

The Development of the Southeast Asian Border Zone
A Social Theory

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I. Theoretical background

1. Introduction and questions

While major border-areas as well as inter-state borders have been thoroughly analyzed with regard to their coming into being and the relevant underlying factors, the case of the Chinese-Southeast Asian borderlands – despite its fascinating multitude of cultures, ideas of statehood and imperial ambitions - is hardly examined. This thesis strives to first create a model to explain the particularities of the process of the coming into existence of the borderlands between what is now China, Viet Nam, Laos and Myanmar of firstly drawing from methodologies of historical sociology, political theories of state formation, political geography, political economy and cultural theory, and secondly, tracing the historical developments leading to the emergence of the borderland alongside the model.

The case of the borderlands between China and its Southeast Asian neighbors is particularly interesting since the entities were in many regards hardly affected by Westphalian ideas of statehood up to the era of colonization. Consequently the manifestation of clear boundaries was only a recent result. The main models on the construction of borders – politically and socially – however, require the existence of a clearly demarcated territorial entity that is then later modified according to the states' interests. The major polities – imperial China, Vietnam, Burma and the Lao states – followed different ideas statehood, such as the *Galactic Polity Model* or the *Mandate from Heaven* that can exist without a demarcated territory. Still, they simultaneously regarded the area that is now adjacent to a political borderline as fringes of their power for centuries, even if geographical, ethnical or power parameters would not support that idea. Furthermore, this area sprawled of small kingdoms and minor states, yet ideas of using tools of national consolidation as it happened in the major lowland-states and empires or allowing interstate rivalry to get one entity to control these lands never materialized.



Map 1: Map of the border area (GIERSCH 2011 40)

Concepts of power exercise, such as the galactic polity model in Southeast Asia and the tributary state system in China, can serve as an explanation, yet there are gaps in these models to explain increasing accumulation and concentration of capital and means of coercion of central states vis-à-vis the entities that covered the border-region to form consistent territories demarcated by a border. Also, concentrating on the structure of centralized low-land polities falls short of providing a theory of how these meta-zones are integrated in knowledge-transfer, migration and trade but not in the low-land polities themselves. Lastly, most models on the development of borderlines and the adjacent territories are static in a way, that they presume two or more existing states that negotiate a line to separate each other while the areas on the fringes are deprived of any agency. They overlook functional aspects of borderlands in interstate and inter-society relations and only attributed a reduced role to the borderlands as opposed to the interests of the state as a whole (cf. HAGEN/DIENERa 2011, 9).

In addition, some emphasis has to be put on the relations between the nation and the state, how to bridge the divide in agency between the center and the periphery – meaning that the peripheral attributes of borders and borderlands are not necessarily impeding them from being agents of their own development – and through what prisms and categories the development from state to nation and integration of borderlands can be best observed. This can be done by taking the subject of borders not only as a result but also as a process, based on the assumption that the state is

incomplete and only recreated through collective social actions, for which border areas, despite often being seen as peripheries to the center, become centers in their own right by continuing center-actions to create the state and so claim territory and sovereignty at the fringes. This process and the resulting product gets more complicated when bringing in the mobility of capital, information, security needs and the self-interest of other state and non-state actors. Actions and counter-actions lead to situations described as de-territorialization and reterritorialization, de-bordering and re-bordering. Apart from the political determinants that shape these spaces, it is also necessary to bring in cultural aspects that further the practice of dividing and attributing territory, bringing in a differentiation between political dividers and social dividers that in the best case are congruent. Factors include language, ethnicity, ways to determine socio-economic status, and can either bridge boundaries or enhance their effects through constant reproduction of differences. A full picture so must take into account the constant contraction and expansion of state authority over its territory, its spaces and spheres of interests and influence shaped by the complex relationship of the state with the economic, political and cultural influences from outside (O'DOWD 2012, 159; SHARP 2008, 141; LUSTICK 2004, 78-79).

Yet this area was much more than a playing ball between different centers of power. One should not underestimate the potential of agency these areas possessed, which turned the process of it becoming a mere border area not just influenced by the various stages of state formation but also influencing them. The whole process until the border eventually resulted in one single agreed and negotiated line was a non-linear process with various disruptions. These disruptions range from war to scientific innovations, from changes in bureaucratic practices to the lack of an heir to continue a polity as recognized tributary. The quality of these disruptors will become an essential factor with the further development of the model that made the borderland exist in the place where it is. This goes beyond classical economy-based or power-military based ideas to explain the formation of borders as fault-lines of states. With this border-area the dimension of the state as a collective social action will have to be introduced to explain the development (cf. MOSTOV 2008, 123; CHOW 2001, 52-53).

This means that the classical parameters of defining statehood – territory, sovereignty, population and ability to enter relations with other states – when trying to understand the development of this particular borderland need to be complemented with a range of collective social practices and interactions that create the border. Reconciling the fluidity of perceptions of territory with the final outcome of a single demarcated line can be achieved by looking at the area and the defining fea-

tures of state building and border consolidation through a hierarchy of spaces which themselves vary in dimension and functionality, such as control, power projection or economic exploitation (BRUNET-JAILLY 2009,1).

Drawing on guiding principles of border studies and the ideas of state building and border construction in historical sociology, political economy and space theory, this PhD project aims to provide a theory linking the creation of borders in Southeast Asia with the particularities of the state formation processes to shed light on questions that do not have any satisfactory answer in the framework of existing theories. These include aspects stemming from characteristics of state-formation in northern Mