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Salt and Revenue in Frontier Formation: State Mobilized Ethnic Politics in the Yunnan-Burma Borderland since the 1720s

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Abstract

This research reviews the formation of the Yunnan-Burma frontier since the 1720s, when the Qing government reformed the administrative systems from chieftainships to official counties in the middle and southern Yunnan mountains areas. One of some crucial political changes was the policy of salt revenue which directly stimulated large scale ethnic resistance in the salt wells' region. However, the social political context of continuing ethnic conflicts was not only rooted in the reshaping of the salt consuming districts, but also rooted in social changes in the Yunnan-Burma borderland because of increasing Han Chinese immigration and their penetration into mining, long distance trade and local agriculture. In order to successfully control mountain resources as the base of revenue, the Qing government continued to gradually integrate native Dai chieftains into official counties. Local resistance continued and reached a peak from the 1790s to the 1810s. Pushed by the Qing government and with the collaboration of different social actors, the synthesized mobilization of frontier formation had made ethnic politics a main style of social political reconstruction, even if commercial exchange, long distance trade, and demographic reshaping also continued to be mixed with ethnic politics as another layer of the Yunnan-Burma frontier formation.

Key words: Yunnan-Burma borderland, salt revenue, native chieftaincy, ethnic minorities, migration.

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Introduction

Based on different styles of historical archives and field data, this paper focuses on various social changes in the southern Yunnan mountains area and will briefly review the extension of the state frontier formation of Qing's China from central Yunnan to the present borderland between Yunnan and Burma. Since the transformation from Ming to Qing dynasties in China, followed by the political transformation from Tunngoo dynasty to Alaungpaya dynasty in Burma, the borderland between various Burmese kingdoms and the Qing Empire had been undergoing a long term social transformation and radical ethnic mobilization. The terrain of the mountains areas from central Yunnan to northern Burma gradually became a ground of political change from the north to the south. Some native Dai chieftaincies were abolished, and new official counties or prefectures were established in the period from the 1720s to 1880s, until the British colonialists occupied Upper Burma. In this paper, the author analyses some historical elements, including the political integration of native chieftains into official counties and the revenue reforms over mountain resources, especially the extended reliance on salt revenue and tea plantations. Additionally, some related social changes will also be discussed, such as the exploitation of silver and copper mines, the change of land property rights and the policy of carrying out household registration due to the demographic change brought about by new migrant settlers from the inner provinces of China. All those elements will be put into a local context of mobilization of native ethnic minorities and their responses to social political changes, over two centuries, in the formation of the Chinese southwest frontier.

In this paper, the author argues that, political transformation with the increase of Han immigration and, following that, the changed ways of controlling local resources, set the conditions of ethnic mobilization for native ethnic minorities since the early Qing dynasty in the Southern Yunnan frontier. The extension of the Qing state, by setting up the new system of official administrative counties to replace chieftainship, followed by Confucian education and military control, directly stimulated local resistance by its policy of salt revenue collection in the beginning. The frontier formation as a historical process had been seriously rooted in a political transformation starting from the original change in the salt policy, in the 1720s. Since then, a historical dynamic full of ethnic mobilizations, due to continuing conflicts between the native indigenous groups and the Qing government, had been maintained time after time, from the 1720s, then to the 1740s, the 1790s, the 1820s and the 1880s. Chains of social changes on this borderland could be regarded as stages of frontier formation from the official interior toward the exterior by shaping the borders toward the Burmese side. In the same period of time, long distance trade between the two sides had been well developed, too, with the flourishing and the declining of the mine industry. Also, the changing of the caravan transportation routes was rooted in these political reforms. The shaping agency of ethnic politics was the extension of Qing state, and the social consequence should be the extension of borders through the integration of Dai chieftains into official counties, until the coming of British colonialists in the 1880s in Burma. In general, elements of trade, the mine industry and transportation, continually worked together, pushed forward the transformation of the political systems and stimulated local ethnic resistance, while the borders of chieftains and counties were also continuing to extend from the category of "interior" to the category of "exterior" between Yunnan and Burma during the whole Qing dynasty. The historical and shifting term of "interior", or *neidi,* means the systems of counties, and the latter term of exterior, or *bianwai,* means the systems of Dai chieftains in the basins, surrounded by mountains with its loose control over mountains tribes, under the Meng

and the Quan administrative units. This long term, continuing re-demarcation therefore established a dynamic mechanism of frontier formation by the Qing officials, to integrate some peripheral areas on the borderland into an official sphere of the Qing government, closely and gradually. This article discusses the process of Qing state borders extension between political systems, causing more and more remote areas and native indigenous groups to be mobilized into a framework of ethnic politics on the frontier; we could define this process as frontier formation. Through frontier formation, on one hand, more and more remote Dai chieftain areas were gradually integrated into official counties; on the other hand, more ethnic identities were mobilized or were confirmed, as the social consequences of frontier formation. The categories of "interior" and "exterior" were equal to the administrative categories of native chieftains and official counties along the border demarcation between the two systems, and the demarcation of the borders was gradually moving forward, from the Southern Yunnan to the Burmese side, in Qing dynasty. Meanwhile the border crossing mechanisms, like trade, migration, or caravan transportation therefore performed their roles of "middle ground actors" as well, the term contributed by Gerisch.[1] However, elements like local commercialization and demographic reshaping, had added some important elements in the changed policies of revenue, land property rights, official education and civil examinations, and these elements had worked closely together with different political interests like the Qing officials, guest settlers and native indigenous such as the rise of Luohei, in the formation of the Yunnan-Burma frontier. Thus, ethnic politics had developed to become a framework for local construction and provides the historical context for current complex ethnic relationships on this borderland.

In this research, the theory of middle ground, contributed by C. Patterson Giersch, will be revisited. The idea of middle ground successfully explained the flux in goods in a continuing mechanism of trade and transportation between the interior and exterior regions or units, in an official term often used by the Qing officials. However, the political resistances, mobilized by the state's penetration in order to control local resources, also provided another perspective beyond the view of middle ground, which could be regarded as a relatively "frozen flat" concept, and which obscured the focus of a historical dynamic in frontier formation. Furthermore, the author wants to check political changes, and points out that the rise of new ethnic identities or social institutions framed by the state, mobilized ethnic politics over the struggle for resources like salt, tea or farmland, and provides an alternative perspective to explain why the colonization of Upper Burma finally became a historical occasion: to set the possibilities of the borderline between China and Burma at its current timing and spatial situation. Therefore, the Asian borderlands were determined.

As Giersch points out, the Yunnan-Burma frontier should be regarded as a middle ground and a borderland. He pointed out that, this frontier became a middle ground which newcomers and natives adapted and sought to use or manipulate for each other, so that the frontiers were often defined by two criteria: they were borderland without clearly defined political boundaries, and, as the middle ground, they were places of fluid cultural and economic exchange, where acculturation and the creation of hybrid political institutions were contingent on local conditions.[2] In this way, different people worked as social actors who shaped this region into a place of fluid cultural and economic exchange under local conditions. Giersch also emphasizes that, this

[1] C. Patterson Giersch (2006), *Asian Borderlands: The Transformation of Qing China's Yunnan Frontier*, Cambridge (London: Harvard University Press).

[2] C. Patterson Giersch (2006). *Asian Borderlands: The Transformation of Qing China's Yunnan Frontier* (Cambridge, London: Harvard University Press) pp. 3-4.

region was a borderland because "the Qing claimed specific indigenous territories within it, but they never demarcated clear political boundaries."[3] If we check the history of continuing integration of the Dai chieftains into official counties and then the setting of new chieftains in the mountains of the Luohei, historians would become aware that, the extension of boundaries was also between official counties and Dai chieftains. In detail, this systematical change also meant that, the demarcation of salt revenue districts changed, land property rights shifted, and the official administration of justices changed. Following this, the establishment of military camps, Confucian education and civil examinations took place. Of course, it was a long term, continual reformation through chieftain integration, or *gaitu guiliu*. Without checking these political conditions and demarcations, we could not understand why, since the 1880s to the 1960s, the Wa lands became a negotiable boundary between the governments of both sides, Burma and China, or the rise and fall of the Luohei, the later Lahu, as a new ethnic category as well as a political system which resisted the coming of the Qing state and their next move into Burma and Thailand.

