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Characteristics of Qing China's Maritime Trade Politics, *Shunzhi* Through *Qianlong* Reigns

Angela Schottenhammer

Introduction

Studies of “international” trade relations in imperial China often give the impression that the Chinese were not really interested in foreign trade as a commercial undertaking and that all they would tolerate was a form of official tribute trade. Government measures such as the well-known “maritime trade prohibition policy” (*haijin* 海禁) of the early Ming (1368–1644) rulers – which lasted after all for some 200 years from 1371 to 1567 – contributed a lot to this picture. It has been considered a proof of the hostile attitude of the Ming government towards maritime trade and commercial activities in general. But also the treatment of foreigners and foreign (maritime) trade by the Manchu rulers of the Qing dynasty (1644–1911) has often been generalized and consequently been regarded as negative – with occasions such as the famous, and eventually unsuccessful embassy by Lord George Macartney (1737–1806) in 1793 serving as evidence.¹ The Chinese, it is said, only regarded themselves in a very Sino-centric way as the representatives of a superior culture and politico-economic entity, as the “middle kingdom”, which was confronted with and surrounded by “barbarians” (*yi* 夷).² But political claims going hand in hand with such ideological concepts were frequently quite different from

1 As for the Macartney mission, its purpose as well as the impression it left on the West, cf. for example Alain Peyrefitte, *Le regard des Anglais: présentation et recueil des documents britanniques et occidentaux inédits éclairant la préparation, le déroulement et les conséquences de l'ambassade Macartney (1792–1794)*. (Paris: Fayard, 1998); Alain Peyrefitte, Pierre Henri Durand, *Un choc de culture: La vision des Chinois, la vision des Anglais*. (Paris: Fayard, 1991, 1998). 2 vols.; Robert A. Bickers (ed.), *Ritual and diplomacy: The Macartney Mission to China, 1792–1794. Papers presented at the 1992 Conference of the British Association for Chinese Studies Marking the Bicentenary of the Macartney Mission to China*. (London: Wellsweep Publishing, 1993); D. E. Mungello, *The Great Encounter of China and the West, 1500–1800*. (Lanham: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, 2005).

2 “*Hua* 華” and “*yi* 夷” were common adjectives in the Chunqiu 春秋 Period (770–476) for Chinese and barbarians respectively, and from early Tang (618–906) times onwards the words were linked in the phrase “*Huayi*”. Cf. Endymion Wilkinson, *Chinese History. A Manual*. 中國歷史手冊. (Revised and enlarged edition, Cambridge, Mass., London: Harvard University Press, 2000), p. 95. The earliest designations for barbarians included collective terms such as the “*siyi* 四夷” (four barbarian peoples) who inhabited the “*sibai* 四海” (four seas), the periphery surrounding the Chinese political centre. The *siyi* were the Dongyi 東夷, the Beidi 北狄, the Xirong 西戎 and the Nanman 南蠻.

reality. Using the words of Leonard Blussé, “(i)t is curious how the fuss that was made in the nineteenth century about the kowtow as a sign of Manchu arrogance continues to occupy the mind” until the present.³

The political ideology going along with this Sino-centric standpoint, from the Chinese perspective, adequately found its expression in the traditional tribute system. But we should first be aware of the fact that within this tribute system diplomacy and commerce were inseparable; paying tribute was not solely an act of formal submission but at the same time an opportunity for trade. Secondly, the self-perception of China as the “middle kingdom versus barbarian states”⁴ actually, if at all, took shape with far-reaching consequences only during a relatively short time period in the early Ming dynasty. As John E. Wills has emphasized, strictly speaking, a unified tribute system only during the first half of the Ming dynasty (c. 1367–1550) “did provide the matrix for all of China’s foreign relations”.⁵ In the second half of the Ming the tribute system had already become weakened. Hans Bielenstein even went so far as to claim that “a tributary system centered on China did not exist” in imperial China.⁶ And it should be added that even the first Ming rulers were no enemies of trade *per se*. Trade did also take place under their rulership. The late Ming dynasty anyhow has to be considered an age of commerce and flourishing “international” trade.⁷ Consequently, even taking into consideration such Sino-centric attitudes, one should not generalize this picture but make precise distinctions and pronounce a judgement only in the context of the respective historical background.

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- 3 Leoard Blussé, *Visible Cities. Canton, Nagasaki, and Batavia and the Coming of the Americans*. (Cambridge, Mass., London: Harvard University Press, 2006), p. 85.
 - 4 The term “Zhongguo 中國” can be found in texts as early as Zhou times, but in the sense of “*guozhong* 國中” it always referred to the political centre of Chinese rule, the royal domains in contrast to the the area where the feudal lords had their lands. It was actually only in the nineteenth century that the expression emerged as the name for the country. It first appeared in a formal document for the chief Manchu negotiator at the Treaty of Nerčinsk with Russia in 1689. Endymion Wilkinson, *Chinese History. A Manual* (2000), p. 132.
 - 5 John E. Wills, Jr., “Great Qing and Its Southern Neighbours, 1760–1820: Secular Trends and Recovery from Crisis”, conference contribution provided under “www.historycooperative.org/proceedings/interactions/wills.html” (03.05.2006).
 - 6 Hans Bielenstein, *Diplomacy and Trade in the Chinese World, 589–1279*. (Leiden: E. J. Brill, 2005), p. 675; cf. also pp. 58 (introduction).
 - 7 See, for example, Chang Pin-tsun, *Chinese Maritime Trade: The Case of Sixteenth-Century Fu-chien*. (Ph.D. dissertation; Princeton: Princeton University, 1983); William Atwell, “Ming China and the Emerging World Economy, c. 1470–1650”, in Denis Twitchett and Frederick W. Mote (eds.), *The Cambridge History of China*, volume 8: *The Ming Dynasty, 1368–1644*, part 2. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998), pp. 376–416; Timothy Brook, *The Confusions of Pleasure. Commerce and Culture in Ming China*. (Berkeley, Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1998), pp. 204–218; Timothy Brook, “Communications and commerce”, in Frederick W. Mote, Denis Twitchett (eds.), *The Cambridge History of China*, vol. 8, part 2 (1988), pp. 579–707; on the rise of private trade, see for example Chang Pin-tsun, *Chinese Maritime Trade* (1983), pp. 198–290.

Upon closer examination it thus becomes evident that throughout the history of imperial China probably much more trade went on than official documents reveal.⁸

In 1644, the Manchus, a Tungusic semi-nomadic people originally residing in the north and northeast of China, came to power in China and founded the Qing dynasty. Despite the indisputable fact that during the Qing dynasty the main emphasis and concentration of the rulers was on land and not on maritime space and expansion,⁹ the rulers did not possess a principal negative attitude towards maritime trade. The Manchus had a long commercial tradition with regions in northeast Asia. Kangxi's trading policy has in this context been designated as "open".¹⁰ And, after all, it was the Kangxi Emperor who first had China's Customs Offices (*haiguan* 海關) established in the time span between 1683 and 1684. The reference of the early Manchu rulers towards overseas trade relations, it will be argued, should be designated as "open" – despite Kangxi's maritime trade prohibitions – and, generally speaking, ranged from strategic security calculations to profit interests – with a different emphasis during different time periods.¹¹ While security calculations prevailed in the early Qing period, commercial interests gained in importance in the course of the eighteenth century.¹²

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- 8 Fairly frequently official accounts provide us with the impression that the Chinese rulers were not really interested in trade and commerce. But actually already in the course of the Tang, the Five Dynasties, and the Song, a steady increase in maritime trade resulted in the official policy and attitude towards trade becoming more and more positive and open. Already by the thirteenth century, we may even designate China as the emporium of commodity exchange in the medieval world. Cf. Angela Schottenhammer, "China's Emergence as a Maritime Power", draft manuscript for volume 5 of the *Cambridge History of China*, ed. by Dennis Twitchett and John Chaffee.
- 9 For details cf. Angela Schottenhammer, Roderich Ptak, *The Perception of Maritime Space in Traditional Chinese Sources*. (Wiesbaden: Otto Harrassowitz, 2006); also Laura Hostetler, *Qing Colonial Enterprise. Ethnography and Cartography in Early Modern China*. (Chicago, London: University of Chicago Press, 2001).
- 10 Gang Zhao, *Shaping the Asian Trade Network: The Conception and Implementation of the Chinese Open Trade Policy, 1684–1840*. PhD dissertation, John Hopkins University. (Ann Arbor: University Microfilms International, 2007), pp. 103–140. Unfortunately, I learned about this dissertation only after the present article had been basically completed.
- 11 The policy adopted by the Manchus in their foreign relations with Central Eurasian polities has been highlighted excellently by Peter C. Perdue. He explains the ways in which Qing China's foreign policy on the land border moved from strategic defence to commercial profit interests. Cf. Peter C. Perdue, *China Marches West. The Qing Conquest of Central Asia*, (Cambridge, Mass., London: Harvard University Press 2005), pp. 397–406. It should perhaps not be surprising that similar political guidelines also characterized Qing China's management of maritime trade.
- 12 But this did not mean that the Qing rulers suddenly sought trade based on the same premises as a nation like England, where a capitalist mode of production necessitated the search for ever-greater markets to maximise profits. The Qianlong Emperor (r. 1736–1795) wanted to use foreign trade to fill his private purse and the state coffers by imposing direct taxes on foreign imports and exports, and by taxing the capital of "his" merchants, who did their business under strict government control and made profits by trading with the foreigners. It was not intended to provide domestic merchants with the liberties of capital utilization, nor to open

It is of course true that “we are saddled with a very one-sided view of the past, largely built on presumptions about how affairs along the coastal border should be conducted, according to the central government, instead of what they were really like.”¹³ Nevertheless, this should of course not prevent us from having a closer look at how the administration of maritime trade was actually organized by the government, especially during a period when for the first time in Chinese history the traditional Maritime Trade Offices or Superintendencies of Maritime Trade (*shibo [tiju] si* 市舶提舉司) were abolished and replaced by Customs Offices (*haiguan* 海關). The early history of Qing China’s administration of maritime trade has so far mostly been treated only in very general terms, especially in Western research¹⁴ – and detailed information on its administrative and institutional history including the question of personnel is still very much scattered in historical sources. Thus the present article seeks to follow this history from an administrative-institutional per-

domestic markets to foreign capital investment and free trade. Accumulation of capital by merchants did, of course, occur in China, but the transition towards a capitalist mode of production never took place.

13 Leonard Blussé, *Visible Cities* (2006), p. 11.

14 The study by Gang Zhao is a welcome exception; also John E. Wills, Jr. and George Bryan Souza have worked on related topics; see above all John E. Wills, Jr., *Pepper, Guns and Parleys: The Dutch East India Company and China 1622–1681*. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1974); John E. Wills, Jr., *Dutch and Portuguese Envoys to K’ang-hsi, 1666–1687*. (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1984); George Bryan Souza, *The Survival of Empire: Portuguese Trade and Society in China and the South China Sea, 1630–1754*. (Cambridge: Cambridge University, 1986). For Chinese publications that are also mostly rather general in their approach and discussion, see, among others, Feng Lijun 馮立軍, “Shilun Qingchao qianqi Xiamen haiwai maoyi guanli 試論清朝前期廈門海外貿易管理”, *Nanyang wenti yanjiu* 南洋問題研究 4 (2001), pp. 74–96; Hui Kim-bing, Phyllis 許劍冰, *Qingchu zhi Yue haiguan* 清初之粵海關. (Hong Kong: University of Hong Kong Press, 1961); Chang Pin-ts’un 張彬村, “MingQing liangchao de haiwai maoyi zhengce: biguan zishou? 明清兩朝的海外貿易政策: 閉關自守?”, in Wu Chien-hsiung 吳劍雄 (ed.), *Zhongguo haiyang fazhanshi* 中國海洋發展史. (Taipei: Zhongyang yanjiuyuan, 2000), pp. 45–59; Chen Xiyu 陳希育, “Qingdai haiwai maoyi de jingying yu lirun 清代海外貿易的經營與利潤”, *Zhongguo shehui jingjishi yanjiu* 中國社會經濟史研究 1 (1992), pp. 51–58; Chen Xiyu, “Qingdai qianqi de Xiamen haiguan yu haiwai maoyi 清代前期的廈門海關與海外貿易”, *Xiamen daxue xuebao* 3 (1991), pp. 111–118; Zhuang Guotu 莊國土, “Lun 17–19 shiji Minnan haishang zhudao haiwai huashang wangluo de yuanyin 論 17–19 世紀閩南海商主導海外華商網羅的原因”, *Dongnan xueshu* 3 (2001), pp. 64–73; Zhuang Guotu, “Qingchu Zhongguo yu Nanyang guanxi 清初中國與南洋關係”, *Taiwan yanjiu jikan* 台灣研究集刊 2 (1983), pp. 127–132; Zhuang Guotu, “Qingchu (1683–1727) haishang maoyi zhengce he Nanyang jinhang ling 清初 (1683–1727) 海商貿易政策和南洋禁航令”, *Haijiaoshi yanjiu* 海交史研究 11 (1987), pp. 25–31; Zhuang Guotu, “Fujianese Commercial Expansion into Southeast Asia in the 17th Century”, *Culture of Review* (Macao), vol. 1 (1991); Jing Xiaoyan 荆晓燕, Qing shunzhi shi’er nian qian de dui Ri haiwai maoyi 清順至十二年前的對日海外貿易”, *Shixue xuekan* 史學學刊 1 (2007), pp. 44–48; Li Xiang 李想, Yang Xiongbo 楊維波, “Lun Qingchao qianqi haiwai maoyi zhengce de ‘fei biguan xing’” 論清朝前期海外貿易政策的非閉關性, *Zhangzhou Shibao xueyuan xuebao* 漳州師範學院學報 29:4 (2008), pp. 64–67.

spective.¹⁵ This investigation can furthermore shed more light on both the Manchu ruler's attitude towards maritime trade and on problems of its implementation in an environment with Manchu rulers imposing their concepts of how maritime trade should be organized on a Han Chinese officialdom.

The Qing period maritime trade bans

Early in 1646 (*shunzhi* 3), an imperial decree with "legal regulations concerning the prohibition of privately going abroad and sailing overseas" was issued, specifying the fines for taking particular interdicted commodities out of China.¹⁶ These regulations were effective until 1655 (*shunzhi* 12), when the court officially launched a maritime prohibition order:

"By imperial order all governors and governor-generals of Zhejiang, Fujian, Guangdong, Jiangnan, Shandong and Tianjin proclaimed: The sea rebel (*haini* 海逆) Zheng Chenggong 鄭成功 and others escaped to and are hiding in the corners of the seas. Until now, they have not yet been exterminated. There are certainly villains, who secretly cross the sea-routes and maritime connections, avariciously scheming for large profits. For their trading activities they are relying on food provisions and goods [from the mainland]. If we do not establish rules in order to strictly prohibit [such activities], how will we be able to sweep away the pirates (*haifen* 海氛)? Starting from today, all the said governors and governor-generals are ordered to reprimand all civil and military officials along the coastline to strictly interdict merchant ships to sail abroad privately. If in the future there is anybody who trades food provisions, commodities or other items with these rebels and bandits, be this discovered by local officials or reported by ordinary people, this very trading person, be it an official or a commoner, has immediately to be accompanied to report for imperial information and [subsequently] adjust the law, confiscating all the goods. If family possessions are violated, they should all be given to the informer. If the respective local civil or military officials involved do not closely interrogate the seized and arrested persons, they will all be removed from office and punished severely. [In regard to] the local community-self-defence-system (*baojia* 保甲), [with the characteristics of] conspiracy and concealing the faults of one another, those who will not raise their voices, will all be considered for the death penalty."¹⁷

Analyzing this quotation, it immediately becomes evident that this prohibition was primarily directed at the resistance of Zheng Chenggong 鄭成功 (1624–1662) and his followers (who were considered bandits and pirates) against Qing rule and did not result principally from an anti-foreign-commerce attitude, or a policy that had characterized the Ming maritime trade prohibition. The early Qing administration of maritime trade has to be seen against the background of the political de-

15 It was, among other factors, the pioneering work of Huang Guosheng in particular that inspired me to investigate the administration of early Qing's maritime trade more thoroughly. Cf. Huang Guosheng 黃國盛, *Yapian zhanzheng zhi qian de Dongnan sisheng haiguan* 鴉片战争之前的東南四省海關. (Fuzhou: Fujian renmin chubanshe, 2000). Huang, however, concentrates on the period between the founding of the Customs Houses and 1840.

16 *Da Qing lili* 大清律例 by Santai 三泰, Xu Ben 徐本 (1683–1747) *et al.* (imperially ordered). (Tianjin: Tianjin guji chubanshe, 1993), pp. 327–328.

17 *Da Qing lichao Shizu Zhanghuangdi shilu* 大清歷朝世祖章皇帝實錄 (*Shunzhi*). (Taipei: Huawen shuju, 1964), j. 102, pp. 10a–10b (1203).

velopments within China – namely the fact that the Manchus until the 1680s did not yet control the east and southeast coastal regions of China. The general developments are well-known and shall therefore not be expounded again here.¹⁸ I will only briefly outline and touch upon the necessary historical background of the story.¹⁹

During the time period from the late Ming through the Ming-Qing transition until the early Qing, smuggling was omnipresent in the Chinese waters. But right from the beginning of Manchu rule gradual steps were undertaken to get control of maritime trade, although, especially during the early Qing, illegal and clandestine trade could never be curbed, usually because official merchants and authorities worked together with private and foreign merchants.²⁰ In this political and economic environment merchants like Zheng Zhilong 鄭芝龍 were able to make big fortunes through trade and piracy and built up a powerful merchant empire. Although Zheng Zhilong surrendered to the Manchus, his son, Zheng Chenggong, subsequently initiated a fierce opposition against Manchu rule.

Still around 1660, three famous Chinese generals, who had formerly supported the Manchus in their conquest of China, controlled these regions: Shang Kexi 尚可喜 (1604–1676) Guangdong, Geng Jimao 耿繼茂 (d. 1671) Fujian and Wu Sangui 吳三桂 (1612–1678) Yunnan. In return for their support they had later attained relative autonomy over the south and southwest territories of China. Shang Kexi had continued tribute trade at Guangzhou with the permission of the Manchu rulers, but at the same time initiated an extensive “private” trading network. When Kangxi in 1673 accepted the request of Wu and Shang for retirement but simultaneously made clear that their autonomy and competencies could not be inherited by their sons and descendants, this triggered the rebellion of the Three Feudatories.²¹ The rebellion was not suppressed before 1680. This political background provided the Kangxi Emperor 康熙 (r. 1662–1722) with solid reasons to regard the coasts from a military and security angle. Twice during his rule he imposed a maritime trade ban. Both maritime trade bans, however, have rather to be traced back to strategic

18 See especially Ng Chin-keong, *Trade and Society. The Amoy Network on the China Coast 1683–1735*. (Singapore: Singapore University Press, 1983), pp. 42–55; or, John E. Wills, Jr., *Pepper, Guns and Parleys* (1974).

19 Interesting additional details on the political-economic and social history of these difficult times may be found in biographies and tomb inscriptions composed by scholars living in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. The famous scholar Dai Zhen 戴震 (1724–1777), for example, repeatedly touches upon these events in his biographies; cf. for example his biography of the Fujian governor-general Fan Chengmo 范承謨 (1635–1674), in *Dai Dongyuan ji* 戴東原集 ed. by Wang Yunwu 王雲五. (Shanghai: Shangwu yinshu guan, 1936), pp. 65–67.

