Zhuan", "Biantong" II, 101: 6b.

[25] Chen Yan, "Shen Que[ying] Shilüe", *Minhou Xianzhi*, 101: 6b, records that Queying "learned poetry and prose from Chen Shu and Chen Yan." Liu Jianping indicates that, from 1894 to 1898, Lin Xu and Shen Queying studied poetry under the guidance of Chen Shu; see Liu 2004, p. 65. Both Lin Xu and Shen Queying address Chen Shu as "*shi*" 師 or "*xiansheng*" 先生 (teacher, mentor, master) in their poems; see Lin Xu, *Wancuixuan Shi* 晚翠軒詩 (Poems from Evening-Emerald Pavilion) and Shen Queying, *Yanlou Yigao* 崦樓遺稿 (Posthumously collected drafts from Yan-Mountain Tower), attached to *Wancuixuan Shi*, ed. Li Xuangong 李宣龔 (1876-1952), *Mochao Congke* 墨巢叢刻 (Serial publications from [Li's studio] Ink Nest) edn., 1936. Li's grandmother was Shen Baozhen's sister and Li himself was Lin Xu's close friend. He collected and published several editions of Lin Xu and Shen Queying's works after their death. The 1936 edition is the latest and most complete version. See Li's preface to Lin Xu, *Wancuixuan Shi*; see also Lin Ning 林寧 2007, pp. 11-16.

poets, such as Han Yu 韓愈 (768-824), Meng Jiao 孟郊 (751-814), and Su Shi 蘇軾 (1037-1101), "classmates", inviting their spiritual participation in their poetic gatherings.[26] She also made clear that she had endeavored in poetic learning not merely for obtaining techniques but also for embracing "the grand ambition of a racing steed (*qianli zhi* 千里志)".[27]

What, then, was her ambition? As Lin Puqing's granddaughter, Queying would naturally inherit her grandmother's concern for the country and the people, as typified in her song-lyric on reading the Tang story, "The Man with the Curly Beard ('Qiuranke Zhuan' 虯髯客傳)", to the tune "Waves Washing Sand ('Lang Tao Sha' 浪淘沙)":

Duke of Yue, self-indulgent and arrogant,	越國意揚揚，
Does not treasure the young woman.	不惜紅粧。
Making her flee in disguise deep in the night.	劇令深夜出嚴裝。
Staggering into the inn and knocking at the door	蹀躞叩門茅店裏，
She looks in a hurry and in panic.	顏色倉皇。
Her discerning eyes recognize the outstanding hero	慧眼識三郎，
As she combs her long, black hair that sweeps the ground.	委地青長。
The Man with the Curly Beard looks at her like crazy.	虯髯顧盼思若狂，
He bestows all the keys of his properties to this adopted sister	鎖鑰儘教將一妹，
Beseeching her to assist Prince Qin.[28]	來佐秦王。

In the original story, the young woman, known as the Girl with the Red Whisk ('Hongfu Nü' 紅拂女), was celebrated having recognized a hero in her future husband Li Jing 李靖 (571-649), who would assist Prince Qin Li Shimin 李世民, the future Emperor Taizong 太宗 of the Tang 唐 (r. 627-649), to found the greatest dynasty in Chinese history.[29] In this sense, the Red-Whisk Girl executed her good judgment—a *xianyuan* capacity—only for ascertaining her position as the wife of a powerful man. Queying, however, subverted this conventional gender order, arguing that, actually, it was the Girl and the Man with the Curly Beard who mutually recognized each other as outstanding heroes. Thus, after realizing the limits of his strength, the Man adopted the Girl as his younger

[26] See Shen Queying, "My Father and My Mentor Feng'an [Chen Shu] Both Followed the Rhyme of Dongpo's 'Garden of Solitary Pleasures'; So I also Wrote One along with the Third Sister Jilan [東坡《獨樂園詩》，家大人、馮庵師均次韻，遂同季蘭三妹]." *Yanlou Shi* 崦樓詩 (Poems from Yan-Mountain Tower), in *Yanlou Yigao*, 1ab. Qian Zhonglian points out that the Min School "imitated ancient poets starting with Han Yu and Meng Jiao […] and Shen Yuqing especially favored Su Shi" (Qian Zhonglian 1983, p. 115).

[27] "Dongpo 'Dule Yuan Shi'", *Yanlou Shi*, in *Yanlou Yigao*, 1b.

[28] *Yanlou Ci* 崦樓詞 (Song-lyrics from Yan-Mountain Tower), in *Yanlou Yigao*, 6b-7a.

[29] See "Qiuranke Zhuan", in *Tangren Xiaoshuo* 唐人小說 (Tang tales), pp. 178-184.

sister and trusted his wealth in her hands. With the Man's help, the Girl (not her husband) assisted Prince Qin to found the dynasty. This song-lyric sends an unmistakable message of Queying's ambition to become a political player herself in China's reform era.

Queying's ambition resulted from an inheritance of her grandmother's passion for China and its people. The changing world situation made her even more restless in the inner chamber. Her other song-lyric, "Reading *Biographies of Women* ('Du *Lienü Zhuan*' 讀列女傳)", to the tune "Tower on the Yan Mountain ('Yanshan Ting' 燕山亭)", is loaded with her anxiety facing increasing foreign aggressions. Queying must have composed this song-lyric after Taiwan was ceded to Japan in the aftermath of the 1894–95 Sino-Japanese War. She sighs for the loss of China's territory and the consequent sufferings of the Chinese people. Queying seeks exemplars from Liu Xiang's 劉向 (77 BCE-6 BCE) *Lienü Zhuan* to justify "domestic womanly concerns with politics and government."[30] She nonetheless goes further: she wants to transform her concerns into action. Turning to the Woman of Wuyan 無鹽, who proposed to be the queen of King Xuan of Qi so as to rectify his way of ruling, Queying expresses her intent to fix the failed Qing state.[31]