In this context, the issue of fluid economic exchange should be added to the discussion about middle ground for commercialization in Southwest China, South China and Southeast Asia. Beyond the idea of middle ground, Giersch also contributes that, copper and cotton could be two cases of goods through which it is possible to check the details of circulation, which implies long-term relations of repeated flows that transform society. Long distance circulation shaped historical changes, including remarkable population growth and urbanization in areas labeled "peripheral", and networks and institutions that facilitated circulation differed from place to place. The overall tendency was for states and merchants to innovate and develop techniques for facilitating circulation across the long distances and rough topography of the regions.[4] Additionally, Bin Yang also checks the theories of the state-sponsored mining industry as stressed by James Lee,[5] and he points out that, James Lee's studies have demonstrated that a local, central-peripheral system was established in 18th century, in which the periphery provided grain for the urban centers. But Skinner's approach about the macro-regions of China is based on physiographic features regarding Yunnan-Guizhou as one of five, small, fairly autonomous central-place systems, which naturally characterized each unit,[6] while James Lee's approach is based on political economy, where imperial power played a decisive role in shaping the economy. The regional central-peripheral structure was created within Yunnan, and the region also needs to be understood as part of an empire-wide, central-peripheral structure.[7] Briefly, if the argument of middle ground is based on a long-term and holistic perspective, we must agree that the Yunnan-Burma borderland had been a mixed terrain, with different identities and political systems, and full of commercial fluxes. But once we review the details of these fluxes, we see that not only was it a historical process of ethnic mobilization and cultural change for these ethnic groups along the Qing state extension in the frontier formation, but also, it had been a painful dynamic for the indigenous, like the mobilized Luohei, who had struggled with the Qing officials and the Han settlers, when they were forced to give up their homeland. Therefore, the frontier society

[3] Ibid, p4.

[4] C. Patterson Giersch (2011). 'Cotton, Copper, and Caravans: Trade and the Transformation of Southwest China', in Eric Tagliacozzo and Wen-Chin Chang (ed.), *Chinese Circulations: Capital, Commodities, and Networks in Southeast Asia* (Durham and London: Duke University Press), p. 39.

[5] James Lee (1982). The Legacy of Immigration in Southwest China, 1250-1850, *Annales de demographie historique,* (1982): 279-304.

[6] G. William Skinner (1977). *The City in Late Imperial China* (Stanford: Stanford University Press).

[7] Bin Yang (2009). *Between Winds and Clouds: The Making of Yunnan (Second Century BCE to Twentieth Century CE)* (New York: Columbia University Press).

sets a historical space, both for indigenous groups and the new settlers, in their mutual acceptance or rejection on the frontier encounter.

For some historical background of chieftainship in Southwest China, based on James Lee's contribution, during the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, one-third of Yunnan province, at least one-half of Guizhou province, and well over three-quarters of the entire area of southern Sichuan province were under native chieftainship control.[8] The native chieftain system (*tusi zhidu*) was a unique administrative institution created in the Yuan dynasty and extended to the Ming and Qing dynasties.[9] The Ming and the Qing courts conferred native chieftain status upon a tribal leader, and classified him as a civilian native chieftain (*tuguan*) or a military chieftain (*tusi*). A military native chieftain's area of jurisdiction was located along or beyond the officially recognized political border, and he was expected to command a sizable military force in order to assist in the protection of official counties.[10] However, David A. Bello argues that the Qing state relied on chieftainship administrative space in South Yunnan, because the Han Chinese's vulnerability to malaria precluded a more stable and direct Qing official presence. So, the ethnic administrative spaces were intended to keep the Han and the ethnic identities separate, as products of the interaction between disease and human agency.[11] However, the author points out that, the issue of malaria had been a virtual barrier which could never have stopped Han Chinese immigration in South Yunnan, and also never stopped the Qing officials from managing the extension of official counties by abolishment of native chieftains according to their strategies of revenue and military control over mountains resources, with the increasing Han Chinese population in the frontier chieftains areas.

Immigrants and their interactions with the natives

As the Ming dynasty's newly conquered terrain, efforts to control native powers in the Southern Ailao Mountains had been an on-going task for the Ming government since the 14th century. Several wars removed political threats posed by rebellious native chieftains. These wars included the war with the Luchuang power led by the Si family (1311-1448), and the war with the rebels in Wuding area in central Yunnan. Finally, the Ming government controlled the main transportation routes and cities in the Yunnan basins. In this process, the Ming government resettled waves of Han Chinese migrants from Jiangxi, Hunan and Jiangnan provinces, into Yunnan, and established military stations, ordinary farmer camps and businessmen camps. However, in Ming dynasty (1368-1644), the official administrative system had not yet extended into the southern part of the Mekong and the Ailao Mountains-Red River line. The region beyond Yun county, Ailao Mountains and the Red River was called the River's Exterior (*Jiang Wai),* which was under the jurisdiction of native Dai chieftains, and, as the inhabitants belonged to the category of barbarian households, they did not need to be registered in the government household records, and there was no need for native inhabitants to pay any direct land taxation to

[8] James Lee (1982). Food Supply and Population Growth in Southwest China, 1250-1850, *The Journal of Asian Studies*, **41:4**, 711-746.

[9] Gong Yin (1992). *The Chieftain System of China* (Kunming: Yunnan Nationalities Publishing House).

[10] See also John E. Herman (1997). Empire in the Southwest Early Qing Reforms to the Native Chieftain System, *The Journal of Asian Studies*, **56:1**, 47-74.

[11] David. A. Bello (2005). 'To Go Where No Han Could Go for Long': Malaria and the Qing Construction of Ethnic Administrative Space in Frontier Yunnan', *Modern China*, **31:3**, 283-317.

the Qing government.[12] But, some so-called barbarians were active in the mountain area beyond the Ailao Mountains. Later, after the Qing government put pressure on the rebellious power of Wu Sangui, in 1680, Zhang Yunsui was appointed as the Yunnan-Guizhou governor. He sent a report to the emperor, Kangxi, about his policy for frontier transformation, in which his investigations concluded that there were enormous numbers of Han immigrants floating between the mines in Yunnan, but most of them came from Huguang and Jiangxi provinces. Many mines were in areas controlled by Dai chieftains, such as the Munai Silver Mine controlled by the Menglian Dai chieftain. The Dai chieftains and exterior barbarians had traded with inland people and one of the most important commodities was cotton. Because there were no cotton plantations in Yunnan, the main cotton supply came from Mubang (the Hsenwi and Lashio areas in today's Burma) and people from Yunnan's interior land were hired to work at these cotton plantations in the dry season, then the businessmen transported the cotton harvest back. Other goods like wood, elephant tusks, feathers and medical herbs also came from Burma. For many reasons, people had moved in an endless stream towards the "barbarian exterior" in chieftain areas, and, historically, this had been a long-term economic tradition in Yunnan.[13]

But after the 1700s, large numbers of Han immigrants moved into the mountainous areas beyond the mines, due to the population increase in China and after the Qing government changed its revenue policies from the poll tax to hidage. According to James Lee, the Chinese population increased threefold from 150 million in 1700, to 450 million in 1850. In the same period, the estimated population in Yunnan and Guizhou increased fourfold, from 5 million to 20 million, which means that some of the newly increased population in the inner provinces had shifted to the southwest mountain frontier. Miners accounted for 10 percent of immigration in the 1750s, but it increased to 30 percent among immigrants in 1800, approaching about 0.5 million. In Yunnan province, immigrants made up around 20 percent of its total population, about 20 million inhabitants. [14] Before the Qing government started carrying out the policy of reform of the native chieftain system (*gaitu guiliu*) in the 1720s, there were already large numbers of immigrants who had moved into the southern Ailao Mountains, and it was an important factor for policy making when officials realized that, when more Han immigrants settled in these mountainous areas, it could guarantee the success of social transformation from chieftain jurisdiction to the official county system.

Some records show that more and more Han immigrants who came from Zhejiang, Jiangxi, and Hunan settled in mountain villages, mixing initially with the indigenous minorities. Because Han immigrants were consummate at exploiting their own interests during their interactions with minorities, they finally took over the non-Han's farming land.[15] Under the squeeze of new settlers, more and more native non-Han minorities were forced to move south to areas in the middle of the southern Ailao Mountains region. Up to the 1850s, Han immigrants accounted for more than 60% of the local population. [16] In parallel to the process of immigration settlement in

[12] Huang Yuanzhi (1968). *The Draft of Yuan Jiang Gazetter* (Taipei: Chengwen Publishing House); Nitui (1992). *The Chronicle of Yunnan (1846)* (Kunming: Yunnan University Press).

[13] Zhang Yunsui (2003). 'The Zhang Yunsui's Reports to the Emperor', in Fang Guoyu (ed.), *Yunnan Historical Materials Collection (1751),* volume 8 (Kunming: Yunnan University Press) , p. 683.

[14] James Lee (1982). Food Supply and Population Growth in Southwest China, 1250-1850, *The Journal of Asian Studies*, **41:4**, 711.