20 For smuggling activities, see also Ng Chin-keong, *Trade and Society* (1983); Paul A. van Dyke, *The Canton Trade: Life and Enterprise on the China Coast, 1700–1845*. (Hong Kong: Hong Kong University Press, 2005).

21 Concerning the early developments of Manchu rule, see also Frederic E. Wakeman, *The Great Enterprise: The Manchu Reconstruction of the Imperial Order in Seventeenth-Century China*. (University of California Press, 1985). 2 vols.

security calculations than to a principal ideological scepticism towards trade and commerce.

(1) For political and security reasons the Kangxi Emperor completely prohibited maritime trade between 1662 and 1684. This political measure has to be seen, firstly, against the background of the fierce resistance against the newly established Manchu Qing dynasty by Zheng Chenggong and his clan (1662–1683) and, secondly, by the fact that China's south, southwest, and southeast was not yet under Manchu control.

Already in 1656, a sea blockade was decided upon, in order to starve out the naval forces of Zheng Chenggong. This blockade was, however, not very effective. Residents along the coast were subsequently ordered to settle further in the hinterlands – a measure originally suggested by Huang Wu 黃梧 (c. 1618–1674)²² in 1657. This was called “*qianjie* 遷界” (to remove from the boundaries). Between 1661 and 1662, the complete relocation from the coastal region was ordered. This measure included the suspension of all trade and industries along the coast.

In 1683, Du Zhen 杜臻 (*jinsshi* 1658, ?- between 1700 and 1705)²³ and Siju 席柱 were ordered to go to Guangdong and Fujian in order to supervise the rehabilitation of the coastal districts, which had been more or less depopulated for almost thirty years. The Chinese Jin Shijian 金世鑾 (1647–1689) and a Manchu official had to supervise the resettlement of Jiangsu and Zhejiang. In his report to the throne, Siju recommended that the lifting of the maritime trade proscription should be postponed for a couple of years. His main argument was that the government should be vigilant about the newly conquered territories of Taiwan, Jinmen (Quemoy) and Xiamen.²⁴ But the Kangxi Emperor rejected his argument and soon afterwards decreed the resumption of maritime trade. He argued that the opening of the borders for maritime trade would not only benefit the coastal people but also the state, and taxes could be used for the military expenses incurred for Fujian and Guangdong provinces. Maritime trade would also help to have wealth and commodities circulating so that, eventually, every province would gain great advantage from this trade.²⁵

22 Huang Wu, a Ming-Qing general, had served under Zheng Chenggong as brigade-general and defended the strategic city of Haicheng 海澄 on the southern coast of Fujian. In 1656, he killed his colleague, surrendered the city to the Manchus and was thereupon made Duke of Haicheng (*Haicheng gong* 海澄公). Cf. Arthur W. Hummel, *Eminent Chinese of the Ch'ing Period*. 2 vols. (Taipei: SMC Publishing Inc., 1991), vol. 1, p. 355.

23 Du Zhen, a native of Xiushui, Zhejiang, concluded his mission in 1684. He received the support of the Governor-general Wu Xingzuo 吳興祚 (1632–1698), who is also known for having encouraged the resumption of foreign trade at Canton and for sponsoring in 1685 the compilation of the atlas *Guangdong yutu* 廣東輿圖. About his experiences in rehabilitating the coastal regions, Du Zhen wrote the *YueMin xunshi jilue* 粵閩巡視紀略.

24 *Da Qing Shengzu Renhuang shilu* 大清聖祖仁皇實錄 (Kangxi). (Taipei: Huawen shuju, 1964), j. 116, pp. 3b–4a (1548).

25 *Da Qing Shengzu Renhuang shilu* (Kangxi), j. 116, p. 18a (1555), j. 117, p. 10b (1567).

(2) The second maritime trade ban was promulgated as an effort to protect the mainland against alleged pirate activities of overseas Chinese who had migrated to Southeast Asia and maintained profitable trade relations between China and regions overseas but who were considered renegades (Hanjian 漢奸) by the central government. Already after the customs offices had been opened in 1683 to 1684 Kangxi was particularly concerned that overseas vessels would be constructed abroad and would deliberately carry weapons, military equipment and contraband items on board, or smuggle people into the country.²⁶ In 1717 (*kangxi* 56), he heard that a shipyard in Suzhou constructed up to 1,000 overseas vessels annually that were subsequently used in maritime trade. Only five or six out of ten, however, would return to China, whereas the others were sold abroad in exchange for silver. The particular large timbers required for the construction of masts and keels, however, were all genuine Chinese products that were unavailable abroad. Consequently, these merchants, driven by the sheer lust for profit, would not only steal these Chinese products but provide renegades and pirates with solid Chinese ships. China could thus lose its monopoly and control over maritime shipping in the nearby waters and be subjected to a possible threat from abroad. In 1717, Kangxi therefore prohibited Chinese ships to sail to Southeast Asia (*jinzhi Nanyang yuan'an* 禁止南洋原案), the place he considered to be the cradle of the renegades.²⁷ Trade with Japan, the Ryūkyūs and Annam – Annam providing China with great quantities of rice – was continued. In addition, foreign ships were still allowed to call at Chinese ports. Consequently, this maritime trade ban was not an absolute one and it was not proclaimed as a result of an anti-commercial attitude; commercial networks in contrast continued to function. In this context, as Marc Mancall noted, the Kangxi Emperor “continued to encourage those forms of foreign trade he considered beneficial for the Chinese economy”.²⁸ There is even evidence that the Court instructed officials “to assist merchants” (*xushang* 恤商) and not only “to enrich revenue” (*yuke* 裕課), but also “to enrich the people” (*yumin* 裕民).²⁹ All this may serve as evidence for that, even during early Qing times, when security calculations quite plausibly were of major importance for the Qing court, no anti-commerce attitudes emerged.

26 *Ming Qing shiliao* 明清史料, *Dingbian* 丁編. (Shanghai: Shangwu yinshuguan, 1970), vol. 8, p. 756–757 (康熙三十三年戶部禁止商人在外國造船帶軍器原案).

27 *Ming Qing shiliao*, vol. 8, p. 774; Gugong bowuyuan wenxianguan weiyuanhui 故宮博物院文獻委員會 (ed.), *Wenxian congbian* 文獻叢編. (Shanghai: Tianjin geda shudian, 1931), vol. 17, p. 8.

28 Marc Mancall, “The Ch’ing Tribute System: An Interpretive Essay”, in John K. Fairbank (ed.), *The Chinese World Order. China’s Foreign Relations*. (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1968), pp. 63–89, here p. 88.

29 *Ming Qing shiliao*, *Dingbian*, vol. 8, p. 746; *Da Qing Shengzu Renbuang shilu*, j. 121, p. 7a (1620), j. 124, pp. 13b–14a (1665), j. 126, pp. 23a–b (1696); cf. also Ng Chin-keong, *Trade and Society* (1983), p. 191.

The early Qing administration of maritime trade

Official tribute relations

Already in 1644, some regulations were laid down concerning the procedures for receiving tribute envoys, the storing of their cargo, the number of tribute ships and the size of the crew permitted each time, as well as a ban on the export of commodities considered to be of strategic value. In 1647, foreign countries were requested to “emulate a good action and return to allegiance, to submit tribute items (*nakuan* 納款) and pay the (new) court its respects”.³⁰ Various countries thereupon sent tribute to the new court.³¹

Consequently it appears as if the early Manchu court – at least formally – more or less adopted the previous Ming model of tributary relations. The first Qing Emperor, Shunzhi 順治 (r. 1644–1661), agreed with the Chinese conception that “earnest and respectful” vassal states should be allowed to conduct trade when presenting their tribute to the Qing court. The Qing emperors inherited the institutions of the *Huitong guan* 會同館 and the *Siyi guan* 四譯館 from their Ming predecessors.³² They placed the *Huitong guan* under the supervision of the Hanlin 翰林-Academy to take charge of the receptions and the *Siyi guan* under the Office of Ceremonies to be responsible for translations. In 1748, Emperor Qianlong 乾隆 (r. 1736–1795) merged the two offices into a single institution known as *Huitong siyi guan*. The main function of this office lay in the reception and lodging of tributary envoys, while ceremonial matters were left to the Court of State Ceremonial (*honglu si* 鴻臚寺). In

30 *Da Qing Shizhu Zhanghuangdi shilu* (Shunzhi), j. 30, p. 20b–21a (358–359); *Lidai bao'an* 歷代寶案. (Taipei: Guoli Taiwan daxue, 1972), j. 3, p. 107.

31 John K. Fairbank and Teng Ssu-yü provide a translation of the “General Regulations for the Presentation of Tribute at Court” included in the Kangxi-edition of the *Da Qing huidian* 大清會典, cf. John K. Fairbank and Teng Ssu-yü, “On the Ch’ing Tributary System”, in John K. Fairbank and Teng Ssu-yü, *Ch’ing Administration: Three Studies*. (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1960), pp. 107–217 (135–146), pp. 135–145 (163–173). *Harvard-Yenching Institute Studies* XIX, reprint from the *Harvard Journal of Asiatic Studies*.

32 The *Huitong guan* 會同館 was the principal agency for receiving tributary envoys; originally established in 1276, it experienced various reformations. During the Ming and Qing, it was the principal state hostelry for foreign envoys; in 1748 it was combined with the Translators Institute (*Siyi guan* 四譯館 or 四夷館) into a single Interpreter and Translators Institute (*Huitong siyiguan* 會同四譯館) under the Ministry of Rites. For details cf. Henry Serruys, “Sino-Mongol relations during the Ming II: the tribute system and diplomatic missions (1400–1600)”, *Mélanges chinois et bouddhiques* 14 (1966–1967). (Brussels: Institut Belge des Hautes Études Chinoises, 1967), pp. 408–442, who wrote a separate chapter on the *Huitong guan*. See also Ralph Kauz, “The postal stations (*yizhan* 驛站) in Ming China”, in Angela Schottenhammer, *Trade and Transfer across the East Asian “Mediterranean”*. (Wiesbaden: Otto Harrassowitz, 2005), pp. 75–90; *East Asian Maritime History*, 1; also Norman Wild, “Materials for the Study of the Ssu I Kuan (Bureau of Translators)”, *Bulletin of the School of Oriental and African Studies* 11 (1945), pp. 616–640.

addition, the Qing rulers established a Court of Colonial Affairs (*lifan yuan* 理藩院), which was in charge of Mongolian, Islamic, and Russian affairs.³³

A provision was made to outlaw “the presentation of gifts by the tributary to the governor, governor-general, and other officials at port”,³⁴ doubtlessly in order to provide against bribery and corruption in general. But we know from scattered information in other sources that such regulations quite often remained solely on paper and were not efficiently carried out. This brought Emperor Kangxi onto the agenda and his initiatives attest to his positive attitude towards merchants and maritime trade. In 1686, after the customs offices in Guangdong had already been opened, Kangxi observed that provincial officials taxed merchants highly and he clearly stated: “Those who are in charge of customs try to increase taxes. I order you all to comply with the existing financial regulations and consequently tax traders fairly. In doing so you will comply with my wish to cherish both merchants and the people.”³⁵ Only a few years later, in 1689, he again learned that customs officials were requesting high bribes from merchants and once again ordered that this practice be stopped.³⁶

Simultaneously, as Viraphol notes, despite the official Qing regulations, “the formal recognition of the ruler of a tributary state, in the form of investiture (*cefeng* 冊封), does not seem to have been an absolute prerequisite for the tributary trade.”³⁷

Tributary relations were officially maintained with some of China’s neighbouring countries. Korea, the Ryūkyūs, Annam, Siam, Burma, Laos, and Sulu ranged among the regular tributaries of the Qing, of which the first two doubtlessly were the most loyal and devoted ones.³⁸ The Qing court actually intended to establish a

33 Immanuel C. Y. Hsü, “The Meeting of the Western and Eastern Families of Nations”, in Immanuel C. Y. Hsü (ed.), *Readings in Modern Chinese History*. (New York, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1971), p. 86. For Qing China’s relations with Russia, cf. for example Immanuel C. Y. Hsü, “Russia’s Special Position in China During the Early Ch’ing Period”, in Immanuel C. Y. Hsü (ed.), *Readings in Modern Chinese History* (1971), pp. 113–123.

34 Sarasin Viraphol, *Tribute and Profit: Sino-Siamese Trade, 1652–1853*. (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1977), p. 30. *Harvard East Asian Monographs*, 76. Viraphol quotes the “*Discourse on countries sending tribute to Canton*” (*Yuedao gongguo shuo* 粵道貢國說), section on Siam, *Xianluo guo* 暹羅國, by Liang Tingnan 梁廷柵 (1796–1861), in *Zhonghua wenshi congshu* 中華文史叢書, fasc. 58. (Taipei: 1968), pp. 8–9.

35 *Da Qing Shengzu Renhuangdi shilu*, j. 126, pp. 23a–b (1696), j. 140, pp. 16a–b (1892).

36 *Da Qing Shengzu Renhuangdi shilu*, j. 139, pp. 18b–19a (1875–1876), j. 126, p. 23a (1696); Gang Zhao, *Shaping the Asian Trade Network* (2006), p. 166.

37 Sarasin Viraphol, *Tribute and Profit: Sino-Siamese Trade* (1977), p. 279, footnote 3.

38 For the Qing tributary system, see above all the essay by John K. Fairbank and Teng Ssu Yü, which is still a standard tool for Qing China’s administration of her tribute system; John K. Fairbank and Teng Ssu Yü, “On the Ch’ing Tributary System” (1960), pp. 107–217 (135–146), reprint from the *Harvard Journal of Asiatic Studies*; table 2, p. 146 (174), provides a list of regular tributaries, table 5, pp. 193–197 (165–169), a list of tribute embassies between 1662 and 1911, and an index on pp. 191–210 (219–238) a list of tributaries included in the Six Editions of the Collected Statutes (*buidian* 會典); see also Marc Mancall, “The Ch’ing Tribute System: An In-

kind of tributary relationship also with Japan. Shunzhi sought to use the dispatch of Japanese drifters via Korea in an effort to present himself as a generous and gracious emperor and as an excuse to try to incorporate Japan into his “system”. In face of the Korean king Yi Jong 李倧, who reigned as King Injo 仁祖 (1623–1649), the Shunzhi Emperor explained that he was designating Japan as an “equal”, lying “at the uttermost end of the world”:

“Now, the universe is united under one rule (*zhongwai yitong* 中外一統), the four seas have become a family (*sihai yijia* 四海一家), the people of all the countries have all become my children (*chizi* 赤子); they regard as fundamental the honourable place they have obtained, in order to spread common humanity. There have just been thirteen Japanese residents on board a boat who were drifting away with the winds to our country. An imperial order has already been sent to the responsible authorities to provide them with clothes and food; but considering that their parents and wives are far away at the uttermost end of the world, I have profound sympathy with them. This is why I ordered an envoy to accompany them to proceed to Korea. At the time of the solstice, you can prepare ships and send them back to their home. Still I awedly dispatch them to an equal so that sovereign and people all know about my intention.”³⁹

Although the Chinese emperor here considers himself the “father” of a big family, in reality, however, the East Asian world order around that time looked differently and Japan was in fact anything but a tribute country or vassal of China.⁴⁰

Officially, as in Ming times, Qing China’s “tribute countries” had to follow strict regulations concerning the frequency of sending tribute. Korea was permitted to send tribute annually. During the Qing period, the tribute missions normally used the land route, which was considered shorter and more convenient.⁴¹ Interestingly, during times of famine the Koreans were permitted to purchase rice and grain in the Jiangnan region, and they used the sea route.⁴² The Ryūkyū Islands could

terpretive Essay”, in John K. Fairbank (ed.), *The Chinese World Order. China’s Foreign Relations*. (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1968), pp. 63–89.

39 *Da Qing Shizun Zhanghuangdi shilu*, j. 21, p. 11a (254).

40 For a detailed analysis of the changing Sino-Japanese relations in comparison to Ming times cf. Angela Schottenhammer, “Japan – The Tiny Dwarf? Sino-Japanese Relations from the Kangxi to the Early Qianlong Reigns”, in Angela Schottenhammer (ed.), *The East Asian ‘Mediterranean’ – Maritime Crossroads of Culture, Commerce, and Human Migration*. (Wiesbaden: Otto Harrassowitz, 2009), pp. 331–388.

41 For relevant studies cf. Chun Hae-jong, “Sino-Korean Tributary Relations in the Ch’ing Period”, in Immanuel C. Y. Hsü (ed.), *Readings in Modern Chinese History*. (New York, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1971), pp. 90–112; Richard Rutt, “James Gale’s Translation of the Yonhaeng-nok, an Account of the Korean Embassy to Peking, 1712–1713”, *Transactions of the Korea Branch of the Royal Asiatic Society* 49 (1974), pp. 55–144; Yi T’ae-jin, “Separating Fact and Fiction about Pre-Modern Sino-Korean Trade”, *Saboe kwabak kwa chongch’aek yongu* 16:3 (1994:12), pp. 21–43; Immanuel C. Y. Hsü, *The Rise of Modern China*. (New York, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1970), pp. 131–132.

42 *Huangchao wenxian tongkao* 皇朝文獻通考 commissioned by Qianlong 乾隆 (1711–1799), compiled by Zhang Tingyu 張廷玉 (1672–1755), Ji Huang 嵇璜 (1711–1794) *et al.* (Copy of the 1747-ed.), j. 33 (*shibo bushi* 市舶互市), pp. 16a–17a. “The imperial granaries opened the sea route for the transportation of rice to relieve the Eastern Country (Dongguo 東國), to revive

send tribute once every two years. The Ryūkyūan kings also sent envoys to present the formal “request for investiture” (*qingfeng* 請封), whereupon China, on the other hand, sent missions to confirm the investiture of Ryūkyūan kings (*cefeng* 冊封). After such investiture, the king again sent a mission with special tribute to the Chinese court to “express gratitude for the Emperor’s grace” (*xie’en* 謝恩).⁴³ At least at the beginning of the Qing dynasty, tribute trade relations with the Ryūkyūs remained basically the same as during the Ming dynasty.⁴⁴

Annam and Xianluo 暹羅 (modern Thailand) were permitted to send tribute once every three years. Annam sent tribute via Taipingfu 太平府, Guangxi. In 1724 (*yongzhen* 2), it was decreed: “When Annam envoys come to Beijing to send tribute, the provincial governor of Guangxi has first to issue them an official document. Then, they have to proceed from Guangxi, via Hunan, Hubei, Jiangxi, Jiangnan, Shandong and Zhili. On the day of their departure, the responsible department returns the original document to them, and they go back home taking the sea route.”⁴⁵ The time interval for Annam and Xianluo was later extended to once every four years. For Sulu and Laos (Nanzhang 南掌), the time interval was once every five years, which was later changed to once every ten years. Burma (Miandian 緬甸) was granted a concession to send tribute once every ten years via Yunnan (according to a regulation of 1662).⁴⁶

After their establishment between 1683 and 1684, tribute trade with overseas countries such as the Ryūkyūs, Xianluo and Sulu was managed by the local customs offices (*haiguan*). The responsible *haiguan* for the Ryūkyūs was located in Fujian. The

the hungry and starving population at the foreshores of the sea...” (p. 17a). Another entry (p. 43a) tells that a certain Chen Xieshun 陳協順 from Putian, Fujian, purchased a merchant ship to sail to Shandong, but drifted to Korea.