Exposure to Western influence may have also accelerated her political ambition. From1891 to 1898, Shen Yuqing served mostly in Jiangsu.[32] Queying followed her father to live in the region and had some contact with the Western-style girls' school, possibly in Shanghai. In a song-lyric titled "Missing My Sister Ping Studying at a Western Girls' School (懷蘋妹西洋女塾)", she recalls that, during the break of a school day, girl students would have a soccer game: "Shaking our gold hairpins, / We kick balls and make a big noise. / Playing together, / Half are Wu girls, / And half Western flowers [顫金釵，蹴鞠喧嘩。共流連，一半吳娃，一半蠻花]." Facing the situation that "now Asia is in a different time. / Heaven expands, as people travel far and wide [況亞洲異日，天共人遐]", she would certainly desire to enlarge her knowledge to include Western learning. Yet, possibly because of her early marriage—she was married to Lin Xu in the fall of 1892 in Nanjing, when she was barely 15—she did not get the opportunity to go to a girls' school as her younger sister Ping (Pingying 蘋應, b. 1889) did.[33]

One poem, titled "Well Frog ('Jingwa' 井蛙)", acutely reveals Queying's frustration. She desires to enlarge her vision through learning so that

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[30] See Mann 2010, p. 393.

[31] *Yanlou Ci*, in *Yanlou Yigao*, 7a. For the Woman of Wuyan (a.k.a. Zhongli Chun 鍾離春), see [*Gu*] *Lienü Zhuan* [古]列女傳, "Biantong", 6: 173-176.

[32] See "Shen Jingyu Gong Nianpu" 沈敬裕公年譜 (Biographical chronology of Shen [Yuqing], the Lord Jingyu), appended to *Taoyuan Ji* 濤園集 (Collection from Roaring-Wave Garden), pp. 204-205.

[33] *Yanlou Ci*, in *Yanlou Yigao*, 3ab.

she would be better prepared to serve the country and the people. In reality, however, she is confined to her little boudoir.

What is going on with this creature,	此物獨何事，
Being long trapped in this deep well?	長居陷井深。
She often feels not quite herself,	慣常難自得，
Depressed, and deeply hurt.	抑鬱亦傷心。
Being shallow is not her intrinsic feature.	弇淺豈其質，
How she has peeped at the light until now.	窺光直到今。
All because the sky can never be reached,.	都緣天不逮，
Lamenting her fate, I composed this little poem.[34]	感此為微吟。

Conventional analogy compares a shallow and narrow-minded person to a frog in a well, who could only see the sky within the limit of the well rail. Queying subverts this disparagement that treats the frog as a mute "it". She instead identifies herself with the frog with great sympathy, feeling its pain of being confined against its will. Who can tell what kind of ambition the frog may embrace? Similarly, in the "Reading *Biographies of Women*", Queying complains that her friends mistake her "heroic feelings" for the country as "tangled personal sentiments" for her husband, only concerned about her personal life, just like a frog in the well.

To be sure, Queying was supportive of her husband's reform career and valued his talents. Not being able to fulfill her own ambition of serving the country directly, it seems, she resolved to be a protector of Lin Xu, as shown in a song-lyric "Lamp Sparkle ('Denghua' 燈花)", to the tune "Slow Song of Zhu Yingtai ('Zhu Yingtai Ji' 祝英台近)". Deep in the night, as all is quiet and dark, the poet is "astonished to see the lamp sparkling red freshness (忽驚一朵紅鮮)":

I stare at the glittering flash; smile dwells on my arched eyebrows.	細認凝笑蛾眉，
Attracted to it, I cannot bear to leave,	為伊久延佇。
For I need protect it from the windy curtain.	護住風簾，
The red flame shines so brightly!	紅焰尚如許。
It is he who enlightens people!	是他報與人知，
Not let the lamp be extinguished	休教落去。
I'll stay awake, to guard it from hungry rats.[35]	儘無寐，替防飢鼠。

Queying compares her husband to the lamp sparkle that lightens up people's minds to a bright future. With the sensitivity of a loving wife, Queying is well-aware of the dangerous environment that engulfs Lin Xu, like the wind that can easily put off the lamp and the hungry rats, the symbol of corrupt officials, who

[34] *Yanlou Shi*, in *Yanlou Yigao*, 2a.
[35] *Yanlou Ci*, in *Yanlou Yigao*, 2ab.

attempt to steal the lamp oil.[36] Precisely because Queying has put so much of her reform ideal into her husband's career, the execution of Lin Xu falls on her as a double blow. She mourns Lin Xu's martyrdom in the following song-lyric:

So hard to fulfill our ambition to serve the country!	報國志難酬，
Who collects his pure blood?	碧血誰收？
His poetic drafts will last for thousands of autumns.	篋中遺稿自千秋。
In vain I try to summon his soul with my broken heart.	腸斷招魂魂不到，
Clouds blacken the river.	雲暗江頭。
I embroider the Buddha in my old boudoir tower.	繡佛舊粧樓，
My life is over after yours.	我已君休。
I regret a thousand times, but whom to blame?	萬千悔恨更何尤？
I can only shed my endless tears,	拼得眼中無盡淚，
Let it stream with the river.[37]	共水長流。

Although Queying could not go to Beijing to collect the physical remains of Lin Xue, she was determined to collect his spiritual remains—his poems and his reform ideal. She expressed this wish in a poetic series titled "Spring Night ('Chunye' 春夜)", composed possibly in the following year (1899). The last one, Poem 8, reads:

Being wrongly sentenced by a lawless court.	蔽罪朝無典，
He left poems known to the entire world.	遺章世所聞。
I follow the model of Liuxia Hui's wife,	吾從柳下婦，
To draft a private eulogy to his integrity.[38]	私謚擬貞文。

Under the inclement circumstances, all could express their deep grief only implicitly.[39] Brave Queying alone directly condemned the "lawless" (*wudian* 無典) Manchu regime. Such a daughter would have added more glory to the Min *cainü* tradition with her independent thinking, heroic passion, and poetic creativity, but her promising life was cut short. Her pining away to death, although conforming to a seemingly late imperial *lienü* model, goes beyond the realm of traditional virtuous women and bears the clear marks of the reform era, when a woman tied her personal life closely to the destiny of the country.

