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A Study on the Interaction Between the Qing and Zheng Wars and the Changes in Chinese Strategic Culture: Based on the Neoclassical Realism Theory

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Abstract: This paper attempts to take the conqueror of Taiwan by the Qing Dynasty as an example to explore the process and results of the strategic cultural transformation of the Qing Dynasty. The Qing Dynasty was faced with intense geopolitics at the beginning of its founding. Therefore, the Qing Dynasty established a stable rule by establishing the eight banners. At the same time, it emphasizes the political situation that the Manchus people are the first and Han people are the second, and the resulting Strategic Culture is dominated by Land Power. However, after the outbreak of the Revolt of Three Feudatories, the previous Strategic Culture could not cope with the Zheng regime, which was dominated by Sea Power.

Keywords: Taiwan; Strategic Culture; Chinese Qing Dynasty strategy; Revolt of Three Feudatories; Land Power; Sea Power

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1 Introduction

Culture has always been an important variable in human society. Different races, people, classes, and groups have different views on culture. After human beings form a state, the state of external interaction behavior also has a special set of patterns and cognition, just like people. In the international community, the culture of the



state's external interaction is called "Strategic Culture," which dominates the cognition and behavior of the state's foreign policy. However, when we reflect on the history of international relations, we can find that most Strategic Cultures do not have a fixed explanation, which is largely due to the different cultural models dominated by different times. If we think further from here, can we say that China has had different Strategic Cultures at different times?

At the same time, we can imagine why the Strategic Culture of modern China did not have a Strategic Culture that attached importance to Sea Power until the 19th century. Before that, Chinese Strategic Culture always had a Strategic Culture of coastal defense and auxiliary Land Power, but why did the Land Power Strategic Culture dominate China for such a long time? On this basis, this paper will reflect on the strategic cultural change mechanism of the Qing Dynasty, which established the territory of modern China. This paper selects the case of the Revolt of Three Feudatories and Taiwan as a starting point to discuss why the Strategic Culture of Sea Power that once appeared in the Strategic Culture of China in the Qing Dynasty disappeared rapidly after Taiwan was included in the territory.

2 Literature Review

According to the topic discussed in this paper, Strategic Culture is that countries often change their behavior for different reasons, which causes changes in Strategic Culture. With the interpretation of a state's strategic choice, Strategic Culture has become an important research field in international relations. However, what is Strategic Culture and what is the driving mechanism for promoting the change of Strategic Culture? Up to now, the academic community still has no conclusion. At the same time, most of the research also focused on the lack of strategic cultural research on the Chinese Qing Dynasty in modern and contemporary times.

The concept of Strategic Culture was first proposed by Jack Snyder in the 1970s. Johnston and Kierman studied the Strategic Culture of the Chinese Ming Dynasty and defined it as "a complete symbolic system, which establishes a universal and lasting strategic preference by forming the concept of the role and efficiency of military forces in international affairs" (Snyder 1990: 50–65; Johnston 2015: 23–30; Kierman 2017: 33–38).

Including causal principle, language, analogy, and metaphor is a pioneer in the study of Chinese Strategic Culture. Since then, Johnston and Kierman believe that the core concept of Strategic Culture has been discussed from "determinism" and "instrumental theory" to the current "intervention variable" analysis. However, there is still no consensus on what strategic culture is. In general, although the relevant studies are as numerous as stars that cannot be reviewed one by one, the previous studies have not answered how to change the Strategic Culture. What is the driving mechanism of this transformation? What is the causal relationship between strategic cultural change and other variables? At present, only Song's Position Realism has carried out relevant research on this issue (SONG 2021: 25–35). In addition, most of the discussions on Strategic Culture focus on the modern nation-state, and less on the Strategic Culture of China in the pre-modern period, especially the Strategic Culture of the Qing Dynasty.

3 Research Objective

Before the conquest of Taiwan, the Strategic Culture of the Qing Dynasty was mainly dominated by the Land Power thought dominated by the Manchus. However, why did the Qing Dynasty choose the Sea Power thought dominated by the Han people after the Han people entered the center of Political decision-making? In addition, in the Early Qing Dynasty, facing the threat of the southeast Zheng regime in Taiwan and the northwest Dzungar Khanate Khalkha Mongolian League (准格爾-喀爾喀蒙古聯盟), why did the Qing Dynasty choose the strategy of the first southeast and then northwest? Based on this, this paper tries to answer how the geopolitical and political elites promote the change of Strategic Culture and then promote the political results of the conquest of Taiwan (Mosca 2019: 58–66).

The case selected in this paper can explain the transformation of the Strategic Culture of the Qing Dynasty. The key lies in the fact that the original Manchus Land Power culture of the Qing Dynasty could not effectively conquer Taiwan in this war, which led to the fact that the political decision-makers of the Qing Dynasty had to adjust their military system and political elites. Before that, the Qing Dynasty did not reuse the Han political elites on a large scale on the issue of state survival. Therefore, this paper believes that the case of “the Qing Dynasty conquered Taiwan” can effectively illustrate the causal relationship between the dynamic mechanism of strategic cultural transformation and the geopolitical and political elites (Palafox 2008: 22–31).

To clearly explain how the Strategic Culture of the Qing Dynasty promoted the conquest of Taiwan, we will establish an effective analytical framework to clarify the causal relationship and dynamic mechanism between the Strategic Culture and other variables.