43 For investiture of Ryūkyūan kings during the Qing period, cf. Ta-tuan Ch’en, “Investiture of Liu-ch’iu kings in the Ch’ing Period”, in John K. Fairbank (ed.), *The Chinese World Order. Traditional China’s Foreign Relations*. (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1968), pp. 135–164.

44 Cf. Matsu’ura Akida 松浦章, *Shindai Chūgoku Ryūkyū bōeki no kenkyū* 清代中國琉球貿易の研究. (Okinawa: Yoju shorin, 2003); and the investigation by Xie Bizhen 謝必震, *Ming Qing ZhongLiu hanghai maoyi yanjiu* 明清中琉航海貿易研究. (Beijing: Haiyang chubanshe, 2004).

45 *Qinding Da Qing huidian shili* 欽定大清會典事例 by Li Hongzhang 李鴻章 *et al.* (rev.). (Lithography of the *guangxu* period) and (Shanghai: Shanghai yinshuguan, copy of the *guangxu*-ed.), j. 502, p. 5b (here, all the tribute routes to be taken are described). In 1795 (*qianlong* 60), it was decreed that Annam “this time has to take the sea route from Guangdong”, cf. *Qinding Da Qing huidian shili*, j. 502, p. 6a.

46 *Qinding Da Qing huidian shili*, j. 502, p. 5a. For general tributary relations within the early modern Asian world order, cf. Hamashita Takeshi 濱下武志, transl. by Zhu Yingui 朱蔭貴 and Ouyang Fei 歐陽菲, *Jindai Zhongguo de guoji qiguan: chaogong maoyi tixi yu jindai Yazhou jingji quan* 近代中國的國際契機: 朝貢貿易體系與近代亞洲經濟圈. (Beijing: Zhongguo shehui kexue chubanshe, 1999); John K. Fairbank and Teng Ssu-yü, “On the Ch’ing Tributary System”, in John K. Fairbank and Teng Ssu-yü (eds.), *Ch’ing Administration: Three Studies*. (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1960), pp. 107–218. *Harvard-Yenching Institute Studies*, 19; Mark Mancall, “The Ch’ing tribute system: an interpretive essay”, in John K. Fairbank (ed.), *The Chinese World Order: Traditional China’s Foreign Relations*. (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1968), pp. 63–72.

envoys came by sea, entered through Min'anzen 閩安鎮, and then proceeded to Beijing, passing seventy-one postal stations over a distance of roughly 4,825 *li*. Sulu tribute missions also had to proceed to Fujian,⁴⁷ those from Xianluo to Guangdong. Between 1607 and 1627, the Dutch repeatedly tried to open up China for their merchants to trade, but without success. Eventually, they attacked the Penghu 澎湖 Islands and Taiwan and invaded Fujian. In order to gain at least the opportunity to profit from tribute trade, they expressed their consent to send tribute to the Qing rulers. In the beginning, they were allowed to make use of the tribute trade regulations once every eight years. Later, because they assisted the Manchu army in suppressing Zheng Chenggong 鄭成功 (see below), they were temporarily granted a privileged status, which was, however, soon abolished.⁴⁸ With her smaller and mostly weaker neighbouring countries, the Qing rulers consequently maintained a combination of bureaucratic tribute relations and commercial trade.

*Authorities and administration in early Qing period maritime trade*⁴⁹

Officially, the former Maritime Trade Offices (*shibo si* 市舶司, *shibo tiju si* 市舶提舉司) were discontinued during the Qing. Instead, until 1662, when maritime trade was temporarily prohibited, at Canton the Salt Distribution Supervisorate (*yanke tiju si* 鹽課提舉司) functioned concurrently as Superintendency of Maritime Trade and was merged into a so-called “*Yanshi tiju si* 鹽市提舉司” or “*Yanke shibo tiju si* 鹽課市舶提舉司”, an administrative structure that was abolished only with the implementation of the first maritime trade prohibition (*jinhai*), that is in 1662 (*guochao bu she shibo tiju, jianling yu yanke tiju si, jinbai bing ba* 國朝不設市舶提舉兼領於鹽課提舉司禁海并罷).⁵⁰ Macao, however, was an exception. The city was one of the most

47 *Minzheng lingyao* 閩政領要, written anonymously, pp. 43a–b (manuscript copy of the Fuzhou Shifan daxue Library).

48 *Qinding Da Qing huidian shili* (Guangxu), j. 502, pp. 1b, 4b (*shunzhi* 13, i.e. 1656, once every eight years), 5b.

49 Emphasis will subsequently be placed on the events in Guangdong province as, due to the particular role of Macao and its maritime trade, the maritime prohibition policy was not implemented area-wide in Guangdong; as a consequence particular structures and rules developed and it was here where the *shibo si*-structures were obviously continued prior to the establishment of the Customs Offices. In Fujian, on the other hand, the negative maritime trade policy of the Qing court resulted in a further concentration of “illegal” maritime trade activities in Amoy, in which many wealthy merchants were involved. These developments have already been outlined excellently by Ng Chin-keong, *The Amoy Network* (1983), esp. chapter II, pp. 42–94. For details on Macao’s trade administration see also Liu Meiyun 劉美云, “Lun MingQing zhengfu Aomen haiguan xingshi zhuquan 論明清政府在澳門海關行使主權”, *Yanbei Shifan xueyuan xuekan* 雁北師範學院學報 16:1 (2000), pp. 42–44; Yang Renfei 楊仁飛, “MingQing shiqi Aomen duiwai maoyi de guan si shang zhi zheng 明清時期澳門對外貿易的官私商之爭”, in <http://www.macaodata.com/macauweb/book154/html/05901.htm>; John E. Wills, Jr., *Embassies and Illusions* (1984).

50 *YueMin xunshi jilue* 粵閩巡視紀略 by Du Zhen 杜臻 (*jinsbi* 1658, ?– between 1700 and 1705), j. 2, p. 30b, in *SKQS*, fasc. 460. A merger with the Salt Distribution Supervisorate was nothing completely new, but had already been carried out in Yuan times, first in 1284 (*zhiyuan* 21) in

important ports for Chinese overseas trade with Western countries since 1557, when Ming provincial authorities made special arrangements for the demands of Western shipping by permitting the Portuguese a trading area in the Pearl River estuary close to Macao.⁵¹ Early in 1647, the viceroy of Liang Guang 兩廣 requested the opening of Guangzhou for traders from Macao:

Tong Yangjia 佟陽甲 requests the opening of Canton to Macaonese (*shunzhi* 4, 5th month, 3rd day)

“Before long the Chinese merchants were drained of money; goods no longer circulated, the people became impoverished, and the customs duties were reduced to little more than 1,000 *liang*. Thus it was clearly demonstrated that if the people of Haojing’ao [濠鏡澳] (Macao) come to trade, Guangdong profits; but if they do not come, then Guangdong is impoverished.

Now that our Great Qing Empire has united the provinces of Zhejiang, Zhili, Shandong, Shanxi and Henan... transportation everywhere is very convenient, and merchants will soon throng to the imperial city. The merchants of Guangdong hope to bring goods to North China, and they will also take silks and fabrics from the interior back to Guangdong in exchange for sandalwood, pepper, rhinoceros horn, camlet, etc., which they will transfer to the capital. This trade tends to accumulate money. Moreover, if we allow the people of Haojing’ao to come to Canton, then we will have another means of increasing trade.

Since your servant believes that the wealth of the universe is limited, how much can we expect from the hard labour of the people in the interior? Commerce is a way to enrich our nation, and to open foreign trade is a special means of raising income [from taxation] in Guangdong as well as in China.”⁵²

In the 8th month of the same year (1647), the Shunzhi Emperor eventually approved that for security reasons the Portuguese living in Macao should continue to be forbidden to enter the provincial city of Canton, but that Chinese merchants were permitted to take their commodities to Macao to trade with the Portuguese.

In 1653, it was ordered that foreign goods brought by tribute ships to Canton were to be sold. Trading activities had to be carried out within a time period of three to five days at the foreign envoy’s residence, the *Huaiyuan yiguan* 懷遠譯館 in Xiguan 西關 district outside the city of Canton.⁵³ The activities were obviously supervised jointly by the local governor, the governor-general, and a commissioner of

Fujian (see *Yuan shi* 元史 by Song Lian 宋濂 (comp.). (Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 1995), j. 13, p. 269) and in 1286 (*Zhiyuan* 23) in Guangdong (*Yuan shi*, j. 14, p. 293; 改廣東轉運市舶提舉司為鹽課市舶提舉司).

51 Leonard Blussé, *Visible Cities* (2006), p. 33.

52 Translation according to Lo-Shu Fu, *A Documentary Chronicle of Sino-Western Relations* (1644–1820). (Tucson: The University of Arizona Press, 1966), p. 7 (quoting the *Wenxian congbian* 文獻從編, vol. 24, p. 18).

53 This was similar to the regulations set up for foreign tribute missions at the *Huitong guan* in Beijing during the Ming period: after the official ceremonies had been completed, the officials opened a market at the *Huitong guan* and the envoys and merchants were allowed to trade there for three to four days; only for missions from Korea and the Ryūkyūs no restrictions existed.

the Provincial Administration Commission (*buzheng si* 布政司).⁵⁴ In 1662, as we have seen, an edict ordered the evacuation of the complete coastal areas due to the activities of Zheng Chenggong.⁵⁵ This practical measure also affected Macao. Initially the provincial authorities ordered the immediate withdrawal of the entire non-Portuguese population, what implied that the city would lose its Chinese inhabitants and would thus be deprived of a workforce and services that were essential to its existence. The Portuguese senate thereupon sent a diplomatic mission to Guangzhou requesting that an exception be made for Macao. By cooperating privately with some high officials, the Macaonese envoys managed at least to gain some time and to delay the implementation of the evacuation orders. In the end, however, for six years, until 1668, when the coastal evacuation orders were revoked, the city of Macao lived in a permanent state of turmoil.⁵⁶

The fact that the Superintendency of Maritime Trade was entrusted to the Salt Distribution Supervisorate may be seen as an indication that salt merchants were among the wealthiest persons at Canton at that time.⁵⁷ Shang Kexi 尚可喜 (1604–1676), the governor of Canton and a Chinese bannerman,⁵⁸ was able to amass a

54 As Sarasin Viraphol notes, this was similar to the Ming practice (*ibid.*), when Emperor Yongle, in 1403, re-opened the *shibo si* in Guangdong, Fujian and Zhejiang, in order to promote tribute trade, and placed them under the supervision of the Provincial Administration Commission.

55 Okamoto Takashi 岡本隆司, “Shindai Yue kaikan no chōzei kikō – hōshō seidu o chūshin toshite 清代粵海關の征稅機構 - 保商制度を中心として”, *Shirin* 史林 5:75 (1992), pp. 69–99 (679–709), p. 72. It is interesting to note that in 1678 the governor-general of Guangdong, Shang Zhixin, complained to the Kangxi Emperor that the provincial administration lacked the ships it needed in order to fight against the pirates and rebels at sea. He continued that the local government did not have enough money to pay for such ships, but that a legalization of maritime trade would stimulate the ship-building industry and, thus, also provide the government with the naval vessels it needed. At that time, however, for security reasons Kangxi rejected a loosening of the maritime ban. Cf. *Da Qing Shengzu Renhuangdi shilu*, j. 77, pp. 12b–13a (1038–1039). 平南王尚之信疏言剿除海逆亟須船艘其如軍需浩繁勢難營造請暫開海禁許商民造船由廣州至瓊州貿易自便則臣得藉商船由廣海海陵龍門一帶進取以收搗巢之功得旨向因平南王尚之信言粵東雖已底定鄭逆仍踞廈門宜申海禁以絕亂萌故准舊界嚴行禁戢今若復開海禁令商民貿易自便恐奸徒乘此與賊交通侵擾邊海人民亦未可定海禁不可輕開其鼓勵地方官員捐助造船以備征剿之用。

56 Cf. Jorge M. Dos Santos Alves, “A Time of Readjustment (1644-1683)”, in Jorge M. Dos Santos Alves (ed.), *Macao. O Primeiro Século de um Porto Internacional. The First Century of an International Port*. (Macao: Centro Científico e Cultural de Macau, 2007), pp. 105–111, here pp. 106–107.

57 When, in 1681, the property of the salt merchant Shen Shangda 沈上達, who had been responsible for the supervision of tribute trade and had been in charge of the “Ocean Guild” (*yanghang* 洋行) since the 1650s, was confiscated by the Qing court, his capital came close to one million *liang* of silver. Cf. Peng Zeyi 彭澤益, “Qingdai Guangdong yanghang zhidu de qiuyuan 清代廣東洋行制度的起源”, *Lishi yanjiu* 1 (1957), pp. 1–24, p. 8.

58 The banner system refers to the military organization used by the Manchu tribes to conquer and control China in the seventeenth century. The banner system was developed by the Manchu leader Nurhaci (1559–1626), who in 1601 organized his warriors into four companies of 300 men each. The companies were distinguished by banners of different colours – yellow, red,

great fortune through maritime trade.⁵⁹ At the beginning of the 1650s, he organized a system of official merchants who were to be responsible for the management of foreign trade at Canton. In 1653, Shang Kexi gave the responsible person in the Salt Supervisorate, Bai Wanju 白萬舉 (also Bai Yuheng 白有珩) and the salt merchant Shen Shangda 沈上達 ample monthly provisions and salaries, established a supervising office at the former location of the Ming period *shibo guan* 市舶館 and had these two persons manage foreign (tribute) trade according to the old Ming regulations.⁶⁰ As we have seen above, it was the Salt Supervisorate that simultaneously took over the responsibilities of the former *shibo si* and, thus, fulfilled two functions at the same time. But this system worked only until 1662 (*jinbai bing ba* 禁海并罷), when maritime trade was again prohibited by Kangxi. As Li Shizhen 李士楨 (1619–1695) informs us, after 1662 no ships arrived officially, but the clique around Shen Shangda privately conducted trade; at one time they could make a profit of 40,000 to 50,000 silver *liang*, within a year a thousand ships were coming and going and their profits amounted to 400,000 to 500,000 *liang*.⁶¹ Smuggling had obviously reached such an extent that the Kangxi Emperor in 1684 had to state: “Although we have a strict maritime prohibition, as for privately conducted trade, how can this be interrupted?”⁶² The activities of Shang Kexi and his successors have in this context been described as the “sprouts” of the later guilds (*gonghang* 公行), “sprouts” because the principle of their organization was more or less the same as in later times – they held a monopoly over both fishing, internal and foreign trade, as well as over the salt production and iron manufacturing and Shen Shangda was appointed as chief of this organization.⁶³ He then organized a subordinate guild, called “Ocean Guild” (*yanghang* 洋行), which came to be responsible for the tribute trade. Shen Shangda also permitted some Chinese merchants to carry on illegal

white and blue. In 1615, four more banners were added, using the same colours bordered in red, the red banner being bordered in white. As the Manchu increased their conquests, the size of the companies grew until each came to number 7,500 men divided into five regiments, divided in turn into five companies.

- 59 Increasing engagement of the banner elite in commercial activities in 1667 even resulted in an edict prohibiting bannermen from engaging in commerce. Cf. *Da Qing Shizong Renhuangdi shilu*, j. 23, p. 2a (329).
- 60 *Guangzhou fu zhi* 廣州府志 by Shi Cheng 史澄 (1814–?), j. 162, p. 3b (雜識); Peng Zeyi, “Qing-dai Guangdong yanghang zhidu de qi yuan” (1957), p. 5.
- 61 *Fu Yue zhenglue*, j. 7, pp. 16a–b.
- 62 *Da Qing Shengzu Renhuangdi shilu*, j. 116, p. 4a (1548).
- 63 Peng Zeyi, “Qing-dai Guangdong yanghang zhidu de qi yuan” (1957), p. 8; for the history of the early merchants see Weng Eang Cheong, *The Hong Merchants of Canton. Chinese Merchants in Sino-Western Trade*. (Richmond: Curzon Press, 1997), esp. pp. 26 *et seq.* *Nordic Institute of Asian Studies Monograph Series*, 70. Already in 1720, the Hong merchants had adopted a three-tiered system and by the early 1760s had managed to establish their Cohong merchant cartel. Cf. Weng Eang Cheong, *The Hong Merchants* (1997), p. 92, and Paul Arthur van Dyke, *The Canton Trade* (2005), p. 20.

private trade.⁶⁴ The system initiated by Shang Kexi was later continued under his son, Shang Zhixin 尚之信 (1636–1680).⁶⁵

Since Shang Kexi was operating his maritime trade mainly through Macao, he was quite open when the Portuguese asked him to persuade the Qing court to reconsider the evacuation of Macao. In 1662, he submitted a memorial to the court arguing that Macao should be treated as an exception to the evacuation policy: “By prohibiting barbarian ships that are already in Macao from trading abroad while forbidding those in the (Chinese) hinterlands from shipping grain to them, the official policy has pushed the barbarians into a corner. Is this not contrary to the original imperial intention of cherishing people from afar?”⁶⁶ Shang Kexi eventually gained the support of the Guangdong governor-general, Lu Xingzuo 廬興祚, who later himself submitted a memorial requesting that Macao be exempted from the court’s evacuation policy.⁶⁷ “By the end of 1668, the evacuation laws had been revoked, and commissioners were touring the Kwangtung coastal areas to supervise their re-population. The gate was opened every five days with few exceptions. Macao was not exempted from the continuing prohibition of maritime trade, but its enforcement seems to have been considerably relaxed. Chinese merchants came and went in Macao, often at night, and Portuguese ships arrived from overseas and departed again.”⁶⁸ The joint effort of Shang Kexi, local officials and Portuguese Jesuits eventually prompted the court to postpone the evacuation and in 1671, Kangxi officially conceded the exemption from the evacuation order and permitted Chinese traders to return to Macao, but trade was only permitted on land routes (*banlu zhun qi maoyi* 旱路准其貿易). Not before late 1679 land trade with Canton was to be fully legalized by an imperial edict, while the legalization of navigation and the permission for Portuguese trading ships once again to anchor at Guangzhou was brought about by a Canton official only in 1681.⁶⁹ During these years, although trade between Macao and Guangzhou had continued, its volume had decreased tremendously. An important entry that provides us with more information on the discussion on the establishment of *haiguan* and the role of Macao as well as on the question of taxation of maritime trade came again from Li Shizhen (see appendix 1). Let us consider this entry more thoroughly against the historical background.

64 Peng Zeyi, “Qingdai Guangdong yanghang zhidu de qi yuan” (1975), p. 8.

65 Shang Zhixin joined the rebellion of Wu Sangui 吳三桂 (1612–1678) in 1676. He later regretted having joined the rebellion and started negotiations with the government forces in Jiangxi. His allegiance was but an act of strategic calculation, for he subsequently refused to engage in any further operations against rebels, ignoring all orders sent to him by the government. In 1680, he was permitted to commit suicide. Arthur W. Hummel, *Eminent Chinese of the Ch’ing Period* (1991), vol. 2, p. 635.

66 See Gang Zhao, *Shaping the Asian Trade Network* (2007), p. 132; Yin Yuanjing 尹元進, *Pingnan wang yuan gong chui fan* 平南王元功垂范, no date, *j. xia*, pp. 29a–b.