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[36] See "Shuoshu" 碩鼠 ('Big Rat'), in *Mao Shi* [*Zhengyi*] 毛詩[正義] ([Orthodox commentary on the] *Mao Commentary on the Book of Songs*), 5: 91.
[37] *Yanlou Ci*, in *Yanlou Yigao*, 8ab.
[38] *Yanlou Shi*, in *Yanlou Yigao*, 5a. For the story of Liuxia Hui's wife, see Liu Xiang, [*Gu*] *Lienü Zhuan*, "Xianming" 賢明 (Worthiness and intelligence), 2: 49-50.
[39] For the mourning poems by Lin Xu's friend, see *Wancuixuan Ji*, "Fulu" 附錄 (Appendix), 1a-7a.

The soul-mate bondage that Queying felt for her reform martyr husband received unreserved sympathy from her fellow Min *cainü* reformers. Xue Shaohui, for instance, composed a song-lyric after Queying's death in the late spring of 1900.[40] She titled the lyric "Tomb of the Righteous Woman ('Yifu Zhong' 義婦冢)", to the tune "Slow Song of Zhu Yingtai", the same tune of Queying's song-lyric "Lamp Sparkle", which Xue clearly understood as Queying's pledge of support to her husband's reform ideal.[41] With this song-lyric, Xue draws a parallel between Zhu Yingtai's tragic love for Liang Shanbo 梁山伯 and Queying's relentless devotion to Lin Xu. Not only were both couples classmates and soul mates but also the word *hantao* 寒濤 or "cold waves" that appears in Xue's song-lyric reminds the reader of the Shen family shrine, the Roaring-Wave Garden, where the heroic spirit of Lin Puqing dwells, the origin of Queying's mental strength. Joining Lady Lin, Queying and Lin Xue's "fragrant souls, so stubbornly in love, / Now happily reunite underground [癡魂香魄，地下共歡聚]", and "their spirits will roam freely, till the end of the world [想靈爽，優游終古]."[42]

III. Xiao Daoguan: When Min Cainü *met Social Darwinism*

Xiao Daoguan was an erudite scholar and a productive writer, "well versed in poetry, prose, and the song-lyric."[43] Her scholastic interest, which focused on

[40] "Shen Jingyu Gong Nianpu": "In the fourth month [of the year Gengzi (ca. May 1900)], daughter Queying pined away to death after [her husband] [(庚子)四月女鵲應毀殉]"; *Taoyuan Ji*, p. 232. See also "Shen Que[ying] Shilüe", *Minhou Xianzhi*, 101: 6b. In his "Lin Xu Zhuan" 林旭傳 (Biography of Lin Xu), written between 1898 and 1899, Liang Qichao asserts that Queying poisoned herself to death soon after Lin Xu's execution, apparently based on a rumor widely circulated of the time; in *Wuxu Zhengbian Ji* 戊戌政變記 (Records of the 1898 political reform), *Yinbingshi Heji* 飲冰室合集 (Assembled collections from Drinking-Ice Studio), *Zhuanji* 專集 (Special works) 1, p. 103.

[41] The theme of this lyric is identical with the origin of the tune—a song about the Eastern Jin girl Zhu Yingtai (fl. mid 4th cent.). Zhu disguised herself as a young man to study at a boys' school. There she befriended her classmate Liang Shanbo 梁山伯. Having learned that Yingtai was a woman, Shanbo proposed to her, but Yingtai was already betrothed to another man. The heartbroken Shanbo soon died and was buried on the Pure-Way Mound 清道原 to the west of Maocheng 鄮城 county (in suburban Ningbo). On her wedding day, Yingtai passed by Shanbo's tomb and cried the tomb open. She jumped into the tomb and buried herself with Shanbo. Their spirits transformed into butterflies, roaming freely into legend. Later the Eastern Jin Prime Minister Xie An 謝安 (320-385) named the site "Tomb of the Righteous Woman", hence Xue's title of the song-lyric. See Mao Xianshu's 毛先舒 (1620–1688), *Tianci Mingjie* 填詞名解 (Interpretations to the tune-titles of song-lyrics), qtd. in *Tang-Song Ci Gelü* 唐宋詞格律 (Tang and Song song-lyric styles), pp. 99-100.

[42] *Daiyunlou Yiji*, *Ciji*, B: 13a.

[43] Hu Wenkai 胡文楷, *Nüzi Wenxue Shi* 女子文學史 (History of women's literature), manuscript, 11 vols. (Shanghai Library), Vol. 11, "Entry on Xiao Daoguan" (not paginated).

history and Evidential Learning (*kaoju* 考據), yielded a book titled *Collected Commentaries on the Biographies of Women* (*Lienü Zhuan Jizhu* 列女傳集注) (10 *Juan*). Through her adoring husband and soul mate Chen Yan, who was closely associated to the Shen family and served under the reform-minded officials Liu Mingchuan 劉銘傳 (1836-1896) and Zhang Zhidong 張之洞 (1837-1909), Xiao was exposed to the Fuzhou Navy Yard culture as well as late Qing reforms in general. These connections further expanded her interest to include newly imported foreign ideas and literature translated by family friends, such as Darwin's evolutionary theory by Yan Fu and Western novels by Lin Shu 林紓 (1852-1924).[44]

Xiao broadened her knowledge even into the realm of modern science and technology. In 1887, Liu Mingchuan, then newly assigned as the first Taiwan Governor, decided to build Taiwan's first railroad from Keelung to Taipei. Chen Yan, who was on Liu's staff, engaged his wife to draft a sacrificial oration to the Mangkah 艋舺 River God on behalf of the governor, in order to obtain the God's approval of building a bridge across the river. At this time, railroads were yet a new thing in China. The first railroad built in China, the Woosung-Shanghai line, began service in July 1876 but was dismantled in October 1877—a consequence of the severe resistance from both the elite and the general public.[45] Xiao however embraced the idea without reservation. She ardently implored the River God's help and blessing by presenting the project as an expression of the people's will for their welfare. She wrote:

> Alas you great river, stretching right in front of us with gigantic amount of water. If there is not [a bridge like] a dragon lying on your waves, depending on what can we cross the river? If there is not [a bridge like] a turtle, what can we ride to cross the river valley and to open the path? We are carrying timbers for making sleepers, so as to establish our great deeds. We dig caves on stone cliffs, *chi chi*! We chop down woods, *zhen zhen*! Thousands of workers and handymen are waiting with shoves and baskets, we are ready to go![46]