4 Research Background

4.1 *Sea Power Strategic Culture:*

According to Alfred Thayer Mahan’s definition of “Sea Power,” this paper defines the Sea Power Strategic Culture as the ability of a state to master the marine strategy, which is very important to its development and security (Mahan 2019: 43–52; ZHANG 2013a: 52–58; Takeda 2021: 37–42).

4.2 *Land Power Strategic Culture:*

According to the definition of Sea Power, we define the Strategic Culture of Land Power as Land Power Strategic Culture as the ability of a state to master the land strategy, which is very important to its development and security.

4.3 *The History of China in the Early Qing Dynasty*

From the Qing Dynasty’s entry into the Shanhai Pass (山海關) to the Revolt of Three Feudatories (1644–1673), the Strategic Culture of the Qing Dynasty was dominated by Land Power, which came from the external



situation faced by the Qing Dynasty (Elliot 2001: 44–58; YI 2020: 51–57). In terms of land security, the Qing Dynasty faced the alliance of Mongolia in the northwest Khalkha and Dzungar Khanate, the collusion of Khoshut Khanate Mongolia in the southwest Qinghai Tibet region, Zheng Taiwan in the southeast, and Three Feudatories (ZHANG 2013b: 33–45). The complex geopolitical structure prompted the Qing Dynasty to pay special attention to the Land Power culture and integrate the Land Power culture with the behavior of political elites. As time went by, the behavior of the political elite gradually became a cultural symbol and shaped the diplomatic concept and interests of the Qing Dynasty (Palafox 2008: 45–53).

To survive in a highly competitive environment, the Qing Dynasty carried out the policy of “the Manchus first” (首崇滿州), relying heavily on military organizations composed of the Manchus. Emperor Shunzhi (順治帝) believed that “Royal ancestor, conquered China, entered the Shanhai Pass (山海關), raised (the Manchus) people from turbulence, ruled the Chinese area, all of these relying on the Manchus military strength, made the most contributions, and worked very hard” (LU 2017: 53–66).

Secondly, since the founding of the Qing Dynasty China, the Qing Dynasty has been actively engaged in the policy of marriage with the Horcin (科爾沁) Mongols, which aims to consolidate the control of the Qing Dynasty over Mongolia. For example, Emperor Shunzhi married Borzhigit (博爾濟吉特氏) in 1651 and granted her the title of Queen (QI 2022: 45–56). Shunzhi Emperor, the third emperor of the Qing Dynasty, the above-mentioned behavior shows that the elite political behavior of the Manchus has gradually become a cultural symbol. The cultural symbols of Land Power influenced the strategic choice of the Qing Dynasty during the Revolt of Three Feudatories, thus shaping the trend of the war (ZHANG 1997: 34–54; Hirano 2018: 64–77).

5 Research Method

This paper uses the process tracking method to try to find the causal mechanism within the case of the change of Strategic Culture. According to the definition of Strategic Culture, Johnston defines Strategic Culture as “a complete symbol system (causal principle, language, analogy, metaphor) generated according to the habitual behavior of political elites, which will affect state preferences and foreign ideas” (Johnston 2015: 33–45).

1. Test how the Qing Dynasty formed a Strategic Culture.
2. Test what the relationship between Manchu elites and Strategic Culture.
3. Check how they promoted the Strategic Culture of Sea Power within the Qing Dynasty after the Han elite participated in the war against the Zheng regime.
4. Check what the relationship between the Strategic Culture of Sea Power and the political elite of the Han people is.

6 Research Hypothesis

This article will take the neoclassical realism theory as the analysis framework. The theory recognizes that “policy choice” and “policy formulation” are no longer regarded as the direct results of system stimulation, and system stimulation needs to be investigated through the state and other actors as the center and recognized and

responded to in the specific internal political environment (Ripsman 2017: 25–34). Therefore, to explain the changes in external behavior, it is necessary to study the unique processes of cognition, decision-making, and policy implementation of countries/international organizations, which make them respond differently to similar stimuli. Therefore, we assume the mechanism process of strategic cultural change in the Qing Dynasty:

1. The whole causal mechanism is the dynamic mechanism of the strategic cultural change of the Qing Dynasty, which was caused by the Revolt of Three Feudatories. Stimulated by the system, which led to the change of the elite political power of the Qing Dynasty.

2. After the Han officials dominated the Southeast War, they changed the original threat perception and then changed the previous Strategic Culture dominated by Land Power.

3. The change in Strategic Culture also further changed the focus of the Qing Dynasty on geopolitics, and the change of focus led to the change of state identity cognition. This can also explain the Chinese legitimacy motive force of the Qing Dynasty’s conquest of Taiwan in previous studies.

4. After the political results of the conquest of Taiwan emerged, they were further fed back to the Qing Dynasty, thus forming a situation in which Han officials had a certain power over the Sea Power in the southeast and the power in the north was still in the hands of the Manchus officials.

5. The different situations of power in the north and the south can show that the Qing Dynasty had two sets of Strategic Cultures in the north and the south, thus burying the root cause of the strategic cultural dispute over land and Sea Power in the late Qing Dynasty.