67 John E. Wills, Jr., *Embassies and Illusions* (1984), pp. 96–101.

68 John E. Wills, Jr., *Embassies and Illusions* (1984), p. 101.

69 John E. Wills, Jr., *Embassies and Illusions* (1984), pp. 139 and 142.

In 1571 (*longqing* 5), the Ming rulers had initiated a new dual taxation system (*gaiding zhangchou zhi li* 該定丈抽之例), the “*xiangshui zhi* 餉稅制” or “*zhangchou shouyin zhi* 丈抽收銀制”, replacing the former “*choufen zhi* 抽分制”, the commodity taxation in kind. Following the new system taxes were, first, imposed according to the size (width and tonnage) of the ships (*zhang* 丈; also *chuanshui* 船稅 or *boxiang* 船餉), and second, according to the cargo or the value of commodities loaded (*chou* 抽).⁷⁰ This system was apparently maintained until 1662, when taxation was officially stopped as a consequence of the maritime trade proscription. After *kangxi* 18 (1679), following requests of local officials and the Portuguese, foreign ships from the Western Ocean were again permitted to trade only at border stations along overland routes (*zai banlu jiekou maoyi* 在旱路界口貿易), and so-called overland commodity taxes (*banshui* 旱稅) were imposed.⁷¹ The *shibo si* was, consequently, ordered to collect taxes on the trade which were in fact equivalent to “land route” taxes or product levies (*ling shibo si zhengshou ji banshui ye* 令市舶司徵收即旱稅也).⁷² In 1678, a Portuguese embassy under Pinto Pereira da Faria⁷³ asked for the permission to trade freely without paying tolls and to “be allowed to go to Canton to trade instead of waiting for Chinese merchants to come to Macao to trade with them”.⁷⁴ In 1679, the Macao authorities received an order that all the land trade with Canton would be fully legalized and, as soon as the seas were cleared from pirates and rebels, Canton officials should again request the legalization of Macao’s maritime trade. After the permission for this “land trade”, ships were subsequently required to anchor at Qianshanzhai 前山寨 and then transport their cargo on land routes to Xiangshan 香山, and the transport should be carried out under the supervision of an authorized person (*fu tong hou, ling fanbo zhu qianshanzhai, luyun huowu zhi Xiangshan; ling fanmu yi guan jian zhi* 復通後令番舶駐前山寨陸運貨物至香山.令藩幕一員監之).⁷⁵ Consequently, all inner Chinese and foreign merchants’ commodities first had to be

70 “監督伊爾格圖奏言，粵東向有東西二洋，諸國往來交易係市舶提舉司征收貨稅。明隆慶五年，以夷人報貨奸欺，難於查驗，改定丈抽之例，按船大小以為額稅，西洋船定為九等，後因夷人屢請，量減抽三分。東洋船定為四等”，in *Yue haiguan zhi* 粵海關志 by Liang Tingnan 梁廷楠 *et al.* (1796–1861). (Taipei: Wenhai chubanshe, 1975), j. 22, p. 20b (1650). Until 1575 (*wanli* 3), regulations (*zeli* 則例) were fixed and after 1582, silver was used as currency in Sino-Portuguese trade. The same quotation can be found in the *Huangchao wenxian tongkao*, j. 26, p. 16a, with additional information explaining the background of the supervisor Irgetu’s (see further below p. 119) request, namely the loss of the principle of being gracious to foreigners (二十四年免外國貢船抽稅福建總督王國安疏言，外國貢船請抽稅，令其貿易部議應如所請得旨，進貢船隻若行抽稅殊失大體且非朕柔遠之意悉免之).

71 *Fu Yue zhenglue*, j. 2, pp. 59b–60a (248–249).

72 *Fu Yue zhenglue*, j. 2, p. 42a (213).

73 Further information concerning the Portuguese at Macao and the regulations there are to be found in John E. Wills, Jr., *Embassies and Illusions* (1984), esp. pp. 127–144.

74 John E. Wills, Jr., *Embassies and Illusions* (1984), p. 133; see also George Bryan Souza, *The Survival of Empire. Portuguese Trade and Society in China and the South China Sea, 1630–1754*. (Cambridge, London, New York: Cambridge University Press, 1986).

75 *YueMin xunshi jilue*, j. 2, p. 30b.

transported to the domestic tax stations (*guan*) and no distinction was made between foreign and Chinese commodities. Once foreign goods reached Macao, they had to be transported to the land tax station, three *li* away from Macao. Upon investigation of their goods they received a certificate which they took to the province (*sheng* 省, i.e. Guangzhou) where a tax was imposed by the *tiju si* according to the old regulations; then they went to the Taiping *guan* 太平關 tax station in order to prevent the possibility of anything being smuggled. As for the commodities of Chinese merchants, they first had to go to the Taiping *guan* tax station for taxation and then proceeded to the *tiju si* in Guangzhou and they had to forward their certificate in order to be permitted to trade.⁷⁶ The tax quotas received through this kind of land taxation were relatively low though: 26,483 *liang* in 1680, a bit more than 12,200 *liang* in 1681, and 18,076 *liang* in 1682.⁷⁷ The officials appointed to supervise and manage this kind of land taxation (*hanlu boxiang* 旱路船餉) were the Director of the Ministry of Personnel (*libu langzhong* 吏部郎中), Irgetu 宜爾格圖 (a Manchu),⁷⁸ and the Vice Director of the Ministry of Revenue (*hubu yuanwai* 戶部員外), Cheng 成[克大],⁷⁹ a Han Chinese.

After the failure of the revolt of the Three Feudatories in 1680, the commercial organization originally established by the Shang family was abolished and the administration of maritime trade gradually re-organized. For a brief time period, however, free trade flourished at Foshan 佛山, southwest of Canton, until the Customs Office (*haiguan*) was opened in Canton in 1684.⁸⁰ Between 1680/81 and 1684 Macao's maritime trade was the only formally legal trade, a fact which had brought about many advantages for the Portuguese during this time.⁸¹ But when the trade proscription in China was lifted, Macao subsequently lost its former special position as a peaceful trading port. The entry by Li Shizhen was thus a further attempt to maintain Macao as a flourishing trading centre. Already late in 1684, Canton offi-

76 *Fu yue zhenglue*, j. 7, p. 46b.

77 *Fu yue zhenglue*, j. 7, p. 17b, j. 2, p. 5a.

78 I have not been able to find any more detailed information on Irgetu in the Manchu biographical literature.

79 This refers to Cheng Keda (*juren* 舉人 1660), the younger brother of Cheng Kegong 成克鞏 (1608–1691); Keda was sent as the first customs inspector (*jiandu* 監督) to the branch office of the Yue *haiguan* in Macao in 1688 (cf. *Da Qing Jifu xianzhe zhuan* 大清畿輔先哲傳 by Xu Shichang 徐世昌 (1855–1939), j. 1, p. 9a (181), in *QDZJCK*, fasc. 198; cf. also Liu Meiyun, “Lun MingQing zhengfu Aomen haiguan xingshi zhuquan” (2000), p. 43; he has an entry in the *Wan Qingyi shihui* 晚晴簃詩匯 (*Poetry anthology of Wanqingyi*) compiled by Xu Shichang 徐世昌 (1855–1939), j. 31, and is also mentioned in the *Jifu tongzhi* 畿輔通志 by Tang Zhiyu 唐執玉 (1669–1733) *et al.* comp, j. 66, and the *Guizhou tongzhi* 貴州通志 [*jiajing*-edition 1555 by Xie Dongshan 謝東山 (rev.) and Zhang Dao 張道 (comp.)], revised by Ortai 鄂爾泰 (1677–1745) *et al.*, j. 18.

80 On trade at Foshan during the Ming and particularly Qing dynasties, cf. among others Guangdongsheng shehui kexue yuan, Zhongshan daxue lishixi. Guangdongsheng Foshanshi bowuguan (eds.), *MingQing Foshan beike wenxian jingji ziliao* 明清佛山碑刻文獻經濟資料. (Guangzhou: Guangdong renmin chubanshe, 1987).

81 John E. Wills, Jr., *Embassies and Illusions* (1984), p. 138.

cials even requested to make Macao the centre of trade with all Europeans, but subsequently, until 1699, the initiative shifted from Guangdong to Fujian (Amoy).⁸² Nevertheless, between 1680 and 1690, Canton merchants continued to trade with the Portuguese at Macao as well as with the Dutch among the offshore islands,⁸³ although briefly before the opening of the *haiguan* at Canton, namely between 1681 and 1682, the Portuguese managed to make use of their relations with Canton authorities and with the court (through Jesuits in Beijing) to convince the Canton authorities to cut off almost all Dutch trade on islands near Macao.⁸⁴

As for the sea route, the government wanted to wait until the “pirates” (*haizei* 海賊) had been extinguished and maritime trade could once again be carried out under safe conditions. Taxation of maritime trade directly at the ports was still considered as too dangerous. Only after the establishment of the customs offices taxes being collected were again “maritime taxes (*haishui* 海稅) just as in former days”; actually, however, they were “equivalent to the overland taxes (*hanshui*)”.⁸⁵ So according to the entry by Li Shizhen, during the time of the maritime trade proscription, although officially abolished, the institution of the *shibo si* consequently continued to exist – at least in Guangdong:

Today, the Emperor graciously rescinded the maritime trade prohibition: all merchants and commodities were now transported on overseas ships. Since *kangxi* 24 (1685), merchants all directly proceed to the supervising authority [i.e. the Yue *haiguan*] to pay their taxes. [But] the commodity taxes (*huoshui*) of outgoing and incoming foreign ships that the authority is now levying, are in fact those commodity taxes that the *shibo* was imposing on trade along the overland routes during the time when maritime trade was still forbidden. Originally, prior to the opening of maritime trade, it was consequently an item [imposed] on land and not on sea [transportation]. After the opening of maritime trade, [taxes were] subsequently [imposed] on sea and no longer on land [transportation]. Consequently of these [two forms of taxation], one has to be stopped and abolished....The actual taxation (*boxiang*) at Yuedong is the taxation at the supervisory [*haiguan*] authority; consequently, the tax rates of the [*shibo*] *tiju si* will have to be abolished.⁸⁶

This entry not only attests to the official shift from the traditional *shibo* taxation to the *haiguan* system, but it also implies that the “*shibo* system” of taxation was obviously not abolished before early 1687, although officially it was apparently stopped as early as 1682 (see appendix 1) – otherwise Li Shizhen’s entry would not make sense. This is also attested to by Li Shizhen’s entry “*Qing chu shibo Aomen hanlu shuiyin shu*” (1686, 2nd month) in which he requested the abolition of the “*hanlu*” taxes

82 John E. Wills, Jr., *Embassies and Illusions* (1984), p. 147.

83 As for Shang Zhixin’s relations with the Dutch, cf. for example John E. Wills, Jr., *Pepper, Guns and Parleys* (1974), pp. 153, 154, 157–159, 194–198. In company trade and diplomacy between 1676 and 1679, “Shang’s chief client-merchants [were]... Tsonqua or Tsjongqua and Lichoncong [Lin Qifeng 林奇逢] in the Dutch sources” (ibid., p. 158).

84 John E. Wills, Jr., *Pepper, Guns and Parleys* (1974), p. 194.

85 *Fu Yue zhenglue*, j. 2, p. 60a (249).

86 Li Shizhen, “*Qing huo shibo hanlu shuixiang shu* 請豁市舶旱路稅餉疏” (*kangxi* 26, 1687, 4th month), in *Fu Yue zhenglue*, j. 2, pp. 60b–61a and 61b (250–252).

in Macao, thereby completely abolishing the traditional *shibo si*-system that was still in use there.⁸⁷

At the same time, new regulations were set up for the treatment of official tribute (*gongbo maoyi* 貢舶貿易) and private trade. Goods from foreign tribute ships up to a number of three were exempt from taxation. As for ships coming for the purpose of private trade, their trade was permitted, but the merchants had to follow the tax regulations,⁸⁸ taxes fixed at a rate of 20 per cent.⁸⁹

It was also Li Shizhen in his function as local governor (*xunfu*) who, in 1686, licensed the successful merchant firms as “*yanghuo hang* 洋貨行” (foreign goods firms) and initiated a distinction between domestic taxes and foreign import-export duties.⁹⁰ Whereas the Golden-silk-thread-warehouse (*jinsi hang* 金絲行), alias the domestic brokers (*ya* 牙), were to be responsible for the management of domestic taxes that had to be paid at the Commercial Tax Office (*shuikē si*), the Foreign-goods-warehouse (*yanghuo hang* 洋貨行) had to supervise foreign im- and export duties that were to be paid at the *haiguan* offices:

In our provincial city [i.e. Guangzhou], formerly a Commercial Tax Office (*shuikē si*) had been established at Foshan that imposed duties paid for unloading goods [for further trade in China] (*luodi zhushui* 落地住稅). Nowadays, we have established the Customs Office (*haiguan*) that imposes taxes on business commodities to be exported overseas. The physical features are very much related to each other. This is why I am afraid, if we do not distinguish between foreign im- and export (*hang*) and domestic (*zhu*) duties, the evil of repeated counterfeiting and smuggling will arise. Today we have officially discussed the establishment of two warehouses, one for [the trade of] of the Golden-silk-thread-warehouse (*jinsi hang* 金絲行) and one for [the trade of overseas commodities of] the Foreign-goods-warehouse (*yanghuo hang* 洋貨行). If the commodities reach Guangdong province to be traded locally (i.e. domestic trade), they are all uploaded goods (*luodi huowu*) and are to be categorized as domestic duties (*zhushui*), their application to pass goods through the customs has to be handed over to the *jinsi hang* and duties have to be paid at the Commercial Tax Office (*shuikē si*); those products that are imported from abroad or are to be sold overseas, are to be categorized as foreign im- and export duties (*hangshui*), their application to pass goods through the customs has to be handed over to the *yanghuo hang* and duties have to be paid at [the local] Customs Office. I am sincerely afraid that all the merchants that come from distant places to our provinces are unable to differentiate between our new regulations on licensed brokers and business firms (*ya hang jinli* 牙行近例), and will thus hardly be able to avoid numerous smuggling activities....⁹¹

This entry shows that the so-called “*jinsi hang*” actually was only another designation for “*yabang*”, the domestic brokers, while “*yanghuo hang*” was also simply called “*hang*”. It also implies that so far no distinction had been made in the Canton

87 Li Shizhen, “*Qing chu shibo Aomen banlu shuiyin shu* 請除市舶澳門旱路稅銀疏”, in *Fu Yue zhengluo*, j. 2, pp. 41a–43b (211–216), and j. 2, pp. 59b–60b (248–250).

88 *Yue haiguan zhi*, j. 8, p. 4b (538).

89 *Da Qing Shengzu Renhuangdi shilu*, j. 124 (*kangxi* 25, 1686, 2nd month, 10th day), p. 12b (1664).

90 Peng Zeyi, “Qingdai Guangdong yanghang zhidu de qi yuan” (1975), pp. 16–18.

91 Li Shizhen, “*Fenbie zhu hang buoshui* 分別住行貨稅”, in *Fu Yue zhengluo*, j. 6, pp. 55a–56b (729–732).

trade between Chinese and foreign merchants, domestic and foreign trade. This *yanghang*-system initiated in 1686 under Kangxi was basically maintained without changes until 1754.⁹²

Consequently, the Canton system, as Weng Eang Cheong has noted, from its earliest days was characterized by private enterprise and personal investments of officials, Li Shizhen being one of the most important figures among them; also the collection of duties was controlled by a small group of merchants operating firms and officially registered to trade in foreign goods.⁹³ These “*yanghuo hang*” were the predecessors of the later specialists in the European trade, then called “*yanghang* 洋行”.⁹⁴

The Ministry of Rites versus the Ministry of Revenue

Sources reveal that as far as maritime trade was concerned the Kangxi Emperor decided himself for the practical alternative. But before the customs offices were established a kind of struggle ensued at the administrative level that may at least reflect the desire and claim of parts of the ruling élites to maintain the tribute system and to confirm China in her role as the alleged Middle Kingdom. The early Qing administration of maritime trade was namely characterized by a dichotomy of emphasis on the traditional tribute system including the concept of “being gracious to foreigners” (*rouyuan* 柔遠) and, on the other hand, by profit calculations regarding maritime trade as a financial source to be tapped. The question of how principally to treat foreign merchants was consequently a long and fundamental dispute among the Ministry of Rites (*libu* 禮部) and the Ministry of Revenue (*hubu* 戶部). Whereas the Ministry of Rites intended to lay great emphasis on China’s suzerainty and at least a formal subordination of foreign countries bringing tribute to China, the Ministry of Revenue favoured the establishment of tax offices to obtain more

92 Peng Zeyi, “Qingdai Guangdong yanghang zhidu de qi yuan” (1975), p. 16.

93 Weng Eang Cheong, *The Hong Merchants* (1997), p. 31.

94 In 1754 (*qianlong* 16), more than twenty *yanghang* and eight warehouses for the trade of domestic goods are said to have existed in Guangdong. The *yanghuo hang* was later also called “*waiyang hang* 外洋行” (Foreign-ocean warehouse) and the *jinsi hang* “*hainan hang* 海南行” (South-of-the-ocean warehouse). Around 1760 (*qianlong* 25), a further diversification was initiated. The overseas merchant Pan Zhencheng 潘振承 (1714–1798), or Puankequa, as Westerners called him, and nine others requested the establishment of a common business firm (*gonghang* 公行), Co-hong, that should particularly concern itself with the management of foreign ships. Their request was followed and thereupon, these Foreign-ocean warehouses no longer cared about matters related with the domestic harbour. The latter were supervised and managed by the Jiyi 集義, Fengjin 豐晉, Dafeng 達豐, Wende 文德 and other business firms, and the eight *hainan hang* became seven “*FuChao hang* 福潮行” (FuChao warehouse). This implies that until about 1760 the *waiyang hang* had still been involved in the management of local harbour affairs. Cf. Peng Zeyi, “Qingdai Guangdong yanghang zhidu de qi yuan” (1975), pp. 16–17. According to Western sources, Peng Zeyi continues, the establishment of the Co-hong has to be traced back to 1720, but there is in fact no Chinese source material substantiating this; *yanghang* and *gonghang* should therefore be carefully distinguished (*ibid.*, p. 17, footnote 4).

income. Eventually, one agreed upon a compromise which explicitly also emphasized the concept of the tribute system that was demanded by the Ministry of Rites.⁹⁵

From an imperial edict discussing this question (cf. appendix 2) it becomes evident that the Ministry of Rites eventually agreed to permit private trade and have it taxed, but at the same time laid great importance on emphasizing phrases like “being gracious to foreigners” and maintaining official tribute relations besides private trade. This joint discussion (*huiyi* 會議) was an important step towards the establishment of the Maritime Customs Offices (*haiguan*) in their final form. In addition, such a dispute may be taken as evidence that the representatives of the Qing government did not (yet) absolutely agree on how to integrate foreign trade into their political and economic system. At least the conservative faction from the Ministry of Rites still considered a kind of tribute system in the traditional sense as more appropriate, whereas the Ministry of Revenue put more emphasis on the financial aspects, regarding foreign trade as a source to be tapped for state revenue. In this respect, the dispute may very well reflect the different considerations from different starting points of the contemporary government towards foreign trade. It was not yet a settled attitude that the latter should enrich the state. At least some officials instead regarded political-ideological considerations as more important. The dispute, eventually, resulted in what I would call “reconciliation” of trade and commercial interests with the tribute system, a reconciliation that was perhaps not only one between political ideology and commerce but also between conservative, mostly Han Chinese officials, and Manchus who possessed a more open attitude towards foreign trade. Officially, the position of a director of the Ministry of Rites (*libu shangshu* 禮部尚書) was to be filled by one Manchu and one Han Chinese official.⁹⁶ I attempted to reconstruct the sequence of office-holders during the time period of interest.⁹⁷

95 *Yue haiguan zhi*, j. 8, pp. 3b–4b (536–538), especially 4b (538).