Her broad reading list covered Tang and Song poetry and prose as well as fiction, including titles such as *Tangren Shuokui* 唐人說薈 (Assorted Tang minor talks), *Honglou Meng* 紅樓夢 (Dream of the Red Chamber), and *Liaozhai Zhiyi* 聊齋誌異 (Strange tales from Make-Do Studio). Her works include *Miscellaneous Essays from Dao'an Studio* (*Dao'anshi Zawen* 道安室雜文) (1 *Juan*); *Posthumously Collected Poems from Hall of Leisure* (*Xiaoxiantang Yishi* 蕭閒堂遺詩) (1 *Juan*); *Song-lyrics from Studio of Wearing Flowers in Peace* (*Daihua Ping'anshi Ci* 戴花平安室詞) (1 *Juan*); and *Ping'anshi Zaji* (1 *Juan*).

[44] See *Ping'anshi Zaji* 平安室雜記 (Miscellaneous records from Studio of Peace), 1a; "Dao'anshi Shilüe" 道安室事略 (Biographic sketch of the Dao'an Studio Scholar), 2ab.

[45] For Taiwan's first railway, built from 1887 to 1891, see Ling Hongxun 淩鴻勛, 1981, p. 72.

[46] Xiao, "Wei Tielu Zaoqiao Ji Mengxia Heshen Wen" 為鐵路造橋祭艋舺河神文 (Sacrificial Oration to the Mangkah River God for Constructing the Railroad Bridge), *Dao'anshi Zawen*, 2b-3a.

> 嗟爾大河，沛然前橫。臥波無龍，涉川何憑？駕壑無鼉，鑿空何能？徒杠輿梁，勖哉告成。鑿石齒齒，伐木丁丁，千夫萬徒，畚臿待興。

Although only this one passage of the oration is extant today, it is sufficient to demonstrate Xiao's heated enthusiasm and persuasive rhetoric in representing people's wishes. The oration should also have included arguments on the scientific and technological basis and the economic functions of the railroad to be built, and it must have been well accepted by the God, for this railroad indeed founded the modern transportation system in Taiwan.

Yet Western knowledge came with military aggressions, which twice directly affected Xiao Daoguan's life. The first time was during the 1884 Sino-French War. Xiao left us a firsthand memoir of this ravaging moment in modern Chinese history. In it, Xiao vents her anger at the rulers, both the Chinese and the French, for they together entrapped the people in misery. On August 23, 1884, Xiao recalled, the Fuzhou people heard cannons firing and saw flames shooting up into the sky. Messengers were racing to report victory on the part of the Chinese Navy. Not until the next dawn did people realize that, in actuality, the Chinese Navy was fatally defeated:

> All the warships built by the Director-General of the Navy Yard [Shen Baozhen] were wiped out. The commissioner from the court who came to oversee the campaign against the French fled into a village by the Drum Mountain. The French warships occupied the harbor. There they fired at the Mawei Fort and the Fuzhou Shipyard after taking precise measurements, and debris scattered into the Fuzhou city. The big officials dared not stretch their necks out of their official residences. […] People all panic. Fearing for their lives, they hastened to flee.[47]
>
> 船司空所造諸戰艦已灰飛煙滅，督師者已奔鼓山下鄉村中，法船已盤踞港內，擇諸礮臺船廠要害者，測量轟擊，瓦碎城中，諸大吏縮頭不敢出衙署。[…] 人心皇皇，懼坐以待斃，倉皇出走。

Xiao keenly observes that China's defeat is caused not so much by its backwardness in modern science and technology—the Fuzhou Navy is also a modernized war force—as by its incompetent governing. The Chinese regime is so incapable of protecting its territory and people that, after the Fuzhou navy was eliminated during the day on August 23, 1884, "the local officials were still in their dreams (當道猶在夢中)" that night, literally and physically.[48] By contrast, the French Navy is menacing because it is efficiently commanded. For instance, they would fire at targets after "taking precise measurements".

The more devastating blow on Xiao took place during the Eight-Joint Force invasion in 1900. Xiao and Chen Yan's second son Chen Shengjian 陳聲漸 (d. 1900), a student at the Northern Ports School (*Beiyang xuetang* 北洋學堂)

[47] *Ping'anshi Zaiji*, 4ab.
[48] Ibid., 4a.

in Tianjin, was killed while protecting a friend's wife from a foreign soldier.[49] This tragic incident pushed Xiao to review Western ideas in critical terms, specifically the Social Darwinism Xiao learned through Yan Fu, a family friend.[50]

Billy K. L. So points out that Yan Fu twisted Thomas H. Huxley's original idea in translating his *Evolution and Ethics* into Chinese as *Tianyan Lun* 天演論. Whereas Huxley's famous axiom "survival of the fittest" still stresses the importance of the ethical order of the human society, Yan Fu changes it into his own version of evolution as "things struggle for existence, and Heaven (*tian*) selects (*wujing tianze* 物競天擇)". Here *tian* 天 is no longer the Confucian *tian* that rules all under Heaven following moral principles, much less the Daoist *tian* that nurtures myriad things and lets them live in harmony. It is rather a Chinese rendering of the Western concept of the "cold and ruthless (*lengku wuqing* 冷酷無情)" nature, which inflicts the "law of the jungle (*ruorou qiangshi* 弱肉強食, *lit.* the strong eats up the weak)" on both the natural world and the human society. Yan Fu's "fundamental paradigm shift" of *tian* encountered resistance from many Chinese intellectuals of the time.[51] Xiao, for one, argues in her heart-wrenching poem, "Mourning My Son Jian ('Ai Jian'er' 哀漸兒)", that it is not the will of Heaven to kill the weak. Even natural disasters can destroy only a very few. By contrast, the unethical, cruel humans, such as the Western imperialists, can use the law of the jungle to justify their slaughtering of people, and modern weaponry has exceedingly enhanced the efficiency of killing. With a mother's sensibility, the grief-stricken Xiao discerns a pessimistic future for all humankind being swayed by such a brutal "law of the jungle": "Only now do we 'believe' weak ones cannot survive, / Fragile women and little boys, the fertilizer of wilderness [此時乃信弱者亡，脆女稚男膏野土]."[52]