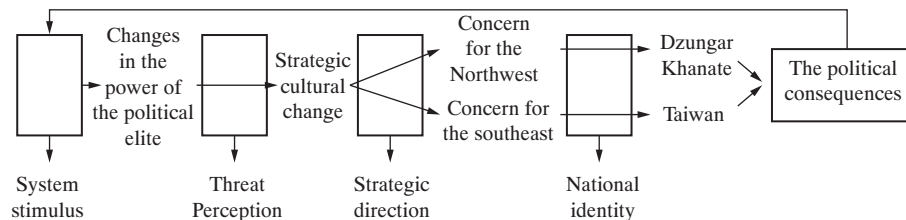


Table 1 Change of Strategic Culture and the Logic (Self-drawn by the author)

7 Results

7.1 Revolt of Three Feudatories and the change of Chinese security concept in the Qing Dynasty

In the Early Qing Dynasty, the ruling power of the Manchus was not enough to directly control the southern provinces, so the Manchu Dynasty adopted the policy of “ruling Han with Han.” With the Revolt of Three Feudatories in 1683, the huge threat prompted the strategic center of the Qing Dynasty to move southward. In the 12th year of Kangxi (1673), Wu Sangui (吳三桂) claimed that Three Feudatories and other states were oppressed by Qing Dynasty to fight against the Qing Dynasty, and the Revolt of Three Feudatories broke out. When the news of Wu Sangui’s rebellion reached the capital, it caused a shock to the Qing Dynasty, and even some ministers were frightened, Led by the great scholar Suo Yetu (索額圖).

At that time, the Qing Dynasty did not think that Wu Sangui and other local political forces would fight with



the central government, and they all had relatives as hostages in the capital. But when Qing Dynasty affirmed the Revolt of Three Feudatories, Suo Yetu demanded the killing of all the ministers who advocated the withdrawal of the vassal state to contain Three Feudatories (CHANG 1981: 14; YANG 2021: 110–120).

Zheng Jing also linked up with Wu Sangui and Geng Jingzhong (耿精忠) to move westward to capture the seven prefectures of Zhangzhou, Quanzhou, Tingzhou, Chaozhou, and Hui. In his reply to the letter, Zheng Jing publicly claimed that he was “To meet the three vassals” and that he would “fight against the Qing’s China with Three Feudatories.” As Three Feudatories and Taiwan’s Zheng regime in Taiwan jointly resisted the rule of the Qing Dynasty, the Qing Dynasty had to face dual threats from land and sea. To win the war against the alliance between the Zheng regime in Taiwan and the Three Feudatories, the Qing Dynasty decided to deal with it first on land security. At the same time, this part can also see the influence of the cultural symbols of the Land Power strategy on the state security concept of the Qing Dynasty (Matsuura 2009a: 108–115; Matsuura 2009b: 88–90; KANG 2016: 120–130).

For example, in diplomacy, to prevent Wu Sangui, one of the Revolt of Three Feudatories, from contacting the Tibetan regime (Perdue 2021: 45–73; YANG 2021: 56–66). Faced with the threat of rebellion, the Qing Dynasty chose to deal with this problem first with state security on land. The Qing Dynasty first allied itself with the Tibetan regime. Tibetan regime said that I had known the news of the Revolt of Three Feudatories. If they enter Tibet, I will arrest them and give them to you (LI 2000: 65–77).

Kangxi assigned five troops to Jingzhou, Yuezhou, Jiangxi, Zhejiang, and Shaanxi to deal with the war. For China, it mobilized all the troops that could be mobilized at that time. The troops stationed in Beijing were quickly launched, and the troops defending the border between China and Russia also went to the front. However, during the outbreak of the Revolt of Three Feudatories (三藩之亂), there was also the Buerni Rebellion (布爾尼之亂) in the north against the rule of the Qing Dynasty. After knowing the rebellion in the north, Emperor Kangxi quickly sent Marquis Tu Hai (圖海) and General Erza (鄂扎) and Mongolian allies to strengthen military preparations to cope with the expanding war between the south and the north (Guo Shi Guan 1987: 39–45; Okada 2016: 66–71; Okada 2021: 52–59).

Although the Buerni Rebellion took only two months to be put down, it highlighted the loose control of the Qing Dynasty over Mongolia in the northwest of Khalkha (喀爾喀). Facing the pressure from the North and South rebellion, the Qing Dynasty made a different choice. Suppose the original Strategic Culture based on Land Power was to march to the south of Khalkha after the end of the Buni Rebellion and strengthen its influence on Land Power in the northwest. However, the Qing Dynasty turned to the Southern Three Feudatories and Taiwan after the chaos. It can be seen that for the Qing Dynasty, the intensity of the Three Feudatories Rebellion’s impact on survival was higher than the threat of the Northwest (CHANG 2019: 113–125; Perdue 2021: 62–69).

At that time, the Qing Dynasty also requested affiliated Korea to send troops to participate in the crusade against the rebels from the north and south. However, the Korean rulers were worried about whether the Qing Dynasty had enough ability to defeat the rebels. In the end, the Korean leader said to the Qing Dynasty that he had made preparations to fight with the Three Feudatories, but in fact, Korea was watching the change in the situation in China (DING 2021: 51–55). The Qing Dynasty mobilized not only Prince Marcher Lord (Beile) but also the officers at the bottom of the Eight Banners, such as distant imperial relatives, Balkan Aisin Gioro (巴爾

堪), and other political strengths such as the Green Standard army (綠營兵) (The former Ming Dynasty army and other Han soldiers who surrendered to the Qing Dynasty) to fight (CHAO 1981: 120–135). The Revolt of Three Feudatories made the Qing Dynasty pay more attention to the Zheng regime in Taiwan and changed its perception of the threat to Taiwan (XIA 2015: 61–72; Iwai 2022: 54–60).