96 Cf. Shimesu Narakino 榎木野宣, *Shindai jūyō shokkan no kenkyū – Man Kan ei'yō no zenbō* 清代重要職官の研究: 滿漢併用の全貌 (*The important government officials of Ch'ing China – A study of using Manchu and Chinese together*). (Tōkyō: 風間書房 Kazama shobō, 1975), pp. 191 and 193.

97 Between 1669 and 1673, the position was held by Gong Tingzi 龔鼎孳 (1616–1673), Saisehei 塞色黑 was appointed in 1677 (*kangxi* 16), 8th month, and dismissed in the 1st month of 1681 (*kangxi* 20) (cf. *Xin Qingshi* 新清史 edited by the Guoshiguan Qingshi zu 國史館清史組, *Shengzu benji* 聖祖本紀, j. 7 (本紀七 聖祖二, pp. 434–462, quoted according to the digital database of the Academia Sinica); the same year, 1681, 2nd month, Gošihai 郭四海, a Manchu, held the position until the 7th month 1681 (cf. *Qing shigao* 清史稿 compiled by Zhao Erxun 趙爾巽 (1844–1927). (Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, reprint 1997), j. 6, p. 206 (109); *Guochao qixian leizheng chubian* 國朝耆獻類徵初編, j. 47, pp. 23a–24a (141–143), for this information cf. p. 24a; *Shengzu*, j. 7 (本紀七 聖祖二, pp. 463 and 467). Shuai Yambo 帥顏保 (?–1684) was appointed in 1681, 12th month, and dismissed in 1683, 1st month (*Shengzu benji*, j. 7 (本紀七, 康熙二十 and 二十二, pp. 470 and 478); in 1683, 2nd month, Jiešan 介山, a Manchu, was appointed (cf. *Qing shigao*, j. 7, p. 212 (110); *Guochao jixian leizheng chubian*, j. 47, pp. 6a–7b (107–110), for this information cf. p. 7b); after the latter's resignation, Hangai 杭艾 took over the position in 1684 (*Da Qing Shengzu Renbungdi shilu*, j. 118, p. 7b (1584)) and obviously remained

- Saisehei 塞色黑, a Manchu (08/1677–01/1681)
 Gošihai 郭四海, a Manchu (02/1681–07 or 12?/1681)
 Hešeri 赫舍里 Shuai Yamboo 帥顏保 (c. 1641–1684), a Manchu (12/1681–01/1683)
 Šaceng 沙澄, a Manchu (12/1661–08/1666; 10/1682–09/1686)
 Jiešan 介山, a Manchu (02/1683–11?/1683)
 Hangai 杭艾, a Manchu (?) (12/1684–04/1685)⁹⁸
 Hajan 哈占 (1632–1686), a Manchu (04/1685– early 1686?)
 Tang Bin 湯斌 (1627–1687), a Han Chinese (appointed 03/1686)

Analyzing this list of officials, it immediately springs to mind that during the time of discussion on the particulars of opening up the country for maritime trade and establishing customs houses, Manchu officials seem to have maintained the influential position as *libu shangshu*. In early 1686, Tang Bin 湯斌 (1627–1687), an orthodox Confucian official, was the first Han Chinese appointed after the early 70s. If this appointment was a demonstrative act of “reconciliation” after the Manchus had

in office until the 4th month of 1685 when he resigned (戊戌, 禮部尚書杭艾免; cf. *Shengzu benji*, j. 7 (本紀七, 康熙二十四, i.e. 1685) pp. 492–493); Šaceng 沙澄 was in office until 1666, 9th month, when he was replaced by Liang Qingbiao 梁清標 (1620–1691), a Chinese (cf. *Qing shigao*, j. 6, p. 173 (101): 禮部尚書沙澄免。以梁清標為禮部尚書; *Da Qing Jifu xianzhe zhuàn*, j. 1, pp. 4a–5a (171–174), for this information p. 5a (173)); according to the *Shengzu benji*, j. 7 (本紀七, 康熙二十) and the *Kangxi qiju zhu*, Šaceng 沙澄 was raised (*qi* 起) again as *libu shangshu* in 1682, 10th month, and remained in office until 1686, 9th month (cf. *Shengzu benji*, j. 7, p. 502; *Kangxi qiju zhu* 康熙起居住 (*kangxi* 24, 9th month, 15th day, edited by the Diyi lishi dang’an guan (Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, no date), vol. 2, p. 1355); in the 4th month of 1685 (*kangxi* 24), Hajan 哈占 (1632–1686), a Manchu, was appointed but, due to illness, he soon asked to resign from office; he had, for example, spent most of his career with military responsibilities in Shaanxi (*Qing shigao*, j. 256, p. 9793 (2523); *Guochao qixian leizheng chubian*, j. 53, pp. 44a–48a (745–753), for this information p. 47b (753)); in 1686 Tang Bin 湯斌 (1627–1687), an orthodox Confucian official, was appointed (cf. *Qing shigao*, j. 7, p. 219 (112); *Guochao qixian leizheng chubian*, j. 48, pp. 1a–61a (173–295)), but already in the winter of 1686 Zhang Shipin 張士甄 was in office (cf. *Qing shigao*, j. 7, p. 221 (113)); from 1688 to 1689 and again for a short period in 1690 the Han Chinese Xiong Cili 熊賜履 (1635–1709), between 1689 and 1690 Zhang Yushu 張玉書 (1642–1711), a Han Chinese, who had already been appointed Vice Director (resp. vice president) for a short period early in 1684, were in office. Cf. Arthur W. Hummel, *Eminent Chinese of the Ch’ing Period* (1991), vol. 1, p. 431, vol. 1 p. 66, vol 1, p. 309; vol. 2, p. 709–710 (does not mention his position as *libu shangshu*); Xiong Cili for example, in 1667, memorialized the throne on corruption in official life, pleading in particular that Chinese officials should not too readily accommodate themselves to the views of their Manchu colleagues (ibid. p. 308); Isangga 伊桑阿 (1637–1703), a Manchu, became Vice Minister/President (*shilang* 侍郎) in 1675 (*kangxi* 14), in 1694 Šamha, a Manchu official, became Director.

98 杭艾 cannot be a miswriting for 杭爱, referring to the more famous Hangai 杭爱 (?–1683), as he had already died in 1683. 杭爱 had in fact filled a position as *bithesi* 筆帖式 (a Chinese transcription of a Manchu word, “*bithe*” meaning “language”, “letter”; the position was available to Manchu, Mongols, and Chinese belonging to a Banner organization) in his early career, but there is no mention of a position as *libu shangshu*. *Baqi tongzhi* 八旗通志 edited and compiled by Ortai 鄂爾泰 (1680–1745), j. 169, p. 2945. (Taipei: Taiwan xuesheng shuju, 1968; copy of the 1739–ed. (*qianlong* 4), in *Zhongguo shixue congshu xubian* 中國史學叢書續編, fasc. 1.

pushed through their interests concerning the administration of maritime trade will still have to be investigated in more detail. The installment of a conservative Han Chinese official may also simply and solely have reflected the idea that after the most decisive measures in this respect had been undertaken, no strict Manchu control was necessary any more. At any rate it is obvious that concerning the question of how China should view and manage her relations with the maritime outside world, two from their original different standpoints were brought together (or reconciled) and that it was “of course” the Manchu ruling élite that pushed through its interests.

On the one hand, this reconciliation was one of antagonistic standpoints. An exchange of tribute goods for Chinese gifts is in principal something different from trade for profit. On the other hand, however, one should emphasize that in practice the dispute was more one between two poles or two extremes of the same concept, because the protagonists of commercial interests within the government were also not in favour of any kind of free trade or commodity economy – as pursued, for example, by Western nations such as the Dutch or the British. In addition the protagonists of commercial interests, supported strict government control and, especially within the spheres of foreign trade, a monopolization of business transactions. The Manchu rulers may also have had at least a faint idea of the fact that “international” trade could always be equivalent to an outflow of national wealth.⁹⁹

99 What this meant for their household in practice, they could study looking back at the fate of the Song-, Yuan- und Ming dynasties. With all the wealth having flowed into China during those times, throughout the course of the dynasties the greatest part of the nationally and internationally valid wealth in the form of metals had nevertheless gradually leaked abroad. The result was once again empty state coffers. For the drainage of metals during the Song and Yuan cf. for example the contribution by Li Kangying “A Study on Song, Yuan and Ming monetary policies within the context of worldwide hard currency flows during the 11th–16th centuries and their impact on Ming institutions” in Angela Schottenhammer (ed.), *The East Asian Maritime World, 1400-1800. Its Fabrics of Power and Dynamics of Exchanges*. (Wiesbaden: Otto Harrassowitz, 2007), pp. 99–136. *East Asian Maritime History* 4; the drainage of bronze coins during the Song is also discussed in So Kee Long, “Financial Crisis & Local Economy: Ch’üan-Chou in the Thirteenth Century”, *T’oung Pao* 77 (1991), pp. 119–137; Angela Schottenhammer, “The Role of Metals and the Impact of the Introduction of *Huizhi* Paper Notes in Quanzhou on the Development of Maritime Trade in the Song Period”, in Angela Schottenhammer (ed.), *The Emporium of the World* (2001), pp. 95–176.

The Establishment of the Customs Offices (haiguan)

In 1684, after a long process of preparation and discussion, Kangxi officially permitted maritime trade, allowing all commodities except those related to national security to be traded domestically and abroad.¹⁰⁰ The maritime trade proscription was officially abolished:

“Now, as China (lit. ‘everything within the seas’, *hainei* 海內) is united and the world (*huanyu* 寰宇) is at peace, as Manchu and Han people form one uniform body (*Man Han xiangtong yiti* 滿漢相同一體), I order you to go abroad to trade, in order to display the good rule of the wealthy and numerous, and by imperial decree open the seas for trade.”¹⁰¹

Subsequently between 1683 and 1684, Customs Houses (*haiguan*)¹⁰² were established in the four most important coastal regions, that is Guangdong (Guangzhou and Xiangshanxian 香山縣, Aomen 澳門), Fujian (Fuzhou 福州, Nantai 南台, and Xiamen 廈門), Zhejiang (Ningbo 寧波 and Dinghaixian 定海縣) and Jiangsu (Huatingxian 華亭縣, Chongque 滄闕, and Shanghai). “Four customs offices were established, one in Aomen 澳門 (Macao), one in Zhangzhou, Fujian, one in Ningbo 寧波, Zhejiang and one in Yuntaishan 云台山, Jiangnan.”¹⁰³

In 1685, foreign traders also received permission to trade in Chinese ports.¹⁰⁴ After 1685, the (authority to) levy taxes was subsequently returned to the Ministry of Revenue (*Hubu* 戶部). The first supervisor of the Fujian (Min) *haiguan* was Ušiba 吳世把 (Wushiba; Manchu official, in some documents also written as Hushiba 瑚什巴), formerly Director of the Ministry of Revenue (*hubu langzhong* 戶部郎中)¹⁰⁵; in Canton, it was Irgetu 宜爾格圖, who had already been responsible for the supervision of the land taxation, as we have seen above. The concrete measures of the Canton trading system were negotiated and commonly fixed by the Governor-generals of LiangGuang, Wu Xingzuo 吳興祚 (1632–1698), Li Shizhen and Irgetu.

In 1686 (*kangxi* 25, 2nd month, 10th day), the regular taxation of foreign ships at the Customs Houses was reduced to 20 per cent.¹⁰⁶ After Irgetu’s petition that

100 *Da Qing Shengzu Renhuangdi shilu*, j. 116, p. 18a (1555), j. 117, p. 10b (1567).

101 Li Xiang, Yang Weibo, “Lun Qingchao qianqi haiwai maoyi zhengce de ‘fei biguanxing’” (2000), p. 65 (quoting the *Huangchao wenxian tongkao*).

102 As Ng Chin-Keong has correctly noted, it is important to pay attention to the fact that the term “*haiguan*” in the sources often implies the whole system of customs administration rather than a particular customs station or office. Cf. his excellent treatise, Ng Chin-Keong, *Trade and Society* (1983), p. 68.

103 *ZhongXi jishi* 中西紀事 by Xia Xie 夏燮 (Qing), (Taipei: Wenhai chubanshe, 1962), j. 3, p. 1a.

104 *Ming Qing shiliao, Wubian* 戊編. (Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 1950), vol. 1, p. 102.

105 *Baqi tongzhi*, j. 219, p. 14b.

106 Lo-Shu Fu, *A Documentary Chronicle* (1966), p. 86; cf. also Liang Tingnan, *Haiguo sishuo* 海國四說, *Yuedao gongguo shuo* 粵道貢國說 and Liang Tingnan, *Yue haiguan zhi*, j. 22, p. 20: 二十四年，監督宜爾格圖奏言：“康熙二十四年，監督宜爾格圖奏言。粵東向有東西二洋諸國來往交易，係市舶提舉司徵收貨稅。明隆慶五年，以夷人報貨奸欺，難於查驗，改定丈抽之例，按船大小以為額稅，西洋船定為九等。後因夷人屢請，量減抽三分，東洋船定為四等。國朝未禁海以前，洋船詣澳，照例丈抽。但往日多載珍奇，今系雜貨，今昔殊異，十船不及一船。請於議減之外，再減二分。東洋亦照例行。”

“originally Macao was a Portuguese settlement, therefore foreign ships have no reason to anchor there without restriction”¹⁰⁷ was approved in 1686, all foreign ships accordingly moved their anchorage to Whampoa, at the mouth of the Pearl River near Canton. Now, the gradual rise of Canton started and Macao lost the rest of her political independence. Gradually, a vast network of forts and *haiguan* tollhouses was established between Canton and Macao. A small group of individuals was permitted to guide foreign ships up to the river mouth, the Humen 虎門 (Bocca Tigris), where the *haiguan* was located. They were known as “Macao pilots” (*Aomen yinshui ren* 澳門引水人). Chinese and Portuguese officials were responsible for the control of this trade. In addition, there existed a wide network of tollhouses between Macao and Guangdong which were either directly or indirectly under the control of the Guangdong *haiguan* (also called Yue *haiguan*).¹⁰⁸

In Fujian, Ušiba, the official of the Ministry of Revenue who was responsible for the taxation of Fujian customs at that time, presented a memorial to the emperor requesting that the introduction of taxes on traders and merchants in Fujian should follow that of the Guangdong customs office, namely imposing taxes according to the size (width and tonnage) of the ships and according to the quantity or value of commodities (敕閩海抽稅仍依定例督理，閩海稅務戶部郎中瑚什巴疏言，閩省商賈貿易無丈船抽稅之例，請照粵關).¹⁰⁹

The particular situation of Sino-Western relations at Guangdong after 1700, including the Cohong (Gonghang) 公行 system, have repeatedly been treated elsewhere and will therefore not be introduced here in more detail.¹¹⁰ What becomes evident in our discussion is that there was not yet a clear and uniform system of taxation as it appeared later. The Kangxi Emperor clearly was in favour of maritime trade. But even after serious security problems had disappeared the primacy of a taxed maritime trade was not always undisputed in ruling élite circles.

107 Lo-Shu Fu, *A Documentary Chronicle* (1966), p. 86 (according to the *Yongzheng zhupiyuzhi* 雍正硃批諭旨 56, pp. 36a–b).

108 Paul Arthur van Dyke, *The Canton Trade* (2005), pp. 19–20.

109 *Huangchao wenxian tongkao*, j. 26, p. 19b.

110 To mention just a few, cf. Hosea Ballou Morse, *The Gilds of China with an Account of the Gild Merchant or Co-Hong of Canton*. (London: Longmans Green and Co., 1909); Louis Dermigny, *La Chine et l'Occident. Le Commerce à Canton au XVIII^e Siècle 1719–1833*. 3 vols. (Paris: S.E.V.P.E.N., 1964); Zhang Wenqin 章文欽 *et al.* (eds.), *Guangzhou shisanhang cangsang* 廣州十三行滄桑. (Guangzhou: Guangdong ditu chubanshe, 2001); Paul Arthur van Dyke, *The Canton Trade* (2005); on pages 183–184, note 1, van Dyke provides an extensive list of literature on the Canton trade, divided according to countries trading at Canton.

Early administration and personal structures in the Customs Offices

The *baiguan*-system did not simply consist of four separate main offices or administrative buildings, but included numerous subordinated customs stations (*kou'an* 口岸), which for example in Fujian alone totalled thirty-three in 1728.¹¹¹ Only some stations were authorized to collect customs duties, while others were solely responsible for routine inspections. The sheer quantity of stations also caused coordination problems and led to various reforms, some of which will be briefly introduced in the last sub-chapter.

These *baiguan* offices controlled both internal coastal and foreign maritime trade. The Qing bureaucratic system, in addition, made a distinction between the headquarters of administration, the central Yamen 衙門, where the superintendent in charge resided, and the various customs stations established at the ports of entry, where the customs duties were levied. The central Yamen could be, but was not always located at the major provincial port. The Yamen supervised a network of maritime customs stations distributed along the east and southeast Chinese littoral. With the establishment of these *baiguan* offices, the former *shibo si*-system had definitely come to an end. In this respect, an entry in the *Huangchao jingshi wenbian* 皇朝經世文編 explicitly notes:

“The establishment of the four *baiguan* is different from the establishment of the *shibo si* (*si queguan* 四權關之設異於市舶之設).”¹¹²

This quotation of course does not characterize the quality of the difference, but it clearly states that with the *baiguan* offices a new and different system had been established.

Who possessed the responsible competencies in this new system? A thorough analysis shows that in the beginning no completely uniform system existed, although we can observe some general tendencies. So, we will see that mostly high officials who had already proved their reliability in another central government office were appointed. The authority to appoint these officials was placed under the jurisdiction of the Ministry of Revenue (*hubu*, in Cantonese pronounced as “*hoppo*”).¹¹³ But this does not mean that most officials were transferred from the Ministry of Revenue to the *baiguan* offices. As Ng Chin-Keong has noted, only two among the forty-four superintendents of the Fujian *baiguan* appointed between 1683 and 1729 came from the Ministry of Revenue, while five came from the Ministry of Justice and the Ministry of War respectively, and nine from the Imperial Household

111 Ng Chin-Keong, *Trade and Society* (1983), pp. 71–72; Huang Guosheng 黃國盛, *Yapian zhanzheng zhi qian de Dongnan sisheng baiguan* 鴉片战争之前的東南四省海關. (Fuzhou: Fujian renmin chubanshe, 2000), pp. 125–179.

112 *Huangchao jingshi wenbian* 皇朝經世文編 by He Changling 賀張齡 (comp.). (Taipei: Wenhai chubanshe, 1972), fasc. 731, j. 83, p. 10b (2958).

113 *Qinding Da Qing huidian shili* (Guangxu), j. 236, p. 4a. This is also the reason why Westerners knew the appointees as “Hoppo” (*hubu*), although the candidates in fact came from other ministries and departments.

Department (*neiwufu* 內務府).¹¹⁴ As we will see below, at least during the *kangxi* reign the *neiwufu* played a particular role in the *baiguan* offices, with the exception of Canton.