Misery in her life and in the lives of others prompted Xiao Daoguan into profound contemplation on how to cope with an absurd world that rendered precious human lives into meaningless existence. She "devoted her later years to philosophical reasoning, and her insights differ entirely from the popularly currents [晚究心哲理，見解迥異常流]",[53] as Chen Yan later recollected. Here the "popular currents" should also include the Social Darwinism then widely circulated among the nationalistic reformers. One philosophical essay she wrote during this period, "On Sorrow ('Yan Chou' 言愁)", reflects her effort to come to terms with human emotions stirred up by life experiences and the ways to

[49] See *Shiyi Xiansheng Nianpu* 石遺先生年譜 (Biographic chronology of Chen Yan), 4: 14b-15a.
[50] Yan Fu translated Huxley's *Evolution and Ethics* into *Tianyan Lun* first in 1895, of which a revised version was published in 1898 and greatly inspired the Chinese intellectual elite; see So 2012, pp. 5-6.
[51] See So 2012, pp. 3-12
[52] *Qingshi Jishi*, 22: 16005.
[53] "Dao'anshi Shilüe", 1b.

appease inner turmoil. At the outset of the essay, she assumes an ideal status in which people can be exempted from sorrow: "If a person faces disasters but does not know to worry, or is about to die but does not feel sad, this person is not doomed but well protected by Heaven [人有禍在目前而不知憂戚，至死亡而不知哀者，非其天喪，乃其天全也]." Why? Because "what people cannot know is what will happen in the future [不知者其未來者也]."[54] If one has no knowledge about things yet to come, then one does not have to suffer from sorrow and anxiety caused by them. Unfortunately, however, people living in the present are constantly suffering.

> A foolish person does not know about the future, yet everyone, even the foolish, knows about the present. Some argue that there is no such thing as the present under Heaven. The present is the past [because of the quick eclipse of the time]. The future does not come to meet us, and the past does not stay, so what do we know about them? Now everyone can feel full [after eating food] or warm [with clothes]. Is feeling full and warm not in the present? If feeling full belongs to the past [because of the quick eclipse of the time], to swallow once, twice, and dozens of times, and there must be a moment of the present. Feeling cold, one needs clothes. If one's body exists, so do his clothes, just like a bird has feathers, and a beast has hair. To pull its feathers or shave its hair, the animal would cry. This is just the same as to grab away one's food before one feels full.[55]
> 未來則愚者不知，見在雖愚未有不知者。曰天下無見在，即見在即過去，未來不迎，過去不留，何知之與有？然莫不知飽煖。飽煖其見在乎？既飽為過去，自一咽再咽以至數十百咽，其間有見在者矣！寒之需衣，自身之在，衣皆見在焉！若鳥之有羽，獸之有毛。拔其羽、刮其毛，未有不鳴號者。未飽而奪之食，亦猶是焉。

This paragraph has strong existential implications for human attitudes toward time and being. Deep down, Xiao is trying to point out that in this meaningless world people can only feel their existence through misery. So, is there a way to assuage the suffering? Xiao suggests:

> For human feelings, no one would not love being together and hate being apart. Yet love and hatred are uncertain, so are being apart and being together. Sorrow and joy thus arise, and so the belief of fate […]. A person will always experience parting, except from his or her self. Even within one's self, one still has to experience parting. Turning deaf means being apart from ears; turning blind means being apart from eyes; teeth shaking means the departure of teeth; hair falling off means the departure of hair; complexion fading means the departure of the luster of the facial skin; body tired meaning the departure of the spirit; […] awakening from the big dream of life means the soul departs from the body.[56]

[54] *Dao'anshi Zawen*, 10a.
[55] Ibid., 10ab.
[56] Ibid., 11ab.

> 人情莫不好合而惡離 […] 好惡無定在，離合又無定在，而苦樂生焉，而命運之說起焉。[…]自身而外，無不離者。雖身以內，亦何嘗不離？不聰則耳離，不明則目離，齒搖則齒離，髮落則髮離，面枯則顏色離，體疲則精神離，[…]大夢覺則魂氣與軀壳離。

Xiao concludes: "Being together is our status in a temporary lodging, being apart is the status of our eternal home, the original status of life [合者其傳舍，離者其歸宿，離者其本來也]."[57] Taking traditional resources, here primarily the *Zhuangzi* 莊子,[58] Xiao tries to soothe the sorrow caused by modernity. This is the best that Xiao could do for herself and for her people in a time of extreme upheaval. Sadness consumed Xiao's health and eventually caused her early death in 1907. Chen Yan compiled and published all of her works one year later.[59] Having indulged himself in a conjugal relationship of mutual intellectual understanding and emotional attachment, Chen Yan stayed loyal to Xiao's memory and never married again.[60]

IV. Xue Shaohui: Advocate of Late Qing Reforms

Among her contemporary Min *cainü*, Xue Shaohui probably benefitted the most from the union of the two cultures and in turn made an outstanding contribution to late Qing reforms. She embraced Chinese and Western learning in forming the ideal womanhood, engaged newly sprouted journalism and translated western literature, history, and science in advancing women's emancipation and used her poetry to chronicle the reform era.[61] In this section, I shall focus on the last few years of her life, during which she participated in the late Qing "New-Policy" campaign and constitutional reform and presented her ideas and ideals in literary writings.

Startled by the invasion of the Eight-Joint Forces, Cixi initiated the "New Policies" that literally continued the 1898 agendas. The year 1904 saw a substantial turn in the campaign. Stimulated by Japan's recent victory in its war with Russia—a result of Japan's adaptation of the constitutional system, as the Chinese generally believed—high-ranking officials joined the advocacy of "constitutional construction (*lixian* 立憲)". The Superintendent of the Southern

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[57] Ibid., 11b.