[15] Wu Daxun (2003). 'The Notes about Southern Yunnan (1782)', in Fang Guoyu (ed.), *Yunnan Historical Materials Collection* (Kunming: Yunnan University Press), volume 12, pp. 17-18.

[16] Fang Guoyu (2003). The general study on the Han immigration in Yunnan in Qing dynasty, in Fang Guoyu (ed.), *Yunnan Historical Materials Collection,* volume 11, (Kunming: Yunnan University Press), pp. 675-681.

southern Yunnan, the Qing government had also extended the official administrative system based on calculations of possible revenue income, which could come from the tea and salt trades. In the southern Ailao Mountains, some famous tea plantations, known as the Six Tea Mountains in the eastern part of the Mekong River, were scattered, especially along the Buyuan River, and some salt wells were scattered along the Weiyuan River to the west of the Tea Mountains. The salt rich Weiyuan River is an eastern tributary of the Mekong River. [17]

Another issue of social change was the development of long distance trade and mining in Yunnan. There was a war between the Qing government and Burma's newly established Alaungpaya dynasty, from 1766 to 1769. A cease-fire agreement was signed by the two sides in 1790, and the Qing withdrew its armies to Yunnan. In 1790, the Burmese king finally sent a representative team to pay tribute to Beijing, which meant their hostilities were over.[18] After several years of wars and social chaos on the borderland, trade quickly recovered and developed. Meanwhile, the mining industry, deep in the mountains on the borderland, also recovered and quickly approached its peak after the war. [19] Several hundreds of thousands of miners were floating among the mines, such as silver mines like Maolong, Munai, and Xiyi, and some copper mines like Ningtai and Lutang. Transportation routes between mines and cities like Yongchang, Dali and Chuxiong in Yunnan, and Hsenwi, Bhamo and Ava in Burma, had been well maintained.[20] In 1780, the Qinglong emperor ordered the Yunnan officials to officially re-open the trade routes with Burma, even though trade, though banned, had never stopped during the war years. In fact, some businessmen from Jiangxi and Hunan provinces were very active in cross-border trade and they did not care about the government ban at all during the war. After the war, more people got involved in these businesses. [21] The main goods that could be imported from Burma were cotton and medicinal herbs, but the Burmese side was seriously reliant on exported silk, paper and needles from Yunnan in everyday life.[22] In order to control these trade routes, the Qing government set up two customs posts at Mianning and Nujiang in western Yunnan in the same year.

More and more interior settlers came from other provinces like Jiangxi, Hunan, Sichuan and Guangdong, or came from the big basins of Yunnan and extended their businesses into the mines. Compared with native populations, the Han population had seriously increased in the chieftain area in Southern Yunnan before 1740s. The new comers not only got involved in the mining industry and long distance trade, but also got involved in agriculture in the mountains. Therefore, their interaction with native indigenous people became more deep and frequent than before. Most significant records about their relationship with natives were from conflicts over farming land. When Han settlers came to the chieftain areas, in the beginning they would rend farmland from the native villagers, then they would learn how to make themselves rich by cheating the mountain people, such as only selling their tofu or pickles to the natives on credit, to cheat them

[17] Zheng Shaoqian and Li Xiling (1840), *The (Daoguan) Gazetteer of Puer Prefecture* (Kunming: Yunnan Provincial Library).

[18] Zhuang Jifa (1982). *Research on the Military Feat of Qing Gaozong* (Taipei: The Forbidden City Museum).

[19] Ma Jianxiong (2011). Shaping of the Yunnan-Burma frontier by Secret societies since the end of the 17th century, *Moussons*, **17:1**, pp.65-84.

[20] Ma Jianxiong (2011). 'Shaping of the Yunnan-Burma frontier by secret societies since the end of the 17th century', Moussons, **17:1**, pp. 65-84.

[21] Yunnan Provincial History Institution Complied (1985). *Collection of Historical Materials Relating to Yunnan in the Qing Veritable Records*, volume 4 (Kunming: Yunnan People's Publishing House), p. 786.

[22] Yunnan Provincial History Institution Complied (1985). *Collection of Historical Materials Relating to Yunnan in the Qing Veritable Records*, volume 4 (Kunming: Yunnan People's Publishing House), p. 786.

through usury. Both the Qing officials and the Dai chieftains called these settlers the guest people (*ke min*) or floating people (*liu min*). "They seduced the barbarians with their wine, food and beautiful clothes, bankrupted the barbarians by lending them silver at unaffordable repayment terms, usury. The result was that the barbarians deposited their farmland to the new settlers first, and then sold them their fields for a cheap price. In this way, farmland rented from the barbarians was finally converted to belong to the guest or floating people. And, if there was any recourse by the barbarians, which meant sending for the officials, the guest people would performed the role of undertaking the costs of the whole lawsuit for the natives, because the guest people could lend them the silver needed for law suit costs, but all these costs had to be paid back by depositing their farmland to the guest people after the case was finished."[23] In this way, cheating natives and letting them borrow through usury became a very effective way to occupy the indigenous people's farmland, according to the reports sent from Yunnan governors to the emperors. But, the condition was, that only in the areas where the farmland was defined as being a marketable property item could this kind of cheating be done.[24] Or, in another words, if the settlers came to an area where the farmland was not allowed to be sold, the Han immigrants could not cheat the natives as easily because the chieftains were still very strong and could control their commoners. Therefore, political transformation between the two systems was crucial for the immigrants and the Qing officials, whether the silver should be accepted as payment for their tax or not. However, the penetration of silver and copper as currency at the markets was an important step that brought the non-Han minorities closer to the Qing state, as they needed the silver to pay tax, and the copper coins to use as the currency media in local commercialization. These two factors of marketable land property and the use of silver linked with social transformation could benefit the settlers, and could become an important motivation for Qing officials in their reform planning.

After more and more immigrants moved to the southern Yunnan mountains, in general, since the 1720s, some inherited Dai chieftains were abolished. After that, county governments were established in the Zhenyuan and the Jinggu chieftains in Puer Prefectures, and the Mengmian in Shunning Prefecture. The Qing government extended its official power at the border between the southern Mengmeng chieftain and the Mekong, from the 1720s to the 1740s. However, this border was extended again in the 1880s, and encroached on the western part of Mekong River, in the Menglian chieftain area, and the Wa lands. The background to this frontier formation process was the rapid increase of Han settlers from the inner provinces, when the natives could not protect their living resources, like their farmland, and when they needed to pay more tax then before. The conflicts between the native groups, no matter whether they were mountain or basin residents, against the guest settlers had become serious. In these conflicts, the Qing officials normally stood by the side of the Han settlers, because the Qing officials also aimed to enlarge their revenue base through political reforms, but it partly depended on the number of Han immigrants, or the size of marketable farmland available for the new comers. In this way, we can judge that the Qing government and officials were the protectors of the Han immigrants in the process of driving the natives away, toward the south through political transformation, and to abolish their collective farmland ownership. But on the opposite side, the natives were unified and depended on their resources of mobilization to protect their land and the mountains'

[23] Yunnan Provincial History Institution Complied (1985). *Collection of Historical Materials Relating to Yunnan in the Qing Veritable Records*, volume 3 (Kunming: Yunnan People's Publishing House), p. 572.

[24] Yunnan Provincial History Institution Complied (1985), *Collection of Historical Materials Relating to Yunnan in the Qing Veritable Records*, volume 3 (Kunming: Yunnan People's Publishing House), p. 572.

resources. This transformation did not seriously involve the miners, because the mines worked as individual communities and they were relatively isolated in the mountains. Normally, the miners societies focused on their industry and its commercial benefits by keeping the natives at a distance, and the miners were mainly concentrated at several separated localities. Therefore, the immigrants activate in mine exploitation and their penetration could have different social consequences, which might have been beyond the view of the Qing government. According to archives, the miners maintained a friendship with the natives, but the miner societies had become the motivated agency to mobilize more and more conflicts with the Qing government when the mining industry shrank. Many mining populations also converted to agriculturalists. Then more conflicts were created with native agriculturalists. Therefore, the frontier formation through the integration of chieftains into counties not only created prefectures like Puer, and counties like Mainning, but also extended the border between "exterior" and "interior" to the banks of the Mekong River and the mountains, with the extension of everyday interaction between the natives and the Han settlers.