As for the Jiangsu *baiguan*, among the thirty-six supervisors appointed between 1685 and 1720, one came from the Ministry of Personnel, five from the Ministry of Justice, only two from the Ministry of Revenue, four from the Ministry of War, four from the Court of Colonial Affairs, four from the Court of the Imperial Stud (including one from the Imperial Park Administration, that means actually also persons from the Imperial Household Department), one from the Ministry of Rites, but fourteen (or actually even eighteen) from the *neiwufu*. We have less information on the supervisors of the Zhejiang and Guangdong *baiguan* offices, but it is evident that until 1720 for example, in Zhejiang also many of the officials appointed came from the *neiwufu*.¹¹⁵ In comparison, no officials from the Imperial Household Department seem to have been appointed as customs superintendents at the Guangdong *baiguan* during the *kangxi* and probably also the *yongzheng* reign periods.¹¹⁶ However, sometimes the sources only speak of “high ministry officials (*buyuan dachen* 部院大臣).”¹¹⁷

In the beginning the personnel was to be exchanged every two years. This measure was supposed to prevent officials gaining too much influence on taxation simply by being in office at one place for a longer time period. In 1684, it was for example ordered that in Fujian and Guangdong provinces the customs offices (*baiguan*) should be supervised by both a Manchu and a Han Chinese official. In addition, a clerk (*bithesi*) was dispatched to both offices.¹¹⁸ Yet the actual authority mostly lay in the hands of high Manchu officials.

114 *Fujian tongzhi* 福建通志 by Sun Erzhu 孫爾準 (1770–1832) *et al.* (rev.), Chen Shouqi 陳壽祺 *et al.* (comp. and ed.), copy of the *Tongzhi*-ed., j. 107, pp. 21b–22a; also Ng Chin-Keong, *Trade and Society* (1983), p. 71. The other twenty-three officials came from various other bureaus and ministries.

115 I have set up lists of all officials appointed to the *baiguan* offices and traced back their time in office as supervisor, their original profession and their ethnic origin. These lists will be published in a monograph investigating the administration of maritime trade from the Ming through the Qing dynasties (unpublished manuscript, in preparation as a monograph for the *East Asian Maritime History* series). The information comes from the *Yue haiguan zhi* 粵海關志, j. 7, pp. 20b–51a (468–529); the *Fujian tongzhi*, j. 107, pp. 21b–22a; the *Jiangnan tongzhi* 江南通志 by Yu Chenglong 于成龙 (1638–1700), Wang Xinming 王新命 (1633–1708) *et al.* (eds.) (*Kangxi*-ed.), j. 105, pp. 20b–21b; and the *Zhejiang tongzhi* 浙江通志, j. 121, pp. 14b–16a. Lists of officials are also included in Huang Guosheng, *Dongnan sisheng haiguan* (2000), pp. 41–46.

116 M. Torbert Preston, *The Ch'ing Imperial Household Department. A Study of its Organization and Principal Functions, 1662–1796*. (Cambridge, Mass., London: Harvard University Press, 1977), p. 100. *Harvard East Asian Monographs*, 71.

117 *Yue haiguan zhi*, j. 7, pp. 20b–51a (468–529).

118 *Ming Qing shiliao*, *Dingbian*, vol. 8, p. 746; *Fujian tongzhi*, j. 107, p. 21b; for the location of the Min *haiguan* outside the city at Nantai 南臺, Zhongzhou 中洲, cf. *Fujian tongzhi*, j. 18, p. 12b.

In 1687 (*kangxi* 26), it was ordered that the personnel in all four provinces should be exchanged annually.¹¹⁹ This is the only time period during the Qing dynasty in which the supervision system was uniform in all four provinces. The *haiguan* superintendents supervised taxation and the movement of trade at several seaports. They were directly responsible to the court and consequently independent of the provincial governments.¹²⁰

Although customs offices were not established in Shandong 山東 and Zhili 直隸 provinces, the maritime trade prohibition was lifted there also. At the beginning of the *kangxi* reign period new regulations were introduced and the number and selection of particular officials in the customs offices was strictly regulated.¹²¹

The role of the Imperial Household Department (*neiwufu* 內務府)

The Imperial Household Department was a central government institution¹²² and closely concerned with the collection and storage of commercial taxes that were levied at particular communication arteries, mainly located in the Yangzi and Pearl River delta. The main domestic tax bureaus (*chaoguan* 鈔關)¹²³, which were directly connected with the *neiwufu*, were those at Kalgan (Zhangjiakou 張家口) northwest of Beijing, at Chongwenmen 崇文門 in the capital, at Jiujiang 九江 in Jiangxi (at the Yangzi), Hangzhou 杭州, Hushu 澉墅 near Suzhou, and one at Guangdong.¹²⁴ Being either profitable or fundamental for government revenue and state purposes, the ginseng and copper¹²⁵ trade was of particular importance in this respect.

119 *Qinding Da Qing huidian shili* (Jiaqing), j. 189, p. 5a.

120 *Huangchao wenxian tongkao*, j. 26, pp. 5079 and 5082.

121 For details cf. Huang Guosheng, *Dongnan sisheng haiguan* (2000), pp. 40–41.

122 A fundamental study on this institution and its functions is M. Torbert Preston, *The Ch'ing Imperial Household Department* (1977).

123 *Chaoguan*-offices were first established during the Ming dynasty. The *Zhongwen da cidian* 中文大辭典 (vol. 9, p. 650, no. 41128.21) notes in an entry on *chaoguan*: “A place for the collection of taxes. Between the reign periods *xuande* (1426–1435) and *jiating* (1522–1566) before and behind the tax stations *chaoguan* were established at twelve places. Of all boats and ships which hire people and load their cargo, the quantity of the cargo and the distance of their journey is calculated. All are ordered to pay paper money receipts (*chao*) or to change precious metals into paper money and pay (their duties). This is where the name (of the office) comes from. Later, although the system of paying paper money receipts at the tax stations has been abolished, the particular name (of the office) has continued to be used.”

124 M. Torbert Preston, *The Ch'ing Imperial Household Department* (1977), pp. 97–98.

125 In the copper trade, the government cooperated with and supported certain merchants by providing them with licenses and granting them loans and particular privileges. The Fan 范 lineage is one example of that, Fan merchants dominating the copper trade until c. 1783. Cf. M. Torbert Preston, *The Ch'ing Imperial Household Department* (1977), pp. 92–97. As for the monetary policy of the Qing government, cf. Hans Ulrich Vogel, “Chinese Central Monetary Policy, 1644–1800”, *Late Imperial China* 8:2 (1987), pp. 1–52; Yang Duanliu 楊端六, *Qingdai huobi jinrong shigao* 清代貨幣金融史稿. (Beijing: Sanlian shuju, 1962); Chen Zhaonan 陳昭南, *Yongzheng Qianlong nianjian de yinqian bijia biandong* 雍正乾隆年間的銀錢比價變動 1723–95. (Taipei: Zhongguo xueshu zhuzuo jiangzhu weiyuanhui, 1966); Ichiko Shōzu 市古尚三,

Also the Maritime Customs Offices were “connected” with the *neiwufu*. It can at least be certain that the *neiwufu* was directly involved in maritime trade since the last decade of the seventeenth century. A great percentage of the early *haiguan* supervisors, except for Canton, came from the *neiwufu*. This may attest to the fact that even after the opening up of maritime trade, China’s maritime borders continued to be considered under particular security aspects. Management and administration of this gateway to the foreign maritime world was a sensitive area both in terms of finance and security, and related responsibilities were handed over to Manchu officials for preference who had already proven their responsibility in a high central government office, such as the *neiwufu*. The maritime supervisors had thus not only to guarantee the provision of taxes into state coffers, but to keep an eye on border security.

Another development that has to be mentioned in our context is the introduction of a new form of taxes at a time period when security along the maritime borders at least appeared to be of less importance than an increase in revenue, interestingly especially for the private purse of the emperor. Starting in the *yongzheng* reign period, it became a usual practice to distinguish between a so-called “regular tax quota” (*zheng’e* 正額) and a “surplus quota” (*yingyu* 盈餘).¹²⁶ The regular quota was supposed to be determined by the number of ships and changed over the centuries. As a rule, it was sent to the provincial treasury and went to the Ministry of Revenue (*hubu*). In addition, there existed extra taxes and illegal demands, which were imposed by the superintendents, their clerks and subordinate officials and went into their own pockets.¹²⁷ According to the official version there were no quotas for surplus taxes. But the practice of levying these extra taxes was openly approved by the Qing court, and officials could use the amount for public and private expenses locally. This practice can be explained by the fact that local Qing officials generally received relatively low salaries and were actually dependent on such additional taxes and levies. After the consolidation period of the *kangxi* reign, when deficits had occurred more frequently and corruption reached a peak, Emperor Yongzheng put the customs officials under stricter control and offices subsequently provided fat returns. In this respect, the annual tax collections of the customs offices served also as an indicator of the degree of authority of the emperor. While the Yongzheng Emperor still attempted to keep the amount of surplus taxes under control,¹²⁸ the

Shindai kabeishi 清代貨幣史. (Tōkyō: Ōtori shobō 鳳書房, 2004); Mio Kishimoto-Nakayama, “The Kangxi Depression and Early Qing Local Markets”, *Modern China* 10:2 (1984), pp. 227–56.

126 The *Xiamen zhi* contains a reference to the explicit distinction between a so-called “regular tax quota” (*zheng’e* 正額) and a “surplus quota” (*yingyu* 盈餘). *Xiamen zhi* 廈門志 rev. by Zhou Kai 周凱 (1779–1837). (*Daoguang*-ed.), j. 7, p. 3b (125) and 5a (126) in *Zhongguo fangzhi congshu* 中國方志叢書, fasc. 80. (Taipei: Chengwen chubanshe, 1967); Ng Chin-keong, *The Amoy Network* (1983), p. 71.

127 Gugong bowuyuan wenxianguan weiyuanhui 故宮博物院文獻委員會 (ed.), *Wenxian congbian* 文獻叢編. (Shanghai: Tianjin geda shudian, 1931), vol. 11, p. 8b.

128 He expected the officials from time to time to report on the amount of the surplus quota they collected and on how they made use of the money. They were also reminded not to impose

Qianlong Emperor eventually in 1749, defined them as a standard of taxation.¹²⁹ After very substantial returns during the *yongzheng* reign, the early Qianlong Emperor “tended to be lenient, and deficits occurred frequently in most of the customs returns”, so that the emperor eventually “found it necessary to tighten his hand over his appointees.”¹³⁰ Officially, the distinction between these two forms of taxation, the “regular quota” and the “surplus quota”, had been introduced to prevent possible excessive corruption. But it immediately springs to mind that the “surplus quota” was directly forwarded to the Imperial Household Department, that means, into the private purse of the emperor.¹³¹ To pay great sums of surplus quota was, consequently, not only a requirement, but also a guarantee to ensure a customs official his lucrative position – the higher this tax revenue, the more pleased the emperor. In 1735, the Qianlong Emperor determined that the amount of c. 1,600,000 *liang*, provided by twenty customs houses in 1735, should serve as a basis for the surplus quota to be sent in annually.¹³²

The fact that the surplus quotas were transmitted directly to the Imperial Household Department is also the reason why sometimes the regular tax quotas were in deficit while the surplus quotas were over-fulfilled. And it explains why the customs officials mostly tried hard to produce an over-fulfilled surplus quota and fill the emperor’s and also their own pockets, while leaving the account of the Ministry of Revenue in deficit.¹³³

As mentioned above, no officials from the *neiwufu* seem to have been appointed as customs superintendents at the Guangdong *haiguan* during the *kangxi* and most probably also the *yongzheng* reign. This can perhaps be explained with the integration of the Canton *haiguan* into the local *hang*-system or with the high amount of local tax revenue (see below). In other provinces this was different. The earliest *neiwufu*-official being appointed to the Zhejiang *haiguan* was, for example, Julantai 朱蘭泰 (Manchu official) in 1692, followed by Torbi 陶爾璧 (Manchu official) in 1693 and Booju 寶柱 (Manchu official) in 1696. In Fujian, it was Jucengge 朱成格 (Manchu official) in 1690, followed by Amitu 阿密圖 (Manchu official) in 1699 and Gerbu

extra levies in addition to these surplus quotas. Cf. Ng Chin-keong, *Trade and society* (1983), p. 192.

129 Chang Te-ch’ang, “The economic role of the Imperial Household in the Ch’ing dynasty”, *Journal of Asian Studies* 31:2 (1972), pp. 243–273, p. 257.

130 Chang Te-ch’ang, “The economic role of the Imperial Household in the Ch’ing dynasty” (1972), p. 257.

131 *Da Qing Gaozong Chunhuangdi lichao shilu* 大清高宗純皇帝實錄 (Qianlong), j. 712, p. 14b (10257).

132 Cf. Chang Te-ch’ang, “The economic role of the Imperial Household in the Ch’ing dynasty” (1972), pp. 256–257; as for tax revenue, see the information provided by Huang Guosheng, *Dongnan sisheng haiguan* (2000), pp. 419–482.

133 Chang Te-ch’ang, “The economic role of the Imperial Household in the Ch’ing dynasty” (1972), p. 257; the source material comes from the Gugong bowuyuan wenxianguan weiyuanhui 故宮博物院文獻委員會 (ed.), *Shiliao xunkan* 史料旬刊. (Shanghai: Shangwu yinshuguan and Zhonghua shuju, 1931), no. 31, 34 and 40, and the *Wenxian congbian*, vol. 10 and 11.

格爾布 (Manchu official) in 1700; in Jiangsu, it was Situ 席圖 (Manchu official) in 1690, followed by Šuhede 舒赫德 and Samboo 三保 (Manchu officials) in 1699 and 1700 respectively. Out of sixty *haiguan* officials in Zhejiang fourteen can definitely be identified as belonging to the *neiwufu*. In Fujian, nine out of forty-four officials came from the *neiwufu* (between 1699 and 1705 continuously), in Jiangsu it was even fourteen out of thirty-six.¹³⁴

Analyzing the amount of tax revenue from maritime trade in the four provinces, one is tempted to understand the appointment of officials from the *neiwufu* in relation to the amount of taxes levied. For, whereas in Jiangxi the revenue was the lowest, followed by Zhejiang, the tax revenue in Fujian and in Guangdong was much higher. At the beginning of the *yongzheng* reign period, for example, the regular tax quota of Guangdong was 43,750 *liang*, in Fujian it reached more than 66,549 *liang*, in Zhejiang 32,030.629 *liang*, and in Jiangxi only 23,016.33 *liang*.¹³⁵ This may suggest that *neiwufu*-officials, high central government officials responsible for the private purse of the court, were perhaps dispatched in order to boost tax revenue especially at those *haiguan* stations which had lower tax revenue.¹³⁶

Until the beginning of the *yongzheng* reign period, *haiguan* officials were frequently selected from among assistant department directors and department directors of various governmental offices in Beijing. Between, for example, 1704 and 1723, *neiwufu* officials served only slightly more often as superintendents than officials from the Ministry of Revenue (*hubu*).

Another case in point is the employment of private household or bondservants (*bao yi* 包衣) in the maritime customs system – more or less the Qing variant of the former Ming eunuchs. The phenomenon of appointing bondservants to high official positions should be traced back to the fact that the supervising officials were mainly persons who were not very familiar with the local situation. Apparently for the most part they did not trust the local managing personnel, thus preferred to employ their own servants.¹³⁷ Although, in 1724, the Yongzheng Emperor decreed that governors should be more careful in assigning household servants to manage official business, as the latter were known for abusing their power, this decree did not result in an interruption of this practice. This means that although the rulers were aware of the negative influence of these bondservants, at the same time it seems they saw no alternative to this problem and consequently – openly or tacitly – permitted this practice. As Ng Chin-keong has shown, household servants played

134 *Yue haiguan zhi*, j. 7, pp. 20b–51a (468–529).

135 Cf. the lists of tax revenue in Huang Guosheng, *Dongnan sisheng haiguan* (2000), pp. 419–482.

136 90 per cent of the tax revenue of the four tax stations was obtained through merchants coming from the Southern Seas (Nanyang) and only 10 per cent through those active in the Eastern Seas. Cf. Wang Ermin 王爾敏, *Jindai shishang de Dong Xi Nan Beiyang* 近代史上的東西南北洋. (Taipei: Shangwu yinshuguan, 1984), pp. 101–113, here p. 111 (with reference to Liang Tingnan's *Yue haiguan zhi*, j. 24, p. 14).

137 Cf. also Ch'ü T'ung-tsu, *Local Government in China under the Ch'ing*. (Cambridge, Mass.: Cambridge University Press, 1962), pp. 73–74, 195–197.

a particular significant role in Fujian,¹³⁸ but we meet them in other provinces as well. M. Torbert Preston concludes that the facts “suggest that the appointment of superintendents to the various customs bureaus seems not to have been the exclusive domain of imperial bondservants”, although they “did play an important role in the collection and handling of large sums of money.”¹³⁹ In summary, what should be emphasized is that responsibilities of supervising maritime trade during the early period of Qing maritime trade administration (until approximately the end of the *yongzheng* reign) were almost exclusively given to high Manchu officials – and those from the *neiwufu*, except for Canton, figured prominently among them. In all four provinces high-ranking government officials were put in office and *neiwufu*-officials particularly were present in those offices which had the least tax revenue.¹⁴⁰

The ethnic structure in the Customs Offices¹⁴¹

Lawrence D. Kessler has shown that the official guideline of Manchu ethnic politics in government during the early and mid-Qing period followed the ideal that “Manchus and Chinese are all of one family” (*Man Han yiti* 滿漢一體).¹⁴² Notably, the Shunzhi, Kangxi, Yongzheng and Qianlong Emperors officially all tried to stick to the principle of impartiality, without showing any favouritism. The Kangxi Emperor in particular had repeatedly reproached both Manchu and Chinese officials for undermining imperial efforts to remain impartial.¹⁴³ Theoretically this kind of policy was also valid for the appointment of officials to the maritime trade offices. The Customs Offices (*baiguan*) should, as a rule, be supervised by both a Manchu and a Han Chinese official.¹⁴⁴ Reality, however, looked a bit different from this official guideline. The major “fat” customs posts throughout the dynasty were, as Chang Te-Ch’ang has already emphasized, “invariably kept as the preserve of Manchu officials and were privileges handed out to the protégés of the emperor”.¹⁴⁵

138 Ng Chin-keong, *Trade and Society* (1983), p. 73.

139 M. Torbert Preston, *The Ch’ing Imperial Household Department* (1977), p. 101.

140 The organization and structure of the officials appointed as superintendents to the Maritime Customs Offices shall be discussed in more detail in a forthcoming monograph. That *neiwufu* officials particularly were present in those offices with less tax revenue should at least be considered as noteworthy, although it will remain a task for further research to underline or reject the idea that they were employed especially in order to boost tax revenue.

141 One of the most important studies concerning Manchu and Chinese officials in Qing China in general is still the excellent work by Shimesu Narakino, *Shindai jūyō shokkan no kenkyū* (1975).

142 Lawrence D. Kessler, “Ethnic Composition of Provincial Leadership during the Ch’ing Dynasty”, in Immanuel C. Y. Hsü (ed.), *Readings in Modern Chinese History*. (Oxford, New York: Oxford University Press, 1971), pp. 58–78, p. 61. Another important study on the ethnic composition of Qing government officials is Chen Wenshi 陳文石, “Qingdai Manren zhengzhi canyu 清代滿人政治參與”, *Lishi yuyan yanjiusuo jikan* 歷史語言研究所集刊 4:48 (1977), pp. 529–594.

143 Lawrence D. Kessler, “Ethnic Composition of Provincial Leadership (1971), p. 60.

144 *Fujian tongzhi*, j. 107, p. 21b.