7.2 *Taiwan Zheng's regime threat and the rise of Sea Power Culture*

However, after the victory of the war with the Three Feudatories on land, the Land Power Strategic Culture held by the Qing Dynasty was not enough for the Zheng regime in Taiwan. The Qing Dynasty continued to fight against the Zheng regime in Taiwan in the southeast for years, and the policy of “surrender” and “siege” under the leadership of the Manchus Land Power culture failed to effectively deal with the threat of the Zheng regime in Taiwan (Okada 2021: 56–60).

First of all, under the influence of the Manchus-dominated Land Power Strategic Culture, the Qing Dynasty adopted the traditional Land Power thinking of “controlling the sea by land,” which focused on land defense and regarded the sea as a forbidden area. During the process from “political elite power change” to “strategic direction,” because the Zheng regime used its geographical advantages to confront the Qing Dynasty across the sea, the Qing Dynasty had no choice but to deal with the Zheng group for a long time. Therefore, under the Strategic Culture dominated by Land Power, the initial policy of the Qing Dynasty against the Zheng regime in Taiwan was “to follow the principle of appeasement, not to suppress highly” (SUN 2019: 71–75).

During the 21 years from the first year of Kangxi to the conquering of Taiwan in the 22nd year of Kangxi, 11 peace talks were held with the Zheng Group. In the first five negotiations, the Qing Dynasty always insisted on Zheng Jing's “obedience to Qing Dynasty” and “shaving hair and surrendering” (Coyett 2011: 110–125). At that time, Kangxi sent Mingzhu (刑部尚書明珠) as the main person responsible for the surrender of the Zheng regime in Taiwan. However, Zheng Jing complied that: “If China in the Qing Dynasty could treat me as a vassal state, like as Korea/Chosen rather than as a part of its territorial sovereignty. I would be willing to sign a peace agreement with China during the Qing Dynasty.” Zheng Jing insisted that: “We were not part of the sovereignty of the territory of China in the Qing Dynasty.” (ZHANG 2013b: 34–41; WU 2015: 35–38; WU 2017: 51–55).

As for Zheng Jing's statement of identity, Kangxi Reply harshly that: “Taiwan has been a Chinese territory since ancient times, can't compare the situation of Korea.” In the 12th year of Kangxi, the Revolt of Three Feudatories broke out, and Zheng Jing colluded with Geng Jingzhong to capture Zhangzhou, Quanzhou, Tingzhou, and other prefectures and local authorities (Clulow 2020: 101–105; Dash 2020: 64–68).

As the China Qing Dynasty was committed to fighting against the war in the southwest, China appointed Jieshu (杰書), who went to Fujian and was responsible for peace talks with Zheng Jing in the 16th year of Kangxi reign. Due to the inability to effectively combat the Zheng regime in Taiwan, the China Qing Dynasty made a big concession. They declared that: “Taiwan can pay tribute to China regularly like Korea, and China will stop attacking if Zheng recognizes Taiwan as a subsidiary of the Chinese Qing Dynasty.” (Iwai 2022: 100–107). In July of the same year, Jieshu sent another envoy to Xiamen, and he requested Zheng Jing tributing to China and stop the war to attack Chin's Qing Dynasty. However, Zheng said that: “the Chinese Qing Dynasty

must transfer to the Zheng regime Taiwan the sovereignty of the islands along the southeast coast of China and the resources stored by the four local governments.” (Iwai 2022: 120–133).

The negotiation between the Qing Dynasty and the Zheng Regime could not reach a consensus, so they could only continue to negotiate while continuing the war. In August of the 19th year of Kangxi (1680), Lai Ta (平南將軍賴塔), the general of Pingnan in the Qing Dynasty, said to Zheng Jing: “If Taiwan agrees to recognize Chinese suzerainty-ship and become a vassal state of China. Then Taiwan will not be attacked by China and can maintain peaceful relations with China like Japan and Korea.” Although the Qing Dynasty had made the biggest concession, finally, they could not adopt suggestions from each other. The peace talks broke down again (China Social Sciences Press 1996: 135–148).

With the rise of Zheng’s threat in the Qing Dynasty, the strategic consideration of Taiwan is increasing. Especially in terms of legitimacy, the Zheng regime in Taiwan was completely denied by the Qing Dynasty in comparison with the request of Korea and replaced by the Chinese identity of the Zheng regime in Taiwan. For example, in September of the eighth year of Kangxi’s reign, Emperor Kangxi’s imperial edict pointed out that “Zheng Jing is a Chinese,” “Most of Taiwan are Chinese immigrants from Fujian” and Korea is a foreign State (Ching sheng-Tsu Shih-lu 1964: 70–88). The two cannot be compared. In their reply to Zheng Jing, Mingzhu (明珠) and other officials also seriously pointed out that “You are Chinese, and it is not appropriate to cite the case of Korea.”

time	amount to	Zheng attack qing	Qing attack Zheng	War scale		
				Ten thousand people below	More than ten thousand people	indeterminacy
In 1651,	6	3	3	5	0	1
In 1652,	6	4	2	4	2	0
In 1653,	3	2	1	1	1	1
In 1654,	2	1	1	2	0	0
In 1655,	4	3	1	3	1	0
In 1656,	8	4	4	6	1	1
In 1657,	7	5	2	1	1	6
In 1658,	4	4	0	1	1	2
In 1659,	5	3	2	2	3	0
In 1660,	3	1	2	1	2	0
amount to	48	30	18	26	11	11

Table 2 According to Yang Ying’s *Con Zheng Shi Lu* (從征實錄), the Zheng regime acquired the island base from 1651 to 1660 and then developed the land. In the past ten years, Zheng’s army attacked the Qing army 38 times, and the Qing army attacked the Zheng regime 18 times without interruption, as shown in Table 2 (BU 2021: 61–63).