[58] Xiao's philosophical ideas are very much likely borrowed from *Zhuangzi* "Tianxia" 天下 (All under Heaven): "As soon as the sun reaches noon, it is already setting; as soon as a thing is born, it is already dying [日方中方睨，物方生方死]", and "Zhile" 至樂 (Perfect happiness): "Life is only a person's temporary lodging [生者，假借也]", in *Zhuangzi* [*Jishi*] 莊子[集釋] ([Collected commentary on the] *Zhuangzi*), 10B: 1102, and 6B: 616, respectively.

[59] See "Dao'anshi Shilüe", 1a-2b.

[60] See Hu Wenkai, manuscript (not paginated).

[61] For Xue's life and her participation in late Qing reforms, see my forthcoming book, *Politics, Poetics, and Gender in Late Qing China: Xue Shaohui (1866–1911) and the Era of Reform*.

Ports (*Nanyang dachen* 南洋大臣) Zhou Fu 周馥 (1837-1921), along with the Governor-General of the Hubei and Hunan Provinces (*Huguang zongdu* 湖广总督) Zhang Zhidong, and the Superintendent of the Northern Ports (*Beiyang dachen* 北洋大臣) Yuan Shikai 袁世凱 (1859-1916), proposed to the court in July 1904 to transform China into a constitutional state in twelve years.[62] The Chen brothers were then serving on the Southern Ports staff in Nanjing. Given their intimate knowledge about the constitutional system they had acquired from their long diplomatic mission in the West, they must have contributed to the proposal.

In the summer of 1905, the Qing regime began seriously tackling the possibility of adopting a constitutional monarchy. In order to communicate between the regime and the general public, the Chen brothers inaugurated the *Official Daily of the Southern Ports* (*Nanyang Riri Guanbao* 南洋日日官報) on 1 August 1905 to complement the *Official Journal of the Southern Ports* (*Nanyang Guanbao* 南洋官報), which had also been in their charge.[63] The editorial board invited Xue to pen the "Editorial Introduction" to the *Daily* on their behalf, despite the fact that the Ports were flocked with talented men, and thereupon brought Xue directly into constitutional reform. Clearly, they knew that they could trust her literary talent, updated knowledge, and, above all, relentless mind for reform.

Xue aptly took this opportunity to promote the "New Policy" and the constitutional reforms. She begins the "Introduction" briefing the readers about the current situation in China, where "the ruler on high is considering good plans for self-strengthening, and the masses below expect a great governing of civilization [上思振作之良圖，群仰文明之盛治]". The installation of the *Daily*, Xue maintains, is to open a space for "announcing the moral intention of the ruler and communicating reasonable demands of the people [宣上德而通下情]". The eventual purpose is for both parties to work together on political reforms, as she declares: "The state of the Zhou, though old, can manage to become new; to restore the Dao of the Yin, the only way is to revise the political system [周邦雖舊可維新，殷道復興惟修政]."[64] To be sure, late Qing reformers often justified contemporary reform movement by comparing it to the reform of the good old state Zhou (ca. 11 cent.-771 BCE). Xue, however, repeats this analogy in the "Introduction" specifically for promoting her constitutional ideal. Referring to Zhou, a feudalist regime that had granted more power to local states than later imperial dynasties, Xue and her fellow

[62] See Zhang Peitian 張培田 and Chen Jinquan 陳金全 2004, p. 81.

[63] The *Nanyang Riri Guanbao* prints the French title of the *Nanyang Guanbao*, *Journal officiel de Nan Yang*, under its Chinese title, showing its affiliation to the Journal.

[64] Xue, "Daini *Nanyang Riri Guanbao* Xuli" 代擬南洋日日官報敍例 (Editorial Introduction to the *Official Daily of the Southern Ports*, on Behalf of the Editorial Board), *Nanyang Riri Guanbao* (2 Aug. 1905): front page; also in *Daiyunlou Yiji*, *Wenji* 文集 (Collected prose), B: 6ab. *Lunyu* 2: 23: "The Zhou inherited the ritual of the Yin (周因於殷禮)".

constitutionalists showed their preference for "republicanism with a nominal monarch (*xujun gonghe* 虛君共和)".[65]

Xue further intimated a more detailed and tangible vision and version of the "New Policy" and the constitutional reforms, in an essay written in late 1905 to celebrate Zhou Fu's seventieth birthday. She made clear at the very outset that this essay was intended for summarizing Zhou's major achievements as the Superintendent of the Southern Ports and the Governor-General of Jiangsu, Anhui, and Jiangxi provinces, "in order to manifest his kindness and favor for the people, and to explain his [new] policy making [以表惠澤，以明政策]."[66] The ten achievements that Xue summarized about Zhou Fu covered basically the following four aspects:

First and foremost, education, which is Xue's most focused concern. In the heyday of the 1898 Reform Movement, Xue actively participated in the 1897-1898 Shanghai campaign for women's education, as a leading advocate and its curricula designer. She, therefore, cites Zhou Fu's ardent establishment of the new school system as his top achievement, especially his pedagogic principle of incorporating both the Chinese and the Western, and the traditional and the modern knowledge on equal terms: "His Dao of [education] still sticks to 'investigating things' and 'perfecting knowledge',[67] yet the textbooks are broadly selected, including Western works [printed in horizontal lines] [道不越格物致知，書廣搜旁行斜上]."[68] Among the schools he built and renovated during his tenure were China's future major higher educational institutes, such as the Sanjiang Normal School (later Liangjiang Normal School, now Nanjing University and Dongnan University) and the Fudan Public School (now Fudan University), as well as a number of professional schools and girls' schools.[69]

Second, economy. In order to mollify late Qing instability of the exchange ratio between copper coins and silver, Zhou Fu regulated the local money market by tightening control of provincial banks and adding new branches to the provincial Mint: "Thus he enabled the gains for both private and government business, and stopped the circulation of bad-quality coins [頓使公私出納，量增其贏；黑澑駁斑，莫生其弊]."[70] A better management of government banks also helped "block bad practices, open up resources for

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[65] See Hou Yijie 侯宜杰, 1993, p. 557.

[66] Xue, "Daini Nanyang Zhou Zhijun Ji Pei Wu Furen Qishi Shouxu" 代擬南洋周制軍暨配吳夫人七十壽序 (Preface in Celebration of the seventieth birthday of the Superintendent Zhou of the Southern Ports and his wife Lady Wu, on behalf of [Chen Jitong and Chen Shoupeng]), *Daiyunlou Yiji*, *Wenji*, B: 9a.