Gaitu guiliu: Integration of Dai chieftains into official counties

The Mekong River (*lancang jiang*) crosses central and southern Yunnan and links the prefectures of Shunning and Puer, and the chieftain areas of Mengmian (*Mianning*), Mengmeng, Menglian and Cheli (*Sipsongpanna*) into a chain. Before the 1720s, the borders between the Dai chieftains and the official counties was still along the line of Yun county crossing the Mekong River in central Yunnan to the Mountains of Wuliang and Ailao, along the Red River to the Vietnam border. Along the southern parts of this line, from west to east, there were the Dai chieftains of Mengmian (the name changed to *Mianning* after reforms in 1747, and it is Lincang city today), Zhenyuan and Jinggu. To the south of these chieftains, there were some small basins which were branches of the Cheli chieftain, in the Simao area. In general, this area could be simply defined as the southern hinterland of the Ailao Mountains. The Qing government mainly extended its administrative county system from the 1720s to the 1740s in this region. After that, a new border between Mengmian county and the chieftain of Mengmeng was set. Then, along the Mekong River to the Cheli chieftain (see map) was regarded as the military border to defend the mountain people who were drawn from the interior counties. This extended border separated southern Yunnan into two parts: the newly established counties as the newly integrated interior; and the exterior Dai chieftains up to Burma, including the Dai chieftains of Gengma, Shuangjiang, Menglian and Cheli. Some more remote Dai chieftains were regarded as symbolically attached by Qing officials, due to their very loose ties with officials in the interior prefectures and counties like Puer and Shunning or Yongchang.

The continued extension of this border highlights the differences in the systems in terms of land property rights, household registration system and the revenue principles, as well as the military guard forces controlled by commanders stationed at Puer and Shunning. In the area of the chieftains, which official power still could not cover, the military force and judicial system could be indirectly controlled by Qing officials in Puer and Shuning as well. [25] Therefore, beyond the chieftains who could be loosely controlled by the Ming and the Qing governments, like the Cheli, the Gengma, the Menglian, another category of more "exterior" terrain was that of those

[25] About the chieftain army, see also C. Patterson Giersch (2005). Yunnan's 'Native Militias (tulian)' and the Qing Empire, *Ethnological Review*, volume 3, pp. 211-232.

Dai chieftains like Mubang, Mengmi, Mengken, who were closer to the Burmese kings. For the strongest frontier chieftains, like Gengma and Cheli, the Qing government sometimes provided financial support for their military forces, in case they were needed in defense against Burma. For instance, since the 1750s, the provincial government supported the Gengma Dai chieftain army, stationed along the Salween River, before and after the Qing-Burma wars when the Burmese kings were strong enough to attack these chieftains and the Qing army. In this situation, the miners were also temporarily organized as autonomous military forces and were jointly supported, with the chieftain army, by the provincial government of Yunnan, who paid them 3000 *liang* (about 5291 ounces) silver per year.[26]

However, even if there was a range of ties, from the strong to the weak Dai chieftains, with the provincial government or the Beijing court, the political and economic differences between the chieftains and the counties were significant, especially on the degree of Han settlers' interaction with their local natives. As new comers, if the Han settlers could not easily join in the collective communal life of the Dai communities in the basins, the non-Dai natives in the mountains could become their next targets. Hence, understanding the administrative system of the *Meng* in the basins and the *Quan* in the mountains under the chieftain is crucial. In the Dai chieftains in southern Yunnan, for instance, in Mengmeng (*shuangjiang*), Gengma, Menglian, Jinggu (*Weiyuan*) and Cheli (*Sipsongpanna*), *Meng* (or Mong), there was a second level administrative unit for tax and corvee in basins under the chieftain's office.[27] In the *Quan* system there were second level administrative units in mountains under the control of native heads, who were appointed or accepted by the chieftains. As the representative of mountains communities, heads of *Quan* should work as the agency for the chieftain to collect household tax from villagers, and pay a fixed ratio of the tax for the whole *Quan* area to the Dai chieftain. The name *Quan* was sometimes replaced by the name *Jiaoma* in Ximeng or *Hai* in Mengmian. This fixed tax paid by *Quan* was recorded as the "silver for mountains and rivers (*shan shui yin*)" in archives.[28] Inside the village community, a custom of autonomy for collective affairs, including the redistribution of collective farmland and the management of village affairs, as well as the selection of village heads, was normally practiced by a committee seat by including reputable elderly people, blacksmiths and ritual specialists along with the village heads.[29] But in the basins, the taxation system was a more complex one than that in the mountains. Normally farmland could not be sold, especially in the basins. The irrigated paddy was classified into three types: the official land (*guan tian*), the assigned land (*fen tian*) and the collective land (*zhai gong tian*). The chieftains assigned laborers to farm their official land as the corvee, according to a list of responsibilities of villages. Besides this official task, namely all farmland was distributed to villages by the chieftain himself, then the village committee re-distributed these lands to individual families if they were identified as members of this community.[30] The leading committee of the villages also

[26] Yunnan Provincial History Institution Complied (1985). *Collection of Historical Materials Relating to Yunnan in the Qing Veritable Records*, volume 1 (Kunming: Yunnan People's Publishing House), p. 282.

[27] Li Fuyi (2005). 'The *Meng* means administrative area lower than the level of county', in *The Letters Records of Fulu* (Tapei, Furen Book House), p. 128.

[28] Ma Jianxiong (2011). 'Historical Process in the *Bazi* Basin Environmental System during the Ming Period: A Case Study of the Zhaozhou Bazi Society in Western Yunnan Mountains Area, Southwest China' paper presented at The First Conference of East Asian Environment History, Tapei, Institute of Taiwan History, Academia Sinica and forthcoming in Ts'ui-jung Liu (ed.), *Resources Utilizations and their Impacts: Studies of East Asian Environmental History* (London: Routldge).

[29] Dao Decai (1992). *Concise History of the Dai in Shuangjiang*, (Shuangjiang: Manuscript), p108.

[30] Dao Decai (1992). *Concise History of the Dai in Shuangjiang* (Shuangjiang: Manuscript), p. 107.

had the power to assign some pieces of collective land to certain people, or to use the rental income to pay for the selected village heads or to be used for the costs of public affairs. All this farmland was recorded under the fixed ratio of land tax, under the names of villages and households. The villagers could use silver, tea or salt to pay the land tax to the chieftain.[31] Villagers should pay a certain ratio of their grain harvest as their household tax respectively, but all styles of land were unsellable.[32] The chieftains collected tax to maintain their army, their family life, to support religious ceremonies, to contribute to the emperors, and, for the Cheli and the Gengma, they should tribute to Burma's kings as well.[33] In other words, before the Qing government carried out the reform of the chieftains, because the farmland under these chieftains was not marketable, the political reform to establish counties on the chieftain lands was of greatest benefit to the Han settlers.

In general, in the area beyond the official counties, when the chieftain administrative system was still well controlled by the Dai chieftains in Mengmian, Gengma, Menglian and Cheli, because the large areas of farmland in the basins belonged to the chieftain office while the remaining parts belonged to the village collective or individual families, the Dai people and the communities in the mountains were mostly kept under this collective farmland property system. One of the purposes of integrating the chieftains into official counties was to change these official and collective farmland ownerships to make farmland rights become private and marketable after the government endorsed land property rights by issuing farm land certificates when household registration was carried out. In other words, the political reform, from chieftain to county, was not only to build a government controlled by state appointed officials, but also to practice a new system of taxation and farm land management. In order to make farming lands freely available at the market, the measurement of farmland would be the first undertaking after the inheritance power of the chieftains was abolished in the beginning, followed by the procedure to set up the stabilized tax ratio for pieces of farmland. The ratio of farmland tax should be stably attached to individual land pieces and recorded on a list. In this way, the farmland could be easily sold or bought, and the land tax was allocated to separate owners. Through this process, people should be registered according to their residential zones, and the registered households should be controlled by the heads of the residential units of *Bao* and *Jia*.[34] The household registration system therefore prepared an institution, from fixed corvee to land tax, as well as everyday management. In order to minimize conflicts in the basins after these reforms, the Qing government used to ban intermarriage between natives and the guest people in southern Yunnan, but it failed. For the natives, they could pay land tax more easily than before, one *sheng* (about 5000 g) per *mu* (666 m^2) under the Yi barbarian category, much lower than the Min

[31] Yang Zhu (2005). 'The Records of Tax, Corvee and Rituals of Gengma Chieftain' in Yang Zhu translated, *The Translation of the History of Gengma Chieftain* (Gengma: The County Bureau of Local Gazetteers), p. 53.

[32] 'Inscription on Prohibition of Chieftain Maladies in Mianning Military County', in County Bureau of Minority Affairs Compiled (1995). *The Ethnography of Nationalities in Shuangjiang County* (Kunming: Yunnan Nationalities Publishing House), pp. 359-361.

[33] Yang Zhu (2005). 'The Records of Tax, Corvee and Rituals of Gengma Chieftain' in Yang Zhu translated, *The Translation of the History of Gengma Chieftain* (Gengma: The County Bureau of Local Gazetteers), p. 42.