The Qing Dynasty, under the guidance of the Land Power Strategic Culture, also adopted the policy of no shipping in an attempt to weaken the strength of the Zheng regime in Taiwan. In the 12th year of Shunzhi’s reign

(1655), the Viceroy of Zhejiang and Fujian, Tuntai (浙閩總督屯泰), besieged the Zheng regime in Taiwan and asked for the southeast coastal provinces to “no ships into the sea.” Fang Xingye (房星燁), the Viceroy of Zhangzhou (漳州), also said that Zheng’s military salaries were obtained from coastal provinces, so he only needed to “No one shall be allowed to carry out private maritime trade or live in coastal areas” (CHENG 2021: 54–60).

In the 18th year of Shunzhi’s reign (1661), the Qing Dynasty adopted the suggestion of Huang Wu (黃梧), the former general of Zheng’s regime. In his command, he forced the southeast coastal residents to move within 30 to 50 Chinese miles. Huang Wu (黃梧) made five strategies to eliminate Zheng’s regime; moved coastal residents from Shandong, Zhejiang, Fujian, Guangdong, and other places into the inland, and set up border defense to prevent Zheng from attacking Chinese coastal territory. However, the Qing Dynasty’s strategy could not damage Taiwan effectively. Qing Dynasty’s strategy originated from an attempt to move the coastal tribes to arrest the Ming Dynasty generals before entering the Shan Hai Pass. But this way, failure to stop the Chinese southeast coast locals with the Zheng regime in Taiwan trades (ZHENG 2021: 56–64).

Because of the Qing Dynasty’s ban shipping policy, Zheng Jing, in addition to developing Taiwan’s shipbuilding industry. Zheng Jing sent merchant ships to and from various Chinese ports and traveled all over Heluo, Chiaoeh, and Tokin, buying shipbuilding materials, and even casting Yongli coins from various places. Zheng Jing sent Jiang Sheng (江勝) to Xiamen to trade with the inland and finally made Taiwan’s goods circulate to China. The Qing Dynasty’s no-shipping policy did not achieve the desired effect but caused widespread smuggling, man displacement, farmland destruction, financial income deficit nearly bankruptcy (CHENG 2021: 61–64).

7.3 Decision to conquer Taiwan and the change of Sea Power Culture

At the same time, the Qing Dynasty’s inferior position in the sea war with the Zheng regime in Taiwan forced the Qing Dynasty to further tilt its threat perception to the southeast. The Sea Power thought of the Han political elite has gradually risen. The Qing Dynasty also gradually realized that Taiwan’s maritime strategy was not the traditional land Strategic Culture that could cope, so the state security concept of the Qing Dynasty began to change (伯來拉 2010: 230–242).

In the 18th year of Kangxi’s reign, when the land war of the Revolt of Three Feudatories was gradually biased in favor of the Qing Dynasty, he decided to conquer Taiwan by force. He assigned Yao Qi-sheng (姚啟聖) to conduct this war. Yao Stated: “The Chinese emperor owns every inch of the sea territory. Unless the emperor agrees, no one can claim the sovereignty of the sea territory”. Yao suggested Kangxi:

If we want to ensure long-term stability in southeast China, we must eliminate the Zheng regime in Taiwan. We must remember the previous lesson. This lesson is that we attacked Xiamen before but were not under the jurisdiction of the local garrison, resulting in local disorder and threatening the stability of the rule. Now that we have conquered Xiamen again, we must quickly attack Taiwan, but we must establish our rule there. If there is no long-term order in the local area, there will be another war of resistance (YUAN 2020: 58–68).



At the same time, Fan Chengmo (範承謨), Yao Qisheng, Shi Lang (施琅), Li Shizhen (李士禎), Li Zhifang (李芝芳), the Han elite, they have successively called for strengthening the development of ocean affairs, especially in the field of ocean trade. Their thoughts are embodied in this article, *Qing Kai Hai Jin Shu* (請開海禁疏), the most representative, for example: “The state interest lies in maritime trade. If the coastal people are forcibly moved inland, it will only cause social unrest. If we develop maritime trade, the state will be prosperous and the people will be safe” (Andrade 2007: 34–43; Andrade, 2017a: 41–46; Andrade 2017b: 48–56).

After the Han political elites were put in the important position of Emperor Kangxi, their decision-making power was not only strengthened, but also strengthened the Qing Dynasty’s understanding of the threat to Taiwan’s oceans. Although Kangxi intended to forge ahead in Taiwan, there was controversy within the Qing Dynasty. Both the authority and the people were afraid to use troops against Taiwan. However, Yao Qisheng, Shi Lang, Li Guangdi (李光地), and other southern Han political elites in the Qing Dynasty advocated attacking Taiwan. It was with the support of many southern Han elites that Kangxi changed his understanding of Taiwan and decided to recover Taiwan by force (XIA 2015: 77–81).

To attack Taiwan, the marine Strategic Culture from the Han political elite gradually rose in the southeast region, and at the same time, it continued to affect the trend of the war against Taiwan. The rise of Sea Power Strategic Culture can be shown in several aspects: First, the Han people began to be responsible for the marine strategy of the war against Taiwan; Second, the Han people’s understanding of the threat of the Zheng regime in Taiwan and the importance of Taiwan can be approved by the state representative (Emperor Kangxi); Third, the political elites of Han people attach importance to the development of the Chinese Southeast coastal region (LAPLANCHE 2021: 101–113).