[67] Referring to the first two of the eight-step "classic account" in the *Liji* [*Zhengyi*] 禮記[正義] ([Orthodox commentary on the] *Record of ritual*), "Daxue" 大學 (Great Learning), in *Shisanjing Zhushu*, *Juan* 60, 2: 1673.

[68] Ibid.

[69] For Zhou Fu's achievements in reforming education, see also Wang Zhiguo 汪志國 2004, pp. 162-166, 171-173.

[70] *Daiyunlou Yiji*, *Wenji*, B: 9b.

making profits, and coordinate funds for people's needs [塞弊竇以濬利源，合公財以合民用]."[71] In order to develop local economy, Zhou Fu urged exploration of regional resources such as minerals, tea, and fisheries and imported modern technologies to reform conventional means of production. Zhou Fu also encouraged trade with foreign countries. In addition to putting right the old Jianghuai 江淮 customs, he opened two natural ports in Jiangsu—Haizhou and Tongzhou—for, "if merchants compete to trade with each other, would not people from afar appreciate our conciliatory policy? [矧互市競相來往，遠人必待懷柔乎？]."[72]

Third, military. Zhou Fu fortified the Nanjing city wall, making it a stronghold against foreign invasions so that "no one could destroy it even with repetitive attacks (*jiugong bupo* 九攻不破)".[73] To guard the Yangzi River delta, Zhou Fu replaced the original Northern Jiangsu governor with a General-in-Chief. He also set up the Provincial Staff of New Troops in Jiangsu to train modernized soldiers, in the number of 10,000 strong. Most importantly, as the Southern Fleet encountered a significant loss in the Sino-French War in 1884, and the Northern Fleet was devastated in the Sino-Japanese War in 1894, Zhou Fu co-proposed with Yuan Shikai to combine the two fleets into one. This merge effectively strengthened the Chinese Navy, as Xue describes: "united into one family, all depends on the great rivers and giant ships; this combination greatly benefitted China, now what are we afraid of about the war smoke in the ocean? [合作一家，全仗巨川舟楫；惠此中國，詎驚隔海煙塵？]"[74]

Last but not least, Zhou Fu highly developed local news media and the publication press. As mentioned above, in a complement to the *Official Journal of the Southern Ports*, he decided to issue the *Official Daily*. He also hired more translators to enlarge the Jiang Chu Translation and Compilation Bureau (*jiang chu bianyiju* 江楚編譯局) that was co-founded in 1901 by Zhang Zhidong and the then Superintendent of the Southern Ports Liu Kunyi 劉坤一 (1830–1902), also a reform-minded official.

Through a thorough account of Zhou Fu's achievements, Xue presents an ideal model of governing an autonomous region under a constitutional monarchy. As she makes clear at the very outset of the essay: "Once the duties of each official is meticulously specified, the royal mind can be at ease [吏職既精，帝心簡在]."[75] The power is in the hands of the local government, which administers every aspect of an independent state de facto, from civil and military affairs to diplomatic and trade relations. The monarchy is only the honorary

[71] Ibid.
[72] Ibid., B:10a. For Zhou Fu's achievements in reforming finances and economy, see also Wang Zhiguo 2004, pp. 147, 153-161.
[73] *Daiyunlou Yiji*, *Wenji*, B: 9b.
[74] Ibid., B:10b. For Zhou Fu's achievements in military reforms, see Wang Zhiguo 2004, pp. 43-47.
[75] *Daiyunlou Yiji*, *Wenji*, B: 8b.

head of the country. This record and design of a would-be constitutional state bore clear marks of the Fuzhou Navy Yard and the Fuzhou *cainü* cultures. The Chen brothers served on Zhou Fu's staff and therein directly assisted Zhou Fu to promote New Policy and Constitutionalist reforms. Jitong was the head of the Official Journal and the Jiang Chu Bureau, hence a mouthpiece and a mastermind of Zhou Fu's reform campaign.[76] Shoupeng, who had a navigational training in the Fuzhou Navy School and therefore specialized in geography, was assigned by Zhou Fu to make the Fishery Atlas. And he spent a whole year, from September 1905 to August 1906, to fulfill this important task that had both economic and military functions.[77] As for Xue herself, in addition to the aforementioned two essays she wrote to promote reform campaigns, she also published with the Jiang Chu Bureau the first systematic introduction to Western Women, the *Biographies of Foreign Women* (*Waiguo Lienü Zhuan* 外國列女傳), which she co-translated and co-compiled with Shoupeng for borrowing the experience of women's education in the West to promote that in China. The book especially highlighted how women, with their learning and talents, participated in political affairs of the country. She even imagined the world of the Greek and Roman goddesses into a women's republic, where women enjoy highly autonomous governance of their own lives.

In 1907, Xue and her husband moved to Beijing after Shoupeng was appointed to a position in the newly established Ministry of Posts and Communications (*youchuan bu* 郵傳部). There Xue spent her last four years in close observation of the "New Policy" and constitutional reforms, only to find that the Manchu regime had its own agendas quite divergent from her expectations. On 27 August 1908, the regime announced the "Court Sanctioned Outline of the Constitution (*qinding xianfa dagang* 欽定憲法大綱)". It declared adopting an imitation of the Japanese system, yet with an explicit desire to garner even greater oligarchical power than the Japanese, and thus disappointed the Chinese constitutionalists.[78] Xue then wrote a poem about worms occupying an elm tree at her new residence in the capital. "They gather the clan to live in the high place [聚族居高位]", and "suck the syrups of the tree [再剝樹膏脂]." The poet hence worries that "once the West wind blows, / Who will lament over the fallen tree? [一朝西風來，樹倒誰為悲？]."[79] This allegorical poem clearly satirizes the greedy Manchu nobles, who moved from Manchuria to dominate all of China yet did nothing but exhaust the resources of the country. Now facing

[76] See "Chen Jitong Shilüe" 陳季同事略 (Biographic sketch of Chen Jitong), 39: 72b.