[34] 'Records about Yunnan in the Qing Code' in Fang Guoyu (ed.) (2001). *Yunnan Historical Materials Collection*, volume 8 (Kunming: Yunnan University Press), p. 127 & p. 178. All capitation of Yunnan were converted to be hidage in 1726, and "the barbarians (*yi ren*)" was one of two categories of household registration, another one was "the commoners", rather than the Han. In Mianning military county of Shunning Prefecture, and in Yong Chang Prefecture, intermarriage between the Yi (Dai) and the commoners (Min) household categories was banned in 1757. The Qing government wanted to separate the Hunan and Jiangxi guest settlers from the natives but this policy was not successful.

commoners or guests (morally the Han).[35] But the problem for the natives was that nobody could help them to defend themselves against the Han settlers, to stop them cheating them and taking their farmland away, after the political change.

In this reform, first the jurisdiction of chieftain was abolished. All criminals were to be sent directly to the county officials, and the chieftain army was disbanded. When a new county was established, the government should measure the farmland and register it, with the fixed tax ratio, piece by piece; then issue certificates to its owners. It was a good excuse for the officials in charge of the measurement to say that the old land owners were, or were linked with, the minority rebels, so that their land property was defined as rebellious property, and thus should be confiscated. After peasants were given their official farmland certificates, the land became marketable. Therefore, the integration of chieftains into counties was mainly a process to legitimize the residential rights of Han settlers in the chieftain areas.[36] After the reform was carried out, the chieftain families were sent to the capital city of Yunnan, or sent to Jiangxi or Jiangnan provinces, to separate them from their people. For example, when the chieftaincy of Jinggu, Dao Guanghuan, was abolished, the chieftain and his whole family were sent to Jiangxi in 1726, and ten years later, his sons were allowed to participate in the local civil examinations in Jiangxi.[37] Meanwhile, another result of reform in the chieftain area was the building of new, official schools. The quotas of official students (*xue e*) were issued by the court, to encourage local students to join the selection examinations to become officials. New official army camps, jails and granaries were built years later, and the military borders, therefore, extended further and further.[38] Thus, the previous exterior places were integrated to become interior places, after this re-demarcation.[39] The border between the chieftain and the counties had highlighted the different political treatments of the natives and of the new comers, in terms of education, religion, military force, jurisdiction and taxation. After that change, the Han settlers who had migrated to the inner areas were protected, the frontier of Qing state had been extended, and the natives were encouraged to follow the Han settlers.

In brief, the process of integrating chieftains into official counties, since the 1720s, in southern Yunnan, should be reviewed as a whole package of regional social change. Through this reform, the Qing officials could control more mountain resources. The new settlers from Hunnan, Jiangxi and other places could also join the competition for resources against the natives, and they were protected by the Qing government under the county system. These political reforms and competitions quickly became the pushing power of ethnic mobilization for their resistance, due to a different orientation in searching for political, religious and organizational means. The following conflict between the settlers and the native ethnic groups was seriously linked with the laws of farmland and governmental revenue in the re-demarcation between political systems.

[35] 'Records about Yunnan in the Qing Code' in Fang Guoyu (ed.), *Yunnan Historical Materials Collection*, volume 8 (Kunming: Yunnan University Press), p. 179.

[36] 'Title Deed for Land' in the County Bureau of Local Gazetteers of Shuangjiang compiled (1995), *The Gazetteer of Shuangjiang,* 'The Appendix' (Kunming: Yunnan Nationalities Publishing House), p. 911 and Qiu Tinghe (1994). *The Wuzhuang Collection* (Lincang: The Prefecture Bureau of Culture), p. 220.

[37] Yunnan Provincial History Institution complied (1985), *Collection of Historical Materials Relating to Yunnan in the Qing Veritable Records*, volume 3 (Kunming: Yunnan People's Publishing House), p. 649.

[38] Yunnan Provincial History Institution complied (1985), *Collection of Historical Materials Relating to Yunnan in the Qing Veritable Records*, volume 3 (Kunming: Yunnan People's Publishing House), p. 643.

[39] Yunnan Provincial History Institution complied (1985), *Collection of Historical Materials Relating to Yunnan in the Qing Veritable Records*, volume 3 (Kunming: Yunnan People's Publishing House), p. 650.

The policy of salt revenue and the control of mountain resources before and after the war with Burma

Before and after the setting up of new counties, from the 1720s to the 1740s, Qing officials had also faced great challenges about how to increase the production of melted copper and silver needed for the court, and how to transport this melted copper to Beijing or Yangzhou. It had been the most important job assigned to the Qing officials in Yunnan for about 100 years, in early to middle Qing. Huge numbers of immigrants were absorbed in the mines before they developed more close relationships with native groups. After the reform at Mengmian, its name was changed to Mianning, meaning "its peaceful Mengmian now". After the Dai chieftain was reformed into a county many native people, like the Dai and the Luohie, were drawn toward the south. Due to the distance between the official centers, like the prefecture seats of Puer city and Shuning or Mianning cities, the cost of management was different. The Yunnan governors used different policies to deal with mine issues, which were linked with the style of mine tax, migration management and transportation organizations, and to send the melted copper and silver to Beijing or other provinces. The influences of these policies on the natives were indirect, but it reshaped the mountains society deeply, especially the organization of secret societies among miners which had provided an important organizational mechanism for political mobilization and some of these miners became political and religious leaders of the natives later, to resist the Qing army and, later, the exploitation of Han settlers.[40]

One case of implementing diverse policies on mining was at the Ningtai Mine. This mine was exploited in 1741, in western Mengmian, several years before the reform. The prefecture government invested 50,000 *liang* silver to hire miners, and in the first ten years it produced more than 100,000 *jin* (50 tons) copper per year. Later, the old mine was exhausted but a new mine, the Lutang Mine, was found and replaced it. The prefecture officials took the income from the new mine to pay the fixed tax of the Ningtai Mine. It was regarded as having the same production and being based on the same costs until, in 1754, a new branch of Lutang was exploited nearby, producing about 100 tons of copper per year. Again, the prefecture government claimed that they had invested another 100,000 *liang* silver into this mine. The government had to buy all the produced copper and transport the melted copper out of the mine, then to Dali to make into coins. This style of official management was based on directly controlling the investment, the hiring of miners, and their transportation. Because the melted copper was transported by caravans, the government also needed to pay four *liang* silver, per 50 kg, for transportation. However, when another new mine was exploited, which was far away from Ningtai Mine, the Shunning prefecture officials just totally accepted the melted copper sent by the mine owners and paid them, in silver, the price of one *liang* (about 1.76 ounce) silver per 10 kg copper. Because the provincial government assigned a fixed quota for the Shunning prefecture they needed to produce 150 to 200 tons copper for coin making, per year. [41] We can imagine that, on the one hand, the provincial government had the very heavy task of producing copper and silver for the state and, on the other hand, the local government had to attract enough miners to work for the government, directly under official control or to find their own routes in

[40] Jianxiong Ma (2011). 'Shaping of the Yunnan-Burma Frontier by Secret Societies since the End of the 17th Century', *Moussons* **17:1**, 65-84.

[41] Liu Jing (2001). *The (Qinglong) Gazetteer of Shunning Prefecture (1761)* (Hong Kong: Tianma Publishing Company), p. 244.

the remote mountains, then sell their produce to the government or at the markets. Increasing the number of Han settlers was also a demand during the years when the mine industry rapidly developed, after the political transformation.