Emperor Kangxi began to use Yao Qisheng and other Han people, let them take charge of the affairs of attacking Taiwan and enhance their political power. In May of the 18th year of Kangxi’s reign (1679), Yao Qisheng proposed a new strategy to Kangxi. He adopted the method of “suppressing and pacifying”. On the one hand, he increased the use of troops to capture and recover lost territory, and on the other hand, he advocated appeasing Zheng’s generals because of the plight of the lack of elite in the water war in the Qing Dynasty. In the 18th year of Kangxi (1679), Yao Qisheng successively recruited Wu Ying (吳英), Chen Chang (陳昌), Zhu Tianguai (朱天貴), and other generals from the former Zheng’s regime army, including nearly 50000 officers and soldiers. Later, a letter was submitted asking for the re-establishment of the chief military officers of Tongan, the addition of 1800 soldiers, the repeated defeats of Liu Guoxuan, the Zheng army, and the conquest of Haicheng (海澄), Kinmen (金門), and Xiamen (廈門) (CHENG 2021: 103–107).

Yao Qisheng asks to withdraw the Manchus soldiers from Fujian, rebuild the Fujian navy with Shi Lang as the navy commander, create new warships, and train the navy. In the 18th year of Kangxi’s reign (1679), Yao Qisheng proposed that if he wanted to keep the Chinese southeast region stable, he must make a plan to attack Taiwan. “We have no maritime military force in Xiamen that can be used for war. If we attack Taiwan, we will be defeated”. After Yao Qisheng was responsible for the attack on Taiwan, he asked the Manchus soldiers to withdraw from Fujian because the Manchus soldiers were not good at naval warfare and the cost of raising horses

was high. “The development of military forces at sea is not like the Land Power, which can adopt the Crowd tactics,” he said (TSAO 1995: 101–107).

At the same time, he restored the Fujian navy structure that had been abolished for many years and transferred the military expenditure of the Land Power to develop the navy to meet the needs of restoring Taiwan to the sea war. Thus Yao promoted the strategic shift from land war to sea war. During his tenure, Yao actively planned the war against Taiwan, made ships and tools, prepared food and salaries, and promulgated regulations. He did everything he needed to enter the army. He also donated hundreds of warships, more than 3000 officers and soldiers, and more than 170000 Liang of silver. The maritime strategic thinking of the Han political elite is completely reflected in their political and political articles, and the Han elite knows the strategy of the Qing Dynasty to conquer Taiwan.

Affected by this, the Qing Dynasty actively attracted the Dutch to ally with the Qing Dynasty to reduce the influence of the Zheng regime in maritime trade. In terms of coastal defense, the Qing Dynasty no longer focused on defense but strengthened the preparation of ships and troops, such as ordering Yao Qisheng to build all kinds of warships, and at the same time, strictly trained sailors (LIU 2015: 65–78). In addition, the influence of Chinese identity prompted Qing Dynasty to actively strive for Taiwan to remain within the territory under Chinese jurisdiction. Because the ruling legitimacy of the Qing Dynasty in China was relatively weak, the conquest of Taiwan can strengthen state stability, and thus legitimacy was promoted (Haneda 2018: 123–137; DING 2021: 230–242; Toby 2022: 47–55).

In the first point, the arrival of the Han political elite prompted the emergence of the Strategic Culture of Sea Power and strategic thinking in the southeast in the Qing Dynasty, and also prompted the Manchus political elite to recognize the marine threat to Taiwan. For example, Shi Lang has a clear understanding of the sea and is good at water warfare. He has a general plan for forging ahead in Taiwan. In the sixth year of Kangxi’s reign (1667), by observing the international situation, Shi Lang expressed his ideas to Emperor Kangxi, which are embodied in this book *Bian Huan Yi Jing Shu* (邊患宜靖疏) and explained If we want to conquer Taiwan, we need sufficient resources and Sea Power. As the political situation became stable, so they decided to attack Taiwan. In August, Kangxi appointed Shi Lang as the commander of the Fujian navy. He was responsible for attacking Taiwan by adding prince Junior Guard and ordering Fujian Viceroy Yao Qisheng and others to cooperate fully (ZHONGHUA BOOK COMPANY 1986: 56–75).

After Shi Lang arrived in Xiamen, he began to train the whole ship. “It is hard to select twenty thousand excellent soldiers, and three hundred big and small warships, all capable of breaking by Zheng regime in Taiwan.” After he rectified the maritime military training along the southeast coast of China, half a year later, the Chinese defense capability had a strong marine strength (China Social Sciences Press 1996: 80–85). In 1681, Emperor Kangxi believed that Shi Lang was familiar with the Sea Power and decided to take Shi Lang as the commander in chief of attacking Taiwan. Emperor Kangxi said: “Now that the rebels on the land have been pacified, together with the former Navy General Shi Lang of Taiwan joining our navy, we can use his knowledge of Sea Power to conquer Taiwan and Penghu” (CHENG 2021: 89–98).