145 Chang Te-ch’ang, “The economic role of the Imperial Household in the Ch’ing dynasty” (1972), p. 256.

For a better understanding of the Qing government's personnel policy, Lawrence Kessler has divided the dynasty into five major phases according to essential political developments – a categorization that is meaningful also in terms of maritime trade administration: (1) the period of conquest and consolidation, 1644–1683; (2) the period of stability, 1684–1735; (3) the period of stagnation, 1736–1795; (4) the period of decline, 1796–1850, and (5) the period of collapse, 1851–1911.¹⁴⁶ What becomes evident from his investigation is that Chinese bannermen were clearly predominant in the period of conquest and consolidation, when the Manchu ruling élite still lacked qualified personnel among its own ranks. In particular during the period of consolidation, Han Chinese who were not part of the banner system were tendentially not considered as reliable enough to be vested with greater competencies. During the period of stability, no ethnic group held a striking majority of positions, while during the period of stagnation, Chinese bannermen experienced a sharp decline, while gradually more and more Han Chinese were employed. Han Chinese held a slight majority of provincial-governors (*xunfu* 巡撫) positions, while Manchus were predominant as governor-generals (*zongdu* 總督) – both positions which were linked with the Ministry of War, the governor-general still slightly higher in rank than the provincial-governor. This may be taken as evidence for the changing relationship between the Manchu rulers and their Chinese subjects, for intermarriage and other forms of “sinicization”. During the period of decline, Han Chinese officials still gained in importance in relation to Manchu officials. “Chinese talent”, to use Kessler's words, “when the Manchus felt secure enough to tap it, was plentiful.”¹⁴⁷ What, now, did the situation look like within the maritime trade administration?

Of the forty supervisors in office at Guangdong until 1735 c. twenty-four were ethnic Manchu (perhaps two of them might also be ethnic Mongolian?),¹⁴⁸ c. fourteen Chinese bannermen (CBan) and only two definitely Chinese without banner affiliation (C).¹⁴⁹ The latter were Mao Keming 毛克明, who held the position from 1732 (*yongzheng* 10), 11th month, to 1734 (*yongzheng* 12) concurrently as vice supervi-

146 Lawrence D. Kessler, “Ethnic Composition of Provincial Leadership (1971), p. 68.

147 If the length of time in office is also considered, Chinese bannermen were the most, and Han Chinese the least favoured (if Mongols are ignored). A Chinese bannerman would serve as governor-general for c. 3,5 years (compared with 2,8 years for Han Chinese) and even c. 6,5 years as provincial governor. Lawrence D. Kessler, “Ethnic Composition of Provincial Leadership (1971), pp. 62–74, quotation on p. 74.

148 These are Šalibu 沙里布 in 1694 (*kangxi* 33) and Sahaliyan 薩哈連 in 1700 (*kangxi* 39). The Šalibu 沙理布 mentioned in the *Baqi tongzhi* lived earlier and died already in 1659; cf. *Baqi tongzhi*, j. 187, p. 25a (3300); Sahaliyan may be the same person as the Sahaliyan, a Manchu, mentioned in *Baqi tongzhi*, j. 213, p. 8b (3840–3841). But there is also a Mongol bannerman who lived about the same time (cf. *Baqi tongzhi*, j. 227, p. 16b (4170).

149 The problem with some of the officials, not only in the *haiguan* at Canton, is that not all of them can be definitely identified. Where no biography or at least some biographical information is provided, it is sometimes difficult or impossible to assess if an official was for example a Chinese bannerman or a Han Chinese without banner affiliation.

sor (*fu jiandu* 副監督), and his successor, Zheng Wusai 鄭伍賽, who was in office before 1735 (*yongzheng* 13) as Vice Supervisor (*fu jiandu*, a position which was subsequently abolished) until 1738 (*qianlong* 3). Very obviously, both held office at the end of the *yongzheng* reign period. At Guangdong, this situation did not change much during the *qianlong*, *jiaqing* and even early *daoguang* reigns. Zheng Wusai was followed by the Han Chinese Wang Anguo 王安國 (*jinsbi* 1724; d. 1757)¹⁵⁰ in 1739, whose position was then taken up by Zhu Shuquan 朱叔權 in 1741. But subsequently almost all of the supervisors appointed were Manchus, only c. twelve Chinese bannermen or perhaps some of them Han Chinese.

In the case of Fujian, between 1684 and 1735 thirty-seven of the forty-four supervisors alone were Manchus, c. five Chinese bannermen, one Han Chinese (C), Shi Qixian 史起賢 in 1686, and one Mongolian, Samha 薩穆哈, in 1711.

Thirty-one (or thirty-two?) of the thirty-six supervisors of the Jiangsu *haiguan* between 1685 and 1720 were Manchus, only four Han Chinese (C) or Chinese bannermen and one Mongolian (?), Monggoro 孟古爾, in 1693.

In Zhejiang, eventually, fifty-three (or even fifty-eight?) of the seventy-four supervisors between 1686 and 1733 were Manchus, eight or thirteen (?) Chinese bannermen, and seven definitely Han Chinese: the latter were Tu Yi 屠沂 (*jinsbi* 1694; d. 1723) in 1722, Yan Shao 閻紹 in 1724, Wang Yidao 王一導 in 1725, Jiang Chengjie 江承玠 in 1727, Sun Zhao 孫詔 (?–1733) in 1727, Cao Bingren 曹秉仁 in 1732, and Wang Tan 王坦 in 1733.¹⁵¹

This shows that the ethnic composition of the personnel in the customs offices was quite different from that of the positions of governor-generals and provincial governors: in contrast to the latter positions we hardly meet any Chinese bannermen in office at all in the customs offices. Instead Manchus are clearly predominant in all four provinces. The tendency that Han Chinese officials gradually gained in importance in relation to Manchu officials during the period of decline can only be observed at the *haiguan* in Zhejiang.

The clear predominance of Manchu officials in the administration of maritime trade most probably attests to the fact that the Qing emperors considered this administration field as such an important government sphere, simultaneously being highly sensitive to security problems, that they wanted to be sure it could not possibly be undermined by Han Chinese who did not agree with Manchu rule. Especially against the background of the Manchu's experience with Ming loyalists such as Zheng Chenggong and his merchant empire, it seems plausible that the maritime border was a particular tricky sphere. Also the calculation that the great resources to be drawn from overseas trade should primarily be reserved for Manchus may have played a role in one or the other case. A comparison with domestic tax stations (*chaoguan*) shows that there, especially during the period of conquest and con-

150 *Qingshi liezhuan* 清史列傳 edited by the Guoshi guan 國史館, Republic of China. 王鍾翰. (Shanghai: Zhonghua shuju, 1928; reprint Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 1987; Taipei: Taiwan Zhonghua shuju, 1964), *j.* 17, pp. 53b–55a.

151 Sources as in footnote 115.

solidation from 1644–1683, many more, sometimes with only a few exceptions, only Han Chinese were employed.¹⁵² Analyzing the administration of domestic tax stations, it springs to mind that starting with the 1690s or around 1700 suddenly Manchus predominated as officials. Consequently, even within the sphere of domestic taxation the tendency that Han Chinese officials gradually gained in importance within government cannot be confirmed. Instead, during the *qianlong* reign, Manchus of the banner organization even gained in importance. More research will be necessary to trace back possible court discussions about the appointment of officials. But the general picture already suggests that the administration of maritime trade had to thoroughly take into account security calculations and was, therefore, considered a kind of monopoly for Manchu officials. Let us now look a bit more thoroughly into the distribution of responsibilities and related reforms at the different customs stations.

Administrative reforms

Although basic principles of maritime trade administration were maintained during the *kangxi*, *yongzheng* and *qianlong* reigns, it was not a fixed system throughout time but subject to various reforms. This is for example already attested to by the above mentioned introduction of the surplus quota. But also in administrative terms several changes can be observed. The supervision of the administration of maritime trade was from time to time transferred to different officials and the system was changed temporarily.¹⁵³ As a rule, such reforms have to be traced back to the government's attempts to organize and coordinate the *baiguan*-system more efficiently.

Originally, personnel were rotated annually and responsibilities had preferably to be undertaken by officials who had been appointed to high positions in the central government prior to this appointment. As we have seen, many of the supervising officials in the customs houses, with the exception of Guangzhou, had formerly been the directors or vice directors of one of the central ministries.¹⁵⁴ In the early years, officially both a Manchu and a trusted Chinese official were to be appointed; in reality, however, Manchus predominated until the eighteenth century.

In 1720, the Kangxi Emperor started to reform the *baiguan*-system in Zhejiang and Jiangsu by transferring the administrative authority to the provincial governors (*xunfu*) of the respective province,¹⁵⁵ that is to powerful local officials. Obviously,

152 Cf. for example the *chaoguan* 鈔關 at Hushu 滸墅, Yangzhou 揚州, Wuhu 蕪湖, Fengyang 鳳陽, Huai'an 淮安 and Longjiang Xixin 龍江西新. The information also comes from my lists of officials.

153 During Song times the maritime trade administration varied for example between central control and local autonomy; cf. Angela Schottenhammer, *Das songzeitliche Quanzhou im Spannungsfeld zwischen Zentralregierung und maritimem Handel. Unerwartete Konsequenzen des zentralstaatlichen Zugriffs auf den Reichtum einer Küstenregion*. (Stuttgart: Franz Steiner Verlag, 2002), pp. 60–148, esp. 73–86 and 113–117. *Münchener Ostasiatische Studien* 80.

154 Sources as in footnote 115.

155 Ng Chin-keong, *Trade and Society* (1983), p. 72.

the Qing government considered this shift from strict central control to high local officials as more efficient. The Yongzheng Emperor continued these reforms of Kangxi and extended it to the provinces of Fujian and Guangdong.

In 1720 (*kangxi* 59), for example, the last appointee of the central ministries (*bu-yuan* 部院) in the Jiangsu *haiguan* was a certain Lioboojū 劉保柱 (Manchu official), Vice Director of the Imperial Household Department (*neiwufu yuanwai* 內務府員外). But already by the following year the central ministries had stopped dispatching these high central officials and merged the control of the *haiguan* in Jiangsu with the responsibilities of the local provincial governor of Jiangsu.¹⁵⁶ From 1723 (*yongzheng* 1) until 1725 (10th day, 5th month), the Provincial Governor and General of the Pacification Army, He Tianpei 何天培 (Han official, CBan: member of the Plain White Banner),¹⁵⁷ managed the (Jianghai) *haiguan* and the Commercial Tax Office (*shuiwu* 稅務) in Longjiang 龍江. The office in Shanghai was managed by a district official (*ling xianguan jian zhi* 令縣官兼之).¹⁵⁸ The authority of the Fujian *haiguan* was, for example, in 1725 transferred to the Provincial Governor, Huang Guocai 黃國材 (c. 1662–1731; Han official, CBan).¹⁵⁹ In 1726, the Fujian Provincial Governor, Mao Wenquan 毛文銓 (Han official)¹⁶⁰ took over the authority, but appointed the Prefect (*zhifu* 知府) of Yanping 延平, Zhang Daopei 張道沛 (Han official), and the Prefect of Quanzhou, Zhang Yuanjiu 張元咎 (Han official), to manage the affairs.

The supervision of the *haiguan* was consequently transferred to different central officials who, as provincial governor, may have been more familiar with local circumstances but who were still central government officials. The practical administration was, however, managed by a local official of medium rank who often came from the vicinity. In contrast to similar measures being undertaken during the Song period administration of maritime trade, these measures during the Qing – at least officially – did not result in a strengthening of the local administration. Instead, the government obviously sought to maintain its central control of maritime trade.

Differences concerning such administrative reforms can also be detected in regard to the respective provinces. In Fujian, for example, the *haiguan* was managed concurrently by a provincial governor (*xunfu*) until the early years of the *qianlong*

156 *Jiangnan tongzhi* 江南通志 (*Qianlong*-ed.), *j.* 105, pp. 21b.

157 *Manchu mingchen zhuàn* 滿州名臣傳, *j.* 35, pp. 5b–10a.

158 *Shanghai xianzhi* 上海縣志 (*Tongzhi*-ed.) by Ying Baoshi 應寶時 (?–1890) (rev.), Yu Yue 俞樾 (1821–1907) (comp.), *j.* 2, p. 13b (176), in *Zhongguo fangzhi congkan* 中國防志叢刊, fasc. 169; this information is, however, not contained in the *Shanghai xian xuzhi* 上海縣續志, *j.* 2, p. 18b (180), in *Zhongguo fangzhi congkan*, fasc. 14. He Tianpei was most probably a Chinese bannerman. He had also been working at the Hushu tax station (*chaoguan*) in 1724.

159 He was in office as Provincial Governor from 1722–04.09.1725. *Man mingchen zhuàn* 滿名臣傳 edited by the Guoshi guan 國史館, Republic of China. (Taipei: Tailian guofeng chubanshe, 1970), 6 vols., *j.* 31, pp. 9b–17a (3720–3717); *Baqi tongzhi* 八旗通志 edited and comp. by Ortai 鄂爾泰 (1680–1745). (Taipei: Taiwan xuesheng shuju, 1968; copy of the 1739–ed.), *j.* 198, p. 18a (3516–3520), in *Zhongguo shixue congshu xubian* 中國史學叢書續編, fasc. 1; *Congzheng guanfa lu* 從政觀法錄, *j.* 13, p. 14b.

160 He was in office as Provincial Governor from 06.09.1725–16.01.1727.

reign, but after 1738 it was generals (*jiangjun* 將軍) who were appointed more often – such as Cereng 策楞 (Manchu official) in 1740, Sinju 新柱 (Manchu official) in 1751 and 1755,¹⁶¹ Cangqing 常清 (Manchu official?) in 1785,¹⁶² Zhalafen 札拉芬 (Manchu official) in 1814, Hešetai 和世泰 (Manchu official) in 1821,¹⁶³ or Songpu 嵩溥 (? – 1845; Manchu official) in 1837.¹⁶⁴ The *haiguan* in Zhejiang continued to be controlled by provincial governors. In Jiangsu, the local provincial governors engaged Su 蘇 (zhou 州), Song 松 (jiang 江), and Tai 太 (cang 倉) circuit intendants (*daotai* 道臺) for the management of the *haiguan*. The Circuit Intendant of SuSong 蘇[州]松[江], Weng Zao 翁藻 (Han official), for example, was responsible for the tax office from 1736 to 1740.¹⁶⁵

Only in Guangdong, a system developed where superintendents (*jiandu* 監督) and governor-generals (*dufu* 督撫) managed the customs office jointly¹⁶⁶ – which makes the Guangdong administration even more complicated. Two general entries state:

“In the official system of customs collection there were cases of concurrent appointments and of acting on behalf of another position. In Fujian, the empire’s maritime customs was controlled by generals (*jiangjun*), in Zhejiang and Jiangsu by provincial governors (*xunfu*), and solely in Guangdong, Yue, a particular (office) for superintendents (*jiandu*) was established, who certainly bore heavy responsibility.”¹⁶⁷

“The taxing requirements of the *haiguan* in Yue have ever since been controlled and managed by officials of the rank of general, governor-general, or (provincial?) governor. But, after 1750 (*qianlong* 15), (the office of) a particular (specialized) Superintendent (*jiandu*) has begun to be established. This was announced as a precedent (*chengli* 成例).”¹⁶⁸

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- 161 *Shiliao xunkan* 34, p. 265a (He Shitai resp. Hešetai 和世泰), 14, pp. 478b–479a, 508a–b (Xin Zhu resp. Sinju 新柱), 10, pp. 360a–b (新柱), 40, 445a–446b (新柱); see also *Fujian tongzhi*, j. 18, p. 12b.
- 162 Cangqing was a general (*jiangjun*), cf. Xu Yipu 徐藝圃 *et al.*, *Zhongguo diyi lishi dang’an* (eds.), *Qingdai ZhongLiu guanxi dang’an xuanbian* 清代中琉關係檔案選編. (Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 1993), p. 204.
- 163 *Shiliao xunkan* 34, p. 265a (和世泰). Duke Hešetai was also involved in the British mission of William Pitt Amherst, Earl Amherst of Arakan (1773–1857) to Beijing in 1816. He replaced the Hoppo of Guangzhou, Sulenge 蘇楞額 (c. 1747–1827), who had already received the Macartney mission in 1793. Cf. Arthur W. Hummel, *Eminent Chinese of the Ch’ing Period* (1991), p. 967.
- 164 Manchu of the Plain Blue Banner. Cf. *Shiliao xunkan* 40, pp. 476b–477a (嵩溥); *Guochao qixian leizheng chubian* 國朝耆獻類徵初編, j. 325, pp. 1a–4b (QDZJCK 171 – 457–464). In the 4th month of 1837, the *haiguan* was temporarily managed by the Governor-general of Min and Zhe, Zhong Xiangjie 鐘祥接.
- 165 Cf. Huang Guosheng, *Dongnan sisheng haiguan* (2000), p. 50, according to document no 28 (*qianlong* 4) in the *Diyi lishi dang’an*, *Neige huke tiben quanrong* 內閣戶科題本宗, *Shuikeli*, *Guanshui*, “*Qianlong 4 nian xieli hubu naqin deng ti* 乾隆 4 年協理戶部納親等題”. Although theoretically the personnel should rotate every year, he was in office for four years. Also later, some officials were in office for at least two years.
- 166 Huang Guosheng, *Dongnan sisheng haiguan* (2000), p. 59.
- 167 *Yue haiguan zhi*, j. 7, p. 1b (430).
- 168 *Qinding Da Qing huidian shili* (*guangxu*), j. 240, p. 4b.

The *haiguan* officials in Guangzhou were consequently provided with particular competencies and responsibilities, a development which most probably has to be seen against the background of the Canton trade with Western powers. In the eyes of the Manchu court, the latter obviously deserved special treatment and a special eye was kept on foreign merchants from the West. This is substantiated by Qianlong's imperial decree of 1757 to restricting all foreign trade except that of Russia to Guangzhou (Canton) – presumably as a consequence of a request by local officials and merchants, though more probably as a result of merchant activities like that of James Flint (1720–?), a representative of the British East India Company.¹⁶⁹

Under the Qianlong Emperor maritime trade management responsibilities were to a great extent handed over to officials of the Manchu banner organization. In 1737, the Superintendent of the Guangdong *haiguan*, Šuhede 舒赫德 (1711–1777), petitioned the Emperor that the management of the customs offices should be given to officials of the Banner (*qi* 旗) organization. The emperor officially rejected this request,¹⁷⁰ but in reality did exactly what Šuhede had asked for – he was “apparently only wise enough not to write this in an official document”.¹⁷¹

Generally speaking, with few exceptions, the Qing court (until the *qianlong* era) sought to maintain a direct and central control of the maritime trade administration. The reforms in the *haiguan*-administration system should be regarded as the official response to the numerous problems, from the coordination of the various customs stations up to corruption. An alternative to central control, namely local autonomy, was obviously never relevant. Instead, the Qing rulers continued to see a government monopolization of maritime trade as the most secure and most efficient treatment to guarantee its functionality both in terms of security and tax revenue.

169 The “Flint case” certainly showed both the emperor and local officials the kind of trouble a foreigner could cause, especially if he, like Flint, could speak Chinese. Violating Qing law that restricted trade with the East India Company to Canton, James Flint had proceeded to Zhejiang. He was refused entry to the local port, escorted back to Canton and sentenced to three years imprisonment in Macao. Yet, he had managed to trade at Ningbo in 1755, other foreign merchants following his example. We should also keep in mind that by 1760, a corporation of nine merchant guilds had been established to monopolize European trade exclusively at the port.