However, the most important change during the period from the 1720s to the 1750s was the policy about salt. Salt revenue performed an even more important role in social transformation on the frontier, through which we can find that, the reform from chieftain to county was not simply because the Qing government wanted to get more revenue. Additionally, at the same time, the Qing government also had to face the pressure of a population increasing in this frontier of rugged mountains, full of fluid goods and people. How should this society be managed, due to its very diverse groups and different political legacy? The reform of the salt policy was one way and it linked, with the chieftains and the counties, into a bigger social context. In 1720s, after the Qing set up the new Puer prefecture and controlled the salt wells along the Weiyuan River, the revenue base enlarged quickly. Again, after the reform of Mengmian, in 1751, the whole Shunning prefecture could be covered by the same salt consuming district. Since then, the prefectures of Puer, Shunning and some nearby counties and chieftain areas were reshaped into a new salt consuming districts system. Through this official consuming system, by selling the salt from Puer prefecture, the Yunnan provincial government could gain more stabilized salt revenue than before. [42]

In 1724, Governor Ertai took over the salt wells along the Weiyuan River, including the Anbang, the Engeng, the Baomu and the Xiangyan, and commissioned special salt officials at Weiyuan to control salt production at an annual rate of about 4,500,000 *jin* (2,250 tons), which provided for the needs of the southern Yunnan salt markets. It accounted for about 20 percent of the yearly provincial salt production. Through the official salt selling system, based on certain quota coupons for salt trade, the control of salt in these wells could generate additional salt revenue, more than 22,000 *liang* (1 *liang* = 50g) in silver.[43] In 1729, Governor Ertai established a new Puer prefecture to effectively control the tea plantations and salt wells, and new counties such as Zhenyuan, Weiyuan, Ninger, Talang and Simao in the region between the Ailao Mountains and the Mekong River. The domination of Puer prefecture was established after the Dai chieftains in Weiyuan and Zhenyuan were demolished. In the same year, Ertai set up an official central tea store at Simao, to control the tea plantations in the mountains and to trade with businessmen; the traditional style of tea trade was also demolished. Before that, businessmen coming from Jiangxi normally stayed at a Woni villager's home and bought tea from the Woni farmer. They could then sell the tea freely to Tibet and other places. Taking as an excuse the conflict between a Jiangxi businessman and a Woni village head, Governor Ertai sent an army to the tea-mountains, suppressed the Woni's rebellion and demolished their Dai chieftains. More than forty villages in the tea-mountains were seriously damaged and many Woni people were driven away to the western Mekong River.[44] After that, Ertai changed the tea trade into an official trade, permitted only in Puer. All tea farmers had to sell their tea to the official tea store first, and then the officials sold the tea to businessmen based on a coupon system similar to that in the salt trade system. After 1748, the Yunnan government required tea

[42] Dang Meng (2001). *The (Guangxu) Gazetteer of Shunning Prefecture (1904)* (Hong Kong: Tianma Publishing Company), p. 335.

[43] Ruan Yuan (2003). *The (Daoguang) Yunnan Gazetteer (1835)* in Fang Guoyu (ed.), Yunnan Historical Materials Collection, volume 12, (Kunming: Yunnan University Press), p. 564 & p. 592.

[44] Zheng Shaoqian and Li Xilin (1840), *The (Dao Guang) Gazetteer of Puer Prefecture*, volume 13 (Kunming: Yunnan Provincial Library), p. 17.

businessmen to apply for tea coupons from Lijiang prefecture. After taking these coupons from Lijiang, the caravan businessmen came to Puer to buy tea from the official tea store and moved the tea by caravan to Zhongdian to trade with Tibetan businessmen, or to sell to inner provinces. The government issued official coupons worth 3,000 *yin* (one *yin* means one coupon), each *yin* could buy about 78.4 kilogram of tea cakes, with the paid taxation of 0.32 *liang* silver.[45] So, the tea trade at Puer could tribute at least 960 *liang* (about 1,700 ounce) silver from revenue. After the tea harvest, some 235 tons of dry tea were provided to the market, per year.

After the salt and tea resources were controlled by the Qing government, the Dai chieftains in Zhenyuan, Weiyuan and Simao were totally abolished. Some of them were sent to Jiangxi province, far away from their home towns. A new land registration and taxation system was put in place under the official administrative system of prefecture and county; through this change more and more Han immigrants acquired land property rights after their farmlands were registered and land licenses issued, even though many immigrants got their land from the native people by usury or tricks. Therefore, the policy of reformation of the native chieftain system into the administrative system was an extending process before the beginning of political reform, and this process was also a means to gradually extend the boundary between the official administration and the native chieftains, into the southern chieftains' region. In general, this happened in the 1720s, south of the Ailao Mountains, after the Qing government gained control of the salt wells and tea plantations and after more and more Han immigrants resettled in the mountain areas; however, new land taxation followed, because a new land property rights system was set up so land measurement and registration could be carried out.[46]

After the Konbaung Dynasty was established in the 1750s in Burma, the Burmese armies attacked Mubang, Mengken and Sipsongpanna chieftains and reached the banks of the Mekong River. The Dai chieftains asked for protection from Qing court officials at Puer. Later, between 1765 and 1769, four wars were conducted against the Burmese, led by Yunnan governors and generals. The Qianglong emperor finally stopped the wars after Burmese kin signed an agreement to go back to their tributary relationship with the Qing emperor; the Burmese finally lost the wars. These were very expensive wars; they cost about 9 million *liang* silver, because of the long distances needed to travel on the transportation routes. The Yunnan government could afford a very large part of the costs for these unsuccessful wars.[47] The financial income from salt revenue in the 1750s reached 1.4 million *liang* (1 *liang* =50g), by selling about 37 million *jin* salt (1 *jin* = 500g) after the Puer prefecture was established.[48] However, the income from salt taxation was mainly used to pay the salaries of officials in Yunnan, but the wars with Burma also exhausted local finances. An investigation was held by the higher officers. The Qing officials needed to make their official annual evaluation and the policy on salt was also a part of this enquiry. All counties were divided into various "salt consuming districts" based on the convenience of mixed transportation. For instance, the salt wells along the Weiyuan River could provide the official salt consumption quota for prefectures of the Puer, the Yuanjiang and the

[45] 'The Tea Taxation of Yunnan', in 'Records about Yunnan in the Qing Code', in Fang Guoyu (ed.) (2003). *Yunnan Historical Materials Collection*, volume. 8 (Kunming: Yunnan University Press), p. 178.

[46] Ma Jianxiong (2007). Ethnic Politics in the Ailao Mountains: Reforms to the Native Chieftain System in the Early to Mid Qing Dynasty and the Mobilization of the Lahu Identity, *The Bulletin of the Institute of History and Philology*, Academic Sinica, **78:2**, 553-602.

[47] Zhuang Jifa (1982). *Research on the Military Feat of Qing Gaozong* (Taipei: National Palace Museum), pp. 269-324.

[48] Ruan Yuan (2003), *The Daoguang Yunnan Gazetteer (1835)*, 'Record on Food and Money', in Fang Guoyu (ed.), *Yunnan Historical Materials Collection*, volume 12 (Kunming: Yunnan University Press), p. 641.

Linan, along with some chieftain regions in western Mekong River, including the Sipsongpanna, the Gengma and the Mengmeng.

Ethnic conflicts mobilized as the response to the salt revenue policy and political reforms

In 1733, the Dai chieftains inland of the Ailao Mountains were led by Dao Xingguo, a chieftain in eastern Mekong River, to rebel. The military commanders of Puer led the Qing army to arrest them and their family members, a total of more than 500 people. Another 3,600 rebels were killed directly, and 43,600 natives from different ethnic groups surrendered.[49] The following year, in 1734, the native groups organized an uprising to resist the Qing government again. They were led by a Dai, Nanben, who declared himself to be a god, and more than 200 people joined the group of leaders to mobilize the native's resistance. Under the fierce pressure of the Qing army, Nanben was captured and killed, more than 8000 rebels surrendered, and more natives escaped to the western part of Mekong River to organize their further mobilization and resistance.[50] Until the 1730s, the region under the newly established Puer prefecture was stable under the control of the Qing government. After that, the mixture of religious movement or millennium, with political mobilization among different ethnic groups in the reform of native chieftains into official counties, became two aspects in the resistance.

In other words, salt tax was collected from different, delimited salt districts in Yunnan. This system set the base for local official budgets, and whether the local officials could collect their salt revenue smoothly or not would influence their annual evaluation, their promotion and their future. Once the Qing officials were faced with increased financial pressure such as the cost of supporting the wars, their strategy changed to collecting more tax by selling more salt. In the later period of the Qinglong reign, the Yunnan officials directly distributed their required revenue into the *li jia* or *bao jia* household registration lists of the counties, forcing the communal units to take on more salt taxation, which was called the Household Salt Tax, even if the villagers did not buy any salt or they could not afford the cost of salt for cooking. Therefore, people had to pay more salt tax whether they needed salt or not. Year after year, the officials distributed the imposed quota for restricted salt consumption, with unaffordable taxation, to villages throughout Yunnan. Meanwhile, the officials also tried to search for some private income through this restricted salt, such as by selling salt privately.[51] In 1790, in the mountains near the salt walls in Weiyuan and Ninger counties in Puer prefecture, the indigenous Luohei people, led by Zhaka, rose up against the official salt policies; it was their second rebellion since the salt wells and tea plantations had been taken by the government in the 1720s, but, for the first time, the Dai, the Luohei and the Woni cooperated together to destroy the salt wells and kill the officials.