In the 21st year of the reign of Emperor Kangxi (1682), Shi Lang went up to attack Taiwan, In October, Shi Lang said to Kangxi: I want to take full charge of the attack on Taiwan. After Kangxi agreed to Shi Lang’s

request, in 1683, Shi Lang led 20000 sailors and 300 warships to attack Taiwan, and the troops arrived in Penghu. Finally, Zheng's army failed, and Liu Guoxuan (劉國軒) fled back to Taiwan. More than 400 Zheng's generals died, 165 were reduced, 12000 soldiers died, and more than 485 were reduced (伯來拉 2010: 282–290).

7.4 *The regional results of the conquest of Taiwan and Chinese Politics in the 17th century*

After successfully winning the war against Zheng's regime in Taiwan, Emperor Kangxi believed that Taiwan was only a tiny place and “nothing was gained.” After Zheng's perception of the threat disappeared, the driving force for the development of the Sea Power Strategic Culture declined and even disappeared. Its development soon began to slow down, such as the strengthening of the sea ban, the sea defense strategy of using land to control the sea, the reopening of the Taiwan abandonment debate, and the Land Power Strategic Culture of the Qing Dynasty regained its dominant position. Most rulers of the Qing Dynasty did not fully realize the value of Taiwan at this time, nor did they realize the importance of Taiwan Island to the inland Sea Power (Hua-wen Shu-chu 1964: 64–70).

This represented the view of most political elites in the Manchus and Qing Dynasties at that time. Therefore, after the elimination of the Zheng Group, the Argument about abandoning Taiwan was noisy. At that time, the mainstream of the Qing Dynasty thought that Taiwan was secluded and isolated from overseas, so it was useless to keep it. On the contrary, it was “useless to spend money in Taiwan every day”. Therefore, we just need to move Taiwan's Han people back to the mainland, abandon ruling Taiwan, and merely guard Penghu. Even if Taiwan is occupied by the Dutch, as long as it recognizes the status of China (a superior suzerain-ship), China will allow and recognize the regime established by the Dutch here” (CHIANG 1985: 88–99).

However, Shi Lang, Yao Qisheng, Li Wei (李蔚), and other Han officials who are familiar with the situation of the Southeast Sea strongly rejected the popular opinion and insisted that Taiwan should not be abandoned. His propositions are mainly reflected in Shi Lang's *Gong Chen Tai Wan Qi Liu Shu* (恭陳臺灣棄留疏). In his memoir, Shi Lang insisted on defending Taiwan and put forward four reasons: first, Taiwan's strategic position is important, and it is the southeast coastal defense barrier; Second, after years of development, Taiwan is rich in natural resources, which can feed the inland; Third, if abandoned, Taiwan will easily become the foundation of rebellion; Fourth, the Dutch are eyeing the enemy. Once abandoned, it will be occupied by foreigners, which will lead to endless troubles. On this basis, I supposed that Taiwan could not be abandoned, “abandon will lead to disaster,” and staying in Taiwan can be an “extended solid edge take” (Ueda 2017: 242–256).

Shi Lang pointed out the importance of Taiwan's strategic position. In the first month of the 23rd year of Kangxi (1684), at a meeting to discuss the Taiwan issue, Li Gui, Wang Xi (王熙), and other scholars from the political elite of Han thought it was “Taiwan is crucial to Chinese sea security governance and domination.” Since then, the “staying Taiwan in China sovereignty” of the Han political elite group represented by Shi Lang was adopted. The Qing Dynasty set Taiwan as the government, which was subordinate to Fujian Province. It had jurisdiction over Taiwan, Fengshan, and Zhuluo states. It set up Provincial Police Office in Penghu and set up the Taiwan-Xiamen Defense Agency to stay under Taiwan rule. At the same time, it set up a general in Taiwan and

a deputy general in Penghu. In the spring of the 23rd year of Kangxi (1684), Taiwan's civil and military officials took office, and Taiwan was officially under the administrative jurisdiction of the central government of the Qing Dynasty (Ibid).

With the Conquering of Taiwan and the expansion of the Qing Dynasty's Sea borders, the Qing Dynasty's Sea Power Strategic Culture was retained and developed. First of all, the abolition of the policy of ban shipping to the sea. In this regard, Han officials went to Develop marine strategy many times. Shi Lang, the Fujian navy commander, asked for the Develop a marine strategy.

Yao Qisheng, Viceroy of Fujian Province, ask for five provinces and six provincial, local authorities to strengthen maritime affairs. Wu Xingzuo, Viceroy of Guangdong and Guangxi (兩廣總督吳興祚), ask for refugees to farm on the land and trade with the sea. In September of the 23rd year of Kangxi's reign (1684), Kangxi declared that "stop no shipping policy" because the threat of security disappeared. The claim directly brought about significant development of maritime trade, including overseas trade (Ueda 2017: 270-331).

Secondly, the southeast Han people, guided by the Strategic Culture of Sea Power, had a deeper understanding of the development of coastal defense in the Early Qing Dynasty. Han officials had a deeper understanding of Taiwan and southeast coastal defense, and their coastal defense consciousness was more focused on the sea. Shi Lang was the representative of this period. Shi Lang advocated coastal defense through active maritime progress and opposed passive inland defense. After the conquering of Taiwan, Shi Lang recognized the importance of southeast coastal defense to the Qing Dynasty's border defense in his *Hai Jiang Di Ding Shu* (海疆底定疏), "The current international situation is mainly an arms race at sea, not international relations on land," It shows that the idea of coastal defense has been transferred from land to maritime states (YUAN 2020: 52-61).