170 *Huangchao zhengdian leizuan*, j. 89, p. 9a.

171 Chang Te-ch'ang, “The economic role of the Imperial Household in the Ch'ing dynasty”, p. 256. Šuhede himself had been Director of the Imperial Household Department (*neiwufu langzhong*) and the Supervisor of the *haiguan* in Jiangsu in 1699 (*kangxi* 38).

Conclusion

With the death of the Kangxi Emperor, Marc Mancall sees “the end of experimentation and encouragement in the field of foreign trade for well over a century”, the following Yongzheng Emperor issuing an edict which ordered the strict control and, if possible, prevention of Chinese emigration abroad or the return of overseas Chinese back home.¹⁷²

Actually, however, this edict only refers to Chinese emigration and, in the widest sense, to national security. I did not find any substantial evidence that the Yongzheng, and later at least the early Qianlong Emperor, possessed a negative attitude towards foreign trade and would therefore officially have discouraged it. Both Emperor Kangxi and Yongzheng doubtlessly regarded the province of Fujian especially under strategic security calculations. They considered Fujian as the most strategic coastal region and believed that local authorities should make every effort to stabilize conditions there. But this should not be considered an anti-foreign commerce attitude. Both Kangxi and Yongzheng transmitted a positive attitude towards trade and commerce, as we have seen above, although the latter’s reign is characterized by a determined return towards “agrarianism” together with his emphasis on a social structure according to the traditional four classes.¹⁷³ He issued a decree that “by establishing the customs offices, the government aimed at facilitating commercial intercourse and not distressing the merchants, benefitting the people, not causing them hardship”¹⁷⁴ and attempted to keep under control the so-called surplus quotas (*yingyu* 盈餘) levied by the customs administration.¹⁷⁵ The subsequent Qianlong Emperor was quite obviously more confident of his country and its glorious history; he intended to further strengthen China’s autarky and make the country again more independent from resources gained via foreign trade.¹⁷⁶ Nevertheless, we should not hastily consider his self-confidence (regarded as arrogance by Western powers) and sino-centrism as an anti-foreign-commerce-attitude. Also during his reign period both maritime and coastal trade continued to flourish.¹⁷⁷

Qing China’s maritime trade policy until the end of the *qianlong* reign (1795) was consequently influenced by both political and economic considerations. From a political perspective, policy depended largely on real or imagined threats from abroad. The events surrounding Zheng Chenggong and his followers, the maritime prohibition of 1717, or the above mentioned imperial decree of 1757 may all serve

172 Marc Mancall, “The Ch’ing Tribute System” (1968), p. 88.

173 Ramon H. Myers and Yeh-chien Wang, “Economic Developments, 1644–1800” (2002), pp. 607–608.

174 *Da Qing lichao Shizong Xianhuangdi shilu* 大清歷朝世宗憲皇帝實錄. (Taipei: Huawen shuju, 1964), j. 10, p. 4a (158).

175 *Fujian tongzhi*, j. shou, 3, pp. 27a–28b (*yongzheng* 7) includes the discussion on the usefulness of rich merchants and their role in tax income; cf. Ng Chin-keong, *Trade and Society* (1983), p. 190.

176 This tendency can for example be observed in the copper trade with Japan. Cf. Angela Schottenhammer, “Japan – The Tiny Dwarf?” (2009), pp. 331–388, esp. p. 373.

177 Ng Chin-keong, *Trade and Society* (1983), p. 184 *et seq.*

as examples. Possibly, the Qianlong Emperor may later have been influenced by events around the Gurkha who had invaded Southern Tibet in 1790. The Manchu general Fukanggan 福康安 (d. 1796) defeated the Gurkha and repulsed them back to Nepal. Having returned to Beijing, he reported that the British had supported the Gurkha in their plans to invade China from her southern border. This message may have sensitized the emperor's attitude toward maritime trade and induced the central government to reconsider security calculations. But, as recent research has shown, it remains more than questionable whether the Qianlong Emperor was actually aware of the fact and its consequences that the British already stood at China's borders with their military.¹⁷⁸ In this context, also the argument that the events around the Gurkha did influence Qianlong's reaction to the Macartney mission of the British in 1793 in a negative sense should be treated with caution. In a letter to the British King formulated according to Qianlong's concepts, for example, the Grand Secretariat (*neige* 內閣) explicitly spoke of the "respectful and obedient" (*gongshun* 恭順) behaviour of the British.¹⁷⁹

Simultaneously, however, the Manchu rulers – by the way similar to many of their predecessors – had at least a faint idea of that trade and commerce, given free reign and removed from any control, could undermine their own political and socio-economic underpinnings. Different to their ruling "colleagues" in contemporary Europe, the Chinese emperors did not give more and more leeway to trade, commerce and merchants and they did not begin to regard the success of merchants' interests as the basis of their national wealth – a development which in Europe peaked during the French Revolution.¹⁸⁰ In this respect, the Qing rulers' treatment of trade was not so much due to the fact that they were Manchus and not Chinese but that they were statesmen, emperors – with completely different politico-economic concepts from many of their representatives in contemporary Europe. This is also the decisive reason why the Qing rulers considered maritime

178 Li Chensheng 李晨升, "Pileng' kao – 1840 nian yiqian Zhongguo dui Yingguo zai Ximalayashan diqu huodong de fanying 披楞考 – 1840 年以前中國對英國在西馬拉雅山地區活動的反應", in Luo Xianyou 羅賢佑 (ed.), *Lishi yu minzu – Zhongguo bianjiang de zhengzhi, shehui be wenhua* 歷史與民族 – 中國邊疆的政治、社會和文化. *Ethnohistory: Politics, Society and Culture in China's Frontier*. (Beijing: Beijing Shekeyuan, 2005), pp. 260–276, in particular 267–268.

179 Li Chensheng, "Pileng' kao" (2005), pp. 267–268.

180 In Europe during the Middle Period the Emperor increasingly handed over to the merchants the liberty to enrich themselves according to their own criteria. Impressed by the sheer quantity of wealth which merchants amassed, the ruling emperors regarded this wealth as a tool of their own enrichment also, namely by benefitting from the merchants' capital via taxes. The enrichment of merchants was in fact so successful that together with the bourgeoisie, a class which developed from the merchant class, they eventually represented the greatest part of national wealth, on which the aristocratic rulers had become dependent. Subsequently, merchants and bourgeoisie no longer saw and accepted why they should support and nourish an emperor, a person who in their eyes only sponged from their wealth. Instead, in the French Revolution they took over the power of state themselves.

trade primarily in “political terms”.¹⁸¹ But under this political umbrella, economic considerations were always important.

Summarizing the course of the above mentioned range in the administration of maritime trade, from political and military security calculations on the one hand to commercial profit interests on the other, the following picture results: whereas strategic security calculations were the centre of attention during the consolidation of the Qing empire, revenue criteria became increasingly important after the lifting of the maritime trade ban in 1684, with only a brief interim phase in Fujian from 1717 to 1727. During the *yongzheng* and *qianlong* reign periods the positive attitude of the Court and the government towards maritime trade basically remained. A vigilant eye on maritime trade and commerce was nevertheless always maintained; principally national security calculations dominated, but only from time to time and under particular conditions they resulted in an interruption of trade. And its supervision remained to a very large extent a privilege and monopoly of the Manchu ruling élite.

181 This is the expression quite accurately applied by John Lee, “Trade and Economy in Preindustrial Asia” (1999), p. 18.

Appendix 1

Li Shizhen 李士楨 (1619–1695), “*Qing chu shibo Aomen banlu shuiyin shu* 請除市舶澳門旱路稅銀疏”, in *Fu Yue zhengluo* 撫粵政略, *j.* 2, pp. 41a–43b (211–216)¹⁸²:

“I (Li Shizhen) request the establishment of a special authority (*zhuanguan* 專官) to ease the merchants in order to satisfy the requirements of the state (*guoyong* 國用). On the 15th day of the 2nd month of 1686 (*kangxi* 25) according to the Provincial Administration Commissioner of Guangdong, acting concurrently as Tax Circuit Intendent, statements and arguments like the following by Wang Zhenyuan 汪震元 were respectfully discussed and reached me; according to the observations of this official, the foreigners in Xiangshan 香山, Haojing 濠鏡, Aomen and solitary islands in the sea undertake maritime trade as a living and do not know how to cultivate the soil. Before the proscription of maritime trade, according to the old regulations, when overseas vessels (*yangchuan* 洋船) reached Ao(men), an official was dispatched to impose taxes according to the size of the ships (*zhangchou chuanxiang* 丈抽船餉).¹⁸³ At the same time, both Chinese and foreign (*Tang yang* 唐洋) commodity taxes (*huoshui* 貨稅) were imposed on domestic merchants (*neidi shangmin* 內地商民), who came to Guangdong to trade. These were the so-called “*boxiang* 餉” taxes (and they were meant for military supplies). Since *kangxi* 1 (1662), maritime trade was prohibited and in Guangdong (Yue) and (Ao)men (the population) has been removed (from the coast), (the regions) have been established as outside (i.e. forbidden) territories (*jiwai* 界外), and taxation (*chuanxiang* 船餉) was stopped.¹⁸⁴ It was continued because countries from the Western Ocean sent tribute and the envoy Pinto Pereira da Faria 本多白勒拉 (1678)¹⁸⁵ observed that the foreigners in Guangdong suffered under the maritime prohibition and went to the authorities to make a protest against that. In the 12th month of *kangxi* 18 (1679) an official report of the Ministry of War (*bingbu* 兵部) was agreed upon and sent forth in which the matter of the uninhabited, solitary islands (off the coast; *guzhou* 孤洲) (located) outside the borders of Guangdong and (Ao)men was discussed. Thereupon, the Director of the Ministry of Justice, Hongniha 洪尼哈, came to Guangdong to make a personal investigation and permitted the trade at border stations along overland routes (*banlu jiekou* 旱路界口).... As for trade along the sea routes, one has to wait until the sea pirates have been extinguished.... At that time the maritime trade prohibition had not yet been abolished, and Guangdong and (Ao)men still belonged to the forbidden territory, which was prohibited for domestic merchants who were not

182 Li Shizhen 李士楨 (1619–1695), “*Qing chu shibo Aomen banlu shuiyin shu* 請除市舶澳門旱路稅銀疏”, in *Fu Yue zhengluo* 撫粵政略 by Li Shizhen, *j.* 2, pp. 41a–43b (211–216), in *Jindai Zhongguo shike congkan sanbian, di 39 ji* 近代中國史科叢刊三編第 39 輯, fasc. 382–384. (Taipei: Wenhai chubanshe, 1988). We also possess a second entry entitled “*Qing huo shibo banlu shuixiang shu* 請豁市舶旱路稅餉疏”, in *Fu Yue zhengluo* 撫粵政略, *j.* 2, pp. 59a–61a (247–252), in which Li discusses this problem.

183 See footnote 70.

184 This refers to the evacuation of the coastal areas.

185 The mission of Pinto Pereira da Faria should be considered as an attempt by Macao to seize once again the initiative in Luso-Chinese relations and to negotiate for the city’s continued physical and economic wellbeing in Beijing. Cf. Jorge M Dos Santos Alves, *Macao* (2007), p. 109, for further details.

permitted to go to Guangdong. As for foreign ships that came to Guangdong, ships with Western merchant commodities that came to Xiangshan 香山 County, the goods were transported on overland routes to the border stations for trade. It was not permitted that (the ships) take the sea route. The *shibo si* was ordered to impose taxes that were actually overland taxes (*banshui* 旱稅). Hence there was a new regulation fixing the (tax) amount to 20,250 *liang*. From *kangxi* 19 until 23 (1680–1684), what was received as duty was entered into registers for reporting to the authorities to serve for military supplies (*chongxiang* 充¹⁸⁶餉).

After by Imperial Favour the maritime trade prohibition was lifted, the trading ships all transported (their goods) by sea, which facilitated merchants. The merchants were delighted and active. As for the office imposing the *boxiang*-taxes, officially appointed as high Commissioners were the Director of the Ministry of Personnel (*libu langzhong* 吏部郎中), Irgetu 宜爾格圖 [a Manchu], and the Vice Director of the Ministry of Revenue (*hubu yuanwai* 戶部員外), Cheng [Keda] 成克大 [a Chinese]; who came to Guangdong to supervise and manage the *shibo si*'s overland taxation (*guanli shibo si banlu boxiang* 管理市舶司旱路船餉). After 1685 (*kangxi* 24), the (authority to) levy taxes was handed over to the Customs Office (*guanbu* 關部) [the Superintendent of Customs at Guangzhou]. Passing a request of myself and others to remove this item (*qing chu e* 請除額),¹⁸⁷ the Customs Office discussed [the problem] and said that the silver *liang* imposed by the *shibo si* actually was a duty paid for unloading goods overland (*luodi banshui* 落地旱稅) and that one should follow the old taxation (regulations). Because of the duties that had to be paid for unloading goods in the provincial capital Guangzhou and at Foshan 佛山, the original tax amount had increased to over 5,000 silver *liang*; in the following years (these taxes) were levied by a commissioner-in-chief (*dashi* 大使) attached to the local Tax Collection Bureau (*shuikou si* 稅課司);¹⁸⁸ but taxes imposed on commodities (traded along) overland routes (*banlu huowu shuixiang* 旱路貨物稅餉), which were imposed by the *shibo si* before maritime trade was permitted, are in fact overland taxes (*banshui*). Nowadays, after the opening of overseas trade, the commodities of foreign vessels and domestic Chinese merchants who come to Guangdong are all transported by sea to reach Aomen (Macao) directly and are no longer traded overland. But the overseas taxes (*haishui*) which are being imposed on maritime trade by the customs offices (*guanbu* 關部)¹⁸⁹ today are equivalent to the overland taxes (*banshui*) formerly imposed by the *shibo si* (*jinri guanbu suo shou zhi haishui ji yiqian shibo si suo shou zhi banshui* 今日關部所收之海稅即以前市舶司所收之旱稅). The customs offices (*guanbu*) have already transferred their archives and taken over the management.¹⁹⁰

.....

Examining the tax revenue (*shuixiang* 稅餉) of the *shibo*, according to the old regulations it was originally a duty imposed on overseas exports and imports of Chinese

186 Instead of “充”, “充 yan” is used in the original.

187 This obviously refers to the above mentioned overland taxes.

188 These were agencies of the territorial administration down to the district level, responsible for overseeing trade, issuing trade permits, and collecting various kinds of taxes imposed on merchants; during Ming and Qing times, it was headed by a commissioner-in-chief (*dashi*). Cf. Charles O. Hucker, *Official Titles in Imperial China* (1985), no. 5498.

189 In the given context, the term “*guanbu* 關部” seems to refer generally to the *haiguan* offices responsible for the collecting of taxes on maritime trade.

190 *Fu Yue zhenglue*, j. 2, pp. 42b–43a (214–215).

and foreign commodities and at the same time a tax according to the size of the ships; after the maritime trade prohibition in 1662 (*kangxi* 1) this kind of taxation has subsequently been stopped up to the period of the 12th month of 1679 (*kangxi* 18), when the Ministry of War discussed again (the case) of foreign ships from the Western Ocean and permitted their trade at border stations (*jiiekou* 界口) along overland routes. An imperial decree following this agreement [subsequently] permitted the trade on overland routes. As for the sea route, one [decided] to wait until piracy in the waters had decreased. The said governor-general and governor (*dufu*) respectfully requested to follow the [proposals] as shown in the records. Thereupon, the foreigners from Aomen and domestic merchants (*neidi shangren*) all transported their commodities along land routes to the customs border stations (*guanqian jiekou*) in order to trade with each other. Since 1682 (*kangxi* 21), all duties (*choushou*) that were collected according to the regulations by the *shibo tiju si* were stopped. The taxes levied were in fact the maritime taxes (*baishui*) of former days. In respect of the maritime trade prohibition, by imperial decree, intercourse had been permitted temporarily along land routes in order to assist livelihood. ...

Since 1685, the merchants go directly to the superintendents (*jiandu*) to pay taxes (*nashui*). (But) the commodity taxes (*huoshui*) imposed today by the superintendents on incoming and outgoing overseas vessels are in fact the same as the commodity taxes levied formerly during the maritime trade proscription by the *shibo si* at the border stations (*jiiekou*) along land routes.”¹⁹¹

Appendix 2

Yue haiguan zhi 粵海關志 by Liang Tingnan 梁廷楠 *et al.* (1796–1861). (Taipei: Wenhai chubanshe, 1975), *j.* 8, pp. 3b–4b (535–538):

“To open the coasts for maritime trade means this will be of advantage to the livelihood of the people along the coasts in Fujian and Guangdong. If the people in these two provinces are very wealthy and have abundant things (to live on), commodities will circulate in every province, and (the other provinces) will subsequently also greatly profit therefrom. But to sail overseas is nothing that poor people can do. It is wealthy and influential merchants who trade and shift their possessions. If they are meagrely taxed, it will not be such a heavy burden on the people. Now, we (proceed) in accordance with what the Director [of the Ministry of Personnel (*libu langzhong* 吏部郎中)], Irgetu 宜爾格圖, has memorialized: According to the regulations fixed for every tax station (*guan*), tribute items and money (*kuanxiang* 款項) at bridges, fords and other similar places are all exempt from taxes. Why is the levying of taxes (on maritime trade) regarded as different? On the contrary to establish additional tax stations at places where originally no taxes were levied – this, I am afraid, will annoy and trouble the people. You (should therefore) instruct and order the high officials (*jiu qing* 九卿), imperial superintendents (*zhanshi* 詹事) and supervising secretaries and censors (*kedao* 科道) to draw up a memorial in a special conference saying that the Ministry of Revenue (*hubu*) and other Yamen offices follow the imperial edict which has been discussed repeatedly, that the officials in the newly established tax offices in

191 *Fu Yue zhenglue*, *j.* 2, pp. 59b–60b (248–250).

Fujian and Guangdong shall only levy taxes on trade and commodities loaded by the incoming and outgoing overseas vessels.¹⁹² As for the traders and the commodities on ships and carriages inside the harbour and on the bridges and rivers, commodity taxation (*choufen* 抽分, that is taxes to be paid in the form of commodities), will be stopped. In addition, tax regulations (*zhengshui zeli* 征稅則例) shall be issued for each port, and the supervising officials (*haiguan jiandu* 海關監督) shall consult about the in- or decrease (of taxes) and fix the regulations accordingly. This memorial was followed.

In 1685 (*kangxi* 24), the Ministry of Revenue (*bubu*) reported on a decree in which it is said among other things that our Ministry (*benbu*) permitted the Ministry of Rites (*libu*) to consult about the opening up of the interior [of the country] (*kainei* 開內) and to find out and fix the regulations, such as that all foreign countries paying tribute may [accordingly] not exceed three ships.

Today the imperial edict was proclaimed that the commodities foreign tribute ships carry as cargo shall collectively be taxed according to the meaning of being gracious to foreigners (*shoushui yu rouyuan zhi yi* 收稅於柔遠之意) and not [using] tallies (*fu* 符). One should in the future fix the number of tribute ships from foreign countries to three. As for the commodities ships carry with them within China, the taxation will be stopped. As for the rest of the merchants who come for private trade, trade will be permitted. The officials of our Ministry shall according to the regulations levy taxes on trade and traders. This has been drawn up as a proposition during the conference.¹⁹³

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192 This implies that only those merchants who could afford overseas trade were taxed and, thus, were relatively wealthy.

193 *Yue haiguan zhi*, j. 8, pp. 3b–4b (535–538).

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