Because the officials at prefectures and counties could not sell their full monthly salt quota, they changed methods to distribute this quota to people directly. In 1791, the salt officials at Aning salt wells even bought private salt (the salt workshop produced salt privately beyond their production quota) using the official budget

[49] Yunnan Provincial History Institution Complied (1985). *Collection of Historical Materials Relating to Yunnan in the Qing Veritable Records*, volume 2 (Kunming: Yunnan People's Publishing House), p10.

[50] Yunnan Provincial History Institution Complied (1985). *Collection of Historical Materials Relating to Yunnan in the Qing Veritable Records*, volume 2 (Kunming: Yunnan People's Publishing House), p. 10.

[51] Ibid., p. 564.

and then sold it to the counties, this will help to make extra money and to make up their deficit, meanwhile they accumulated more everyday salt quotas which could not sell out easily. Finally, they began to sell salt based on population registration. Anyone, including men and women, children and the elderly, had to pay this salt tax. The official runners fiercely forced the collection of tax from people. The rebellions first rose in western Yunnan by burning offices and killing the runners. The rebellions by the Luohei in Weiyuan were due to this issue, but the Governor Jianglan did not report the truth about the salt policy to the emperor, he just said that the Luohei had rebelled, led by Zhaka, and Jianglan arrested him, but Zhaka's followers escaped to hide deep in the mountains and then became robbers.[52]

When the Qing government carried out the policy of integration of the chieftains into administrative offices, by establishing the Puer prefecture in the area between the Ailao Mountains and the Mekong River in the 1720s, the Luohei rose up against this reform, especially the salt and tea policies, because they then needed to pay extra taxation to the chieftains. The Luohei tried to cooperate with the Dai chieftains and the Woni people, but failed and were then driven deep into the mountains in the south after several thousand people were fired on by guns and died.[53] Again, when the salt policy became worse after the wars with Burma in 1790, the Luohei burned the salt workshops and destroyed salt wells as they had done in the 1720s in the mountains they inhabited. Then the Qing governors sent more troops to kill the rebellious Luohei and other natives, and drove them away to the western mountains on the opposite side of the Mekong River. In the rebellions in the 1720s, the Dai chieftains at Zhenyuan and Weiyuan regions used to cooperate with the Luohei leaders to fight against the Qing army, but later, in the 1790s, the descendents of the former Dai chieftains, who were entitled to be township level military officers, became the leaders of the Qing troops in the fight against the Luohei. After 70 years, the previously resistant Dai chieftains shifted their loyalty towards the Qing government.[54]

Before the Ming dynasty, a historically significant process of identity construction was the shifting of Han Chinese immigrants to become non-Han natives. But since the Qing, Han Chinese immigrants from Jiangxi, Hunan, Sichuan or other inner provinces had gradually penetrated into the southern Ailao Mountains towards Burma, especially the mountainous area between the Mekong River and the Ailao Mountains, initially, then toward the western areas of the Mekong River. This process was also a process of frontier formation, by extending the demarcation between the Dai chieftain areas and the official administration counties in a southerly direction. This frontier formation was a complex mechanism mixed with flows of immigration, changing policies towards local resources such as salt, tea, cooper and silver, as well as the shifting and mobilization of ethnic identities in the regional mutual construction between the Dai, the Han, and the Luohei. Through the process of frontier formation, the demarcation between official administrative counties and the chieftain areas had extended from the Ailao Mountains to today's borderland between Yunnan and Burma in the period of time from the 1720s to the 1880s. It was also an extension of the Qing government's three-step policy to "destroy bandits," "offer amnesty and enlistment," and "transformation from chieftain to the

[52] Ibid., p. 564.
[53] Zheng Shaoqian and Li Xilin (1840). *The Dao Guang Gazetteer of Puer Prefecture,* volume 13, (Kunming: Yunnan Provincial Library), p. 17.
[54] Xia Ding and Xie Tiren (1838). *The (Dao Guang) Gazetteer of Weiyuan*, volume 5 (Kunming: Yunnan Provincial Library).

counties." [55] This process was based on the integration of Han immigrants into mountain society, followed by the withdrawal of indigenous people, and the reconstruction of the local political framework at the same time. Through this transformation, pushed forward by the Qing government, the officials and the government gained more and more benefits. The Qing state had extended its bases of revenue by controlling native resources, but, the Qing officials also gained more personal economic income and enriched their political power through this transformation. In general, it was an extending process of demarcation for different governances based on the dynamics of ethnic ecology in the middle-land of southwest China.

According to local records, in the 1840s to the1850s, after the Puer prefecture was established, the composition of residents in the mountains area, which used to be under a Dai chieftain's control, had seriously changed. For example, in Ninger county the native households accounted for only about 39%, in Simao county it was about 12%, in Weiyuan county it was 35%, and in Talang county it was about 50%. [56] The emperor Daoguang therefore required:

> Yunnan is a large terrain full of unexploited mountains and streams, therefore many poor people come from Hunan, Hubei, Sichuan, Guizhou and build their grass houses there, farming their corn by cutting down forests. These migrants are concentrated in three prefectures including the Kaihua, the Guangnan and the Puer. Please try to practice the household registration for them, and organize them into the Baojia household registration system. [57]

According to a local saying, it was a process of "the Han driving the Yi (the barbarians) away" following the governmental policies of "destruction" and "transformation". But at the same time, this driving away process has also been a process of Lahu identity mobilization. Before being squeezed by Han immigration and social conflicts, the Luohei was still not a significant group, according to local historical archives. The categories of indigenous people in the southern Yunnan mountain area beyond the Ailao Mountains used to be defined crudely into two: there were the Cuan and the Bo. "Even though Yunnan is known for its hundreds of barbarians, in general there are just two kinds of peoples, the Cuan and the Bo. The Cuan are inhabitants of the east and the Bo of the west."[58] Another method of classification used for non-Han indigenous peoples was to define them as the Pu, the Cuan, the Bo, the Luo, the Heni/Woni, the Xibo, the Bai and so on. For instance, "In Zhenyuan county, local peoples are all of the Pu and the Luo. Their custom is mainly based on their loose ties with the officials. Because their lands are lean, the Luo barbarian relies on their slash-and-burn farming."[59] Another piece of archive says, "The Kuchong is a branch of the Cuan and has been under the jurisdiction of Linan prefecture since the Yuan dynasty (1271-1368). Now they live in the Linan, the Yuanjiang, the Zhenyuan and the Puer prefectures." [60]

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[55] Wei Yuan (2001). 'The Records about the Chieftains Transformation in Southwest in the Yongzheng Reign (1846)', in Fang Guoyu (ed.), *The Yunnan Historical Materials Collection*, volume 8 (Kunming: Yunnan University Press).

[56] Fang Guoyu (2003). 'The Brief Study on the Han Chinese Immigration in Yunnan in Qing dynasty', in Fang Guoyu (ed.), *Yunnan Historical Materials Collection,* volume 11 (Kunming: Yunnan University Press), pp. 675-681.

[57] Xia Ding and Xie Tiren (1838). *The (Dao Guang) Gazetteer of Weiyuan*, volume 5 (Kunming: Yunnan Provincial Library), p49.

[58] Tang Cui (1990). 'The Records about Barbarians' in Tang Cui (ed.), *The Gazetteer of Yunnan (1799),* volume 13 (Kunming, the People's Publishing House of Yunnan), p. 312.

[59] Liu Weisan (2001). 'The Brief Gazetteer of Southern Yunnan', in Fang Guoyu (ed.), *Yunnan Historical Materials Collection*, volume 13 (Kunming: Yunnan University Press), pp. 330-332.

[60] Ibid., p106.

When the Qing officials had more opportunities to interact with the local peoples, they and some Han migrants began to produce more and more documents about the indigenous peoples. Since then, descriptions about indigenous groups have become more detailed and complex. In the earlier time of the Qing dynasty, groups like the Kuchong, the Luohei and the Pu were just some names among hundreds of indigenous groups. Later, some groups disappeared from the records and some of them rose to become more important due to their political struggles. In the conflicts over local resources, more and more groups got involved with the Luohei, and changed their identities to the Luohei in a political movement or identity mobilization. A new Luohei (the Lahu, as they call themselves) gradually absorbed many Han immigrants and some of them became leaders of the Luohei to fight with other Han, or the Qing officials.

According to local gazetteer records about "peoples" there used to be many indigenous groups in the mountains of the Puer prefecture and the Mekong River region, including: the Kucong, the Bo, the Dry Baiyi, The Flowery Baiyi, the Pu, the Chesu, the Black Pu, the Long, the Akha, the Man, the Three Strands of Hair, the White Woni, the Nuobi, the Limi, the Kawa, the White Luoluo, the Luohei, the Yao, the Kaduo, the Small Liemi, the Guzong and the Small Guzong and so on.[61] Through these records we can find that many recorded indigenous groups gave up their identities during the social mobilization to become 'another'. Even later, some peoples, like the Lahu and the Hani, have arisen from serious ethnic conflicts in the last three hundred years. Through social and identity mobilization, the Lahu became seen as a significant new ethnicity and continued to move forward in the southern mountains. Therefore, social and identity reconstruction reconfirmed the Luohei people and they became the Lahu, through their own volition, through the Five Buddha Districts movement, which provided a minimum framework for Lahu ethnicity. This ethnicity has created enough space for very diverse cultural behavior among the sub-identity groups under this Lahu ethnicity in a historical mobilization. Thus, we could remark that the Lahu has become a newly shaped ethnicity fused from different parties. Meanwhile the Lahu culture, the sub-identities and social structures, with their resettlements, have also been reshaped in the history of frontier formation. In a brief summary, in the context of social change since the 1720s, more and more indigenous groups, especially the Luohei recorded in Chinese documents, moved toward the southern and western parts of the Mekong River from the Ailao Mountains and Mianning basins. Even though some of them still remained in the Weiyuan and Simao Mountains areas, the majority of these resettled peoples were led, later, to reorganize their social order into a new social construction by Han Chinese monks. Their inhabitance has been called The Luohei Mountains in the official archives since the 1790s.

Conclusion

Re-demarcation as a continual process to extend borders between chieftains and official counties from central Yunnan toward the southern Yunnan-Burma frontier had been a long term process of frontier formation, from the 1720s to the 1880s, until British colonialists occupied Upper Burma. However, the original stimulation should be traced back to the time of mining industry development, the rapid development of long distance trade and the greatly increasing numbers of

[61] See also Liu Weisan (2001). *The Brief Gazetteer of South Yunnan (1881)*; Nitui (1992). *The Chronicle of Yunnan (1846)* (Kunming: Yunnan University Press); Wang Song (1826). *A Copy of (Daoguang) Yunnan Gazetteer (1829)*; Xu Shuhong (1732). *The Gazetteer of Jingdong* (Kunming: Yunnan Provincial Library). These materials described the so-call local barbarians before the Daoguan period (1821-1850) in the local contexts.

Han Chinese immigrants in this borderland. The process of political border re-demarcation highlighted political, social and cultural differences in communal life, land property rights, revenue and judicatures, especially the private farmland rights under the household registration *li jia* system, which changed the system of collective and official land rights practiced in the Dai chieftain basins and mountains communities, both in the *Meng* and the *Quan* system.

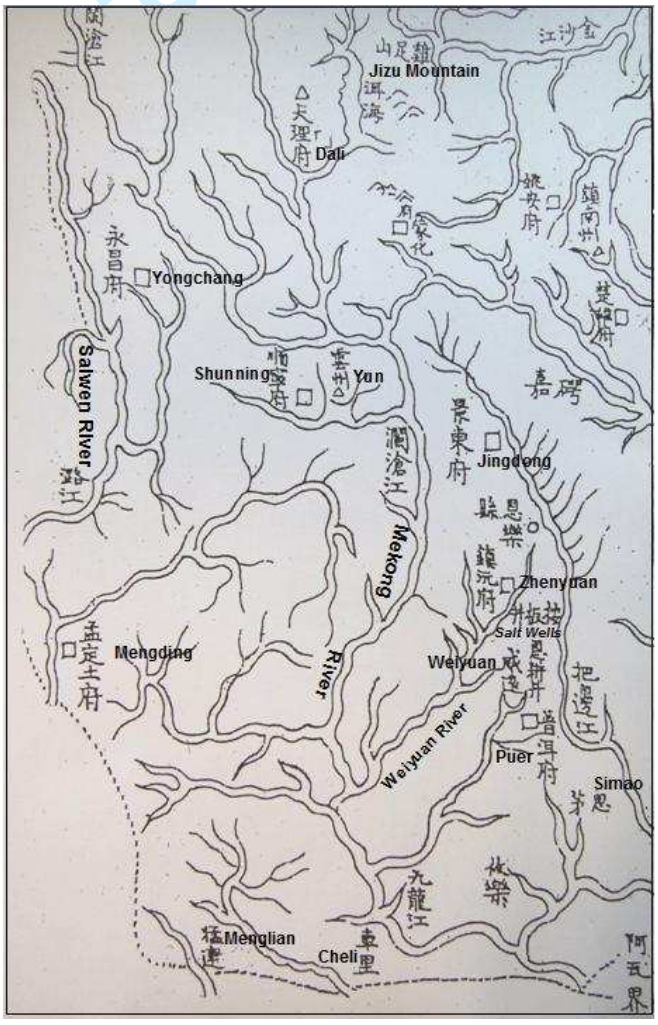
Among these political and social changes, the most significant issue was salt revenue and the competition over mountains resources, because the salt revenue, plus that from tea plantations, became the direct means to stimulate political mobilization among ethnic minorities, or between Han settlers and non-Han natives in the original scheme of things. However, in the following years of resistance under the framework of well mobilized ethnic politics, social mobilization and political resistance methods became more and more diverse, especially among the well mobilized Luohei. The social institution in the mountains communities was flexible and sustainable for more than two centuries since the conflicts over salt revenue happened after the 1720s. In the 1790s and the 1800s, local resistances against official policies had approached their peak, while the occasions for ethnic mobilization were set by the Qing government. The well mobilized native resistances, in and after the political reforms, therefore set out in the Yunnan-Burma frontier a framework of ethnic politics for native people both in the basins and in the mountains. The fluxes of goods, businessmen, and miners, were linked with the changes of political systems into an ethnic mobilization framework for resource competition, but it was a historical dynamic. There are two layers of social reshaping: one is the movement of goods and human resources across the systems or reshaped borders, the other is the extension of borders from the interior to the exterior, following the establishment of the state administrative county system throughout the whole Qing dynasty. Or, this tendency could be traced back to earlier in the Ming, in the whole process of southwest frontier formation in Southwest China. Meanwhile, not all fluid goods exchanged in this frontier represented the commercial flow, which circulated freely. Copper should be used to exchange with salt in South China and was controlled by the Qing government, according to the salt consuming directive demarcation, which was fixed with salt revenue and copper provision. Thus, some commercial goods should be regarded as having a dual purpose, both for the market value and for the state policy.[62] However, some goods like cotton and medicinal herbs were more freely traded than others like salt and tea. It depended on Qing government policy and their timely ability to carry out political reforms, or to manage mining, war, resistance suppression and the human agency for social movement and negotiation, in the case of Yunnan-Burma frontier formation.

In this way, we should revise or rethink our understanding about the formation of the Chinese frontier in the southwest, and the political ties between remote mountains, cities and political centers in Yunnan and Upper Burma, such as the idea of middle ground, macro-region, or trade circulation. The political borders' extension and ethnic mobilization had overlapped, and were mixed with the floating of goods and people at the cross border. Variables like ethnic politics and state extension, as well as the borders re-demarcation should be added to the theories of middle ground and the networks of circulation based on the local historical context. This research shows that different interest parties, including the Qing officials, immigrant miners, businessmen and settlers in different agricultures, had more close interactions with each other under state pressure or official policies, and could benefit more from political reform and border re-demarcations. Meanwhile, the Dai chieftains, the Luohei living in the Weiyuan River valleys,

[62] 'The code of currency' in 'Records about Yunnan in the Qing Code', in Fang Guoyu (ed.) (2003). *Yunnan Historical Materials Collection*, volume 8 (Kunming: Yunnan University Press), p. 203.

and many other indigenous groups, like the Woni and the Kucong in the Tea Mountains areas, were the parties who lost their living resources in the reforms. They were on the negative side in the frontier formation, and in response the natives cooperated with some of the Han immigrants in different ways. Some of them became a part of the newly established counties and were registered under the Yi barbarian household category, or even participated in the civil examination like the Dao Guanghuan, but some of them separated from the others, due to the newly set borders, and moved to the western Mekong River mountains to further their political resistance, led by some immigrants who became their religious masters in the next century. Different parties had cooperated, negotiated, rejected but also mutually constructed with each other in this long process of frontier formation. So, William Skinner's assumption about the Chinese market, arguments about middle ground and commercial circulation should also be put into the context of local everyday life and ethnic interaction in the setting and extension of political borders, mixed with migration and commercial fluxes, to be understood as a relationship between structuring and reformation agencies in dynamic frontier making.

Map 1. The Area of Southern Yunnan in the 1720s.
(From E'ertai ed. *Yunnan Province Gazetteer* [1736])



Map 2. The Area of Southern Yunnan Frontier in the Early to Mid Qing Dynasty. © Jianxiong Ma.