Shi has a very clear understanding of Taiwan's strategic position in coastal defense. "Although Taiwan is a place with many islands, it is the key to the four provinces", which is regarded as the gateway to the southeast coast. Shi Lang has put forward the idea of taking Taiwan and Penghu as a whole to build a state coastal defense. "Taiwan and Penghu are both strategically valuable." Therefore, different from the negative "sea defense" strategy of no shipping, preventing entry and exit, and using land to prevent the sea in the Early Qing Dynasty, Han officials represented by Shi Lang, Gu Zuyu (顧祖禹), Chen Lunjong (陳倫炯), Lan Dingyuan (藍鼎元), Lu Zhiyu (魯之裕) have begun to lean toward the "sea" in their coastal defense ideas, especially their understanding of Taiwan's strategic position in coastal defense in the southeast (Ibid).

8 Discussion

8.1 *The Strategic Culture of Sea Power and the concerns of the Manchus*

After the conquering of Taiwan, Emperor Kangxi once again focused on leading the Sea Power with Land Power. In the fifty years of Kangxi, according to the will of Kangxi, Guan Yuanzhong (管源忠) (Fushun, Liaoning and Huang Banner of Han Army) General of Guangdong, Jue Luo Manbao (覺羅滿保), Viceroy of Fujian and Zhejiang (Yellow Banner of the Manchus), and Yang Lin (楊琳), Viceroy of Guangdong and

Guangxi (Tieling Wei of Fengtian and Huang Banner of Han Army) proposed the “No shipping”, and trade via sea was banned. In the twenty-second year of Qianlong, the Qing Dynasty closed Jiang Hai Pass (江海關), Zhe Hai Pass (浙海關), and Minhai Pass (閩海關), only retained the trade between Yuehai Pass (粵海關) for foreign trading, restricted the export of traditional commodities such as silk and tea, and imposed many bans on the overseas trade of Chinese merchant ships. Although Taiwan was finally retained, after Qing established effective rule in Taiwan, the dispute about abandoning Taiwan still broke out. It can be seen that the Qing Dynasty did not recognize the important influence of Taiwan on southeast coastal defense (WU 2021: 87–93; Klooster 2023: 100–125).

The power of the Han political elite in the south rose because of their achievements in conquering Taiwan, the Qing Dynasty was established with the Manchus nobles as the main body, and the Viceroy of the Qing Dynasty was an important force for the central government to control the local areas, integrating local judicial, administrative, military, and supervisory powers. Therefore, the Qing Dynasty attached great importance and prudence to its state identity when appointing the Viceroy. This is reflected in the number of the Manchus and Han Viceroys. Guangdong and Guangxi, Fujian, and Zhejiang are located on the southeast coast, far from Beijing. They are the gateway to the southeast of China and the last place surrendered to the Qing Dynasty. Therefore, the rulers of the Qing Dynasty, proceeding from their interests, appointed a large number of Manchus Viceroys (BU 2021: 73–88).

8.2 *Mainstream Land Power Strategic Culture and marine barrier*

During the war against Taiwan, the political elite of the Han people published many books on ocean affairs, which repeatedly emphasized the importance of the ocean. It can be seen that the Han people in southeast China (especially in Fujian) are closely related to the marine Strategic Culture. The battle for the mainstream culture between the sea and the land took place as early as the Qing Dynasty ruled the Han people in southeast China. But at that time, most of the Chinese Han people belonged to the ruled class (unless they had special contributions) (Murry 2019; Tremml-Werner 2022).

China has always been a state with a land-based Strategic Culture, and its attention to maritime strategy is particularly weak. For China, no matter which dynasty, the most important thing is still the land territory. Territorial sovereignty and territorial strategy are regarded as the most important links of state security (Shepherd 2016: 115–118). However, there is a gap between the land right Strategic Culture that the policy elites are concerned about and the dependence of Chinese civil society on the sea. Chinese civil society often emigrates through the sea, especially the Han people in South China and Southeast Asian countries have close interaction. However, the elites of state decision-making rarely think that the ocean is a region that can be operated for a long time. It was not until the 19th century that China began to pay attention to the ocean again after the impact of Western states.

9 Conclusion

By testing the hypothesis of the change in the Strategic Culture of the Qing Dynasty, we can find that the

Strategic Culture of the Qing Dynasty was not always dominated by Land Power. It should be emphasized that after the threat perception from Taiwan was eliminated, the Strategic Culture of Sea Power once developed within the Qing Dynasty was soon contained or even retreated. Twenty years after the conquering of Taiwan, the Qing Dynasty ordered a new ban on the sea, the government started discussions within the government about abandoning Taiwan and guarding Penghu, the construction of the navy gradually stalled, and the goal of coastal defense turned to “only pirates,” and the restrictions on inland Taiwan exchanges gradually strengthened.

The Strategic Culture focused on coastal defense was ignored, and the Strategic Culture focused on land defense regained its dominant position. But this also reflects the correctness of the model constructed in this paper. Therefore, when faced with problems that the old political elites could not solve, the impetus for Strategic Culture change will emerge, and the new political elites will promote the formation of new Strategic Culture. On the one hand, the new political elite will further develop their habitual behaviors into a series of policies and symbol systems, while the new symbol system will affect the perception of threats, geopolitics, and state identity, resulting in different worldviews, self-awareness, and enemy identity. After the Qing Dynasty conquered Taiwan, it can also be found that this political result not only consolidated the power of the Han political elite in the southeast region, but also made the Qing Dynasty think that there was no longer a unit threatening the survival and then acquiesced in the binding of the Strategic Culture of southeast Sea Power with Han officials.

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