[77] See "Xianbi Xue Gongren Nianpu" 先妣薛恭人年譜 (Biographic chronology of our late mother, Lady Xue), 12ab. For the economic and military function in developing fisheries, see also Wang Zhiguo 2004, pp. 154-157.

[78] See Gasster, 1968, p. 76. For late Qing constitutional reform and its Japanese resources, see Shang Xiaoming 尚小明 1998, pp. 143-168. For the "Qinding Xianfa Dagang", see *Qingmo Minchu Xianzheng Shiliao Jikan* 清末民初憲政史料輯刊 (Collected historical materials on late Qing constitutional movement), pp. 329-335.

[79] *Daiyunlou Yiji*, *Shiji* 詩集 (Collected poetry), 4: 5b-6a.

the increasing threat from the imperial West, a much weakened China is doomed to meet its fall.

Xue elaborated her fear for the destiny of China and its people in greater details in another poem written at this time, titled "Watching Circus ('Guan Maxi' 觀馬戲)". Xue went to a Western circus performance with Shoupeng. Amused by its dancing horses, Xue exclaimed: "I wonder, once all kinds of animals dance at the imperial court, / The warm breeze must have transformed the realm with the righteous and harmonious music [我思百獸舞於庭，薰風雅化諧宮羽]."[80] Shoupeng, however, begged to differ. He pointed out that, witnessing the origin of the circus in the West, these abnormal horses might not be as auspicious as Xue imagined:

In the past, during the prosperous era of the Roman Empire,	憶昔羅馬全盛時，
Its governing policies were redundant and harsh.	國政煩苛民困苦。
People were depressed, wanting to revolt;	人心抑鬱欲思亂，
The ruler therefore created circuses to appease the public.	乃創馬戲俾快覩。
Yet the world was changing, hard to achieve its harmony;	世異難宣天地和，
Countries fought each other, flaunting their military muscles.[81]	列國紛爭動師旅。

The Roman Empire soon declined, and the dancing animals only served as a portent of its downfall. A similar story took place in the once equally affluent Tang China. Under Emperor Xuanzong 玄宗 (r. 712-756), the Ministry of Music reared 400 horses. These animals were decorated with precious stones and embroidered clothing, and their duties were to dance to the ritual music at court ceremonies. This extravaganza was soon interrupted by the An Lushan 安祿山 Rebellion (755-757): "The rainbow-skirt tune was broken in front of Diligent-Governing Tower, / When fierce rebels gathered by Congealed-Emerald Pond [勤政樓前破霓裳，凝碧池邊聚強虜]."[82] The horses scattered. Some later fell into the hands of the Weibo 魏博 warlord Tian Chengsi 田承嗣 (705-779). At a military banquet, these horses danced with music and could not stop. The astonished warlord thought these horses were haunted by demons and had them all slaughtered.[83]

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[80] Ibid., 4: 7a. Here Xue alludes to *Shangshu* 尚書 (*Book of Documents*), "Shundian" 舜典 (Cannon of Shun): As the Sage-King Shun asked his courtier Kui to start the court music, Kui responded: "Ah! I strike the stone bells to play music, and myriad animals all dance following the tune [於！予击石拊石，百兽率舞]" (*Shangshu* [*Zhengyi*], in *Shisanjing Zhushu*, 3: 19).

[81] *Daiyunlou Yiji*, *Shiji*, 4: 7b.

[82] Ibid.

[83] See *Shanhugou Shihua* 珊瑚鉤詩話 (Poetic criticism of A Coral Hook), 2: 3ab.

Putting words in Shoupeng's mouth, Xue's actual purpose is to borrow her husband's scholarly authority to launch her criticism of the current political situation. (Shoupeng studied more than three years in Europe in sciences, technology, and the humanities and obtained the *juren* degree after graduating from the Navy School; hence he was an expert in both traditions, although Xue herself was no less learned). The dancing horses are clearly metaphors with multiple layers of meaning. They may represent a luxurious spectacle for the Roman ruler to avert people's anger at his bad governing or for the Tang emperor to add splendor to his royal glory. The horses may also represent clever and compliant courtiers, who help the rulers by beguiling the people. Yet, "although the dragon spirits of the horses may be easy to tame; / People's feelings should be the [ruler's] primary concern [從來龍性縱易馴，惟有民情要安撫]." Unfortunately, however, the current regime was only concerned about its power, regardless of the actual situation of the country and the people. Xue's spirit was understandably low: "On our way home, the moon sets, and young crows cry for food [歸途月落鴉啼乳]".[84] People are like the young birds—they desire and deserve a better life. Seeing the discrepancy between the Qing ruler and the people, the poet must have sensed the difficulty in transforming China in peace as she always hoped. On 26 July 1911, Xue died of a longtime illness. Four months later, the Republican revolution took place. The Chinese intellectual elite replaced a highly refined imperial system with an instant republic, one more radical than had been originally proposed by the 1898 reformers.

Embracing gender as a category of analysis and using women's writings as sources, Dorothy Ko suggests that "historical studies of Chinese women must take greater account of specific periods and locales, as well as of the different social and class backgrounds of the women in question."[85] Following this approach and focusing on previously overlooked historical figures and materials, this article conducts a study of Min women writers during the later Qing reform era. This special period and locale witnessed the development of the unprecedented Fuzhou Navy Yard culture that had intended for modernizing China's naval power but resulted also in breeding a new generation of China's intelligentsia. Through the companionate marriage and the mother's teaching intrinsic of the Min *cainü* culture, the Fuzhou Navy Yard culture helped exposing local Min writing women to a much broader spectrum of knowledge and information of the world. The ensuing late Qing reform movement that included women's education and emancipation in its agendas further released the long repressed intellectual and political ambition of Min *cianü*. Min writing women played prominent roles nationwide not only as enthusiastic participants in late Qing reforms, but also as independent thinkers and critics. Via newly

[84] *Daiyunlou Yiji*, *Shiji*, 4: 7b.
[85] Ko 1994, p. 4.

sprout news media, they published essays and poems to deliver open criticism against the self-interested Manchu regime and some leading male reformers' nationalistic approach. A study of their participation in and their contemplation of the events surrounding late Qing turmoil and reforms fills out a much complex picture of women's function in later Qing Chinese sociopolitical and cultural history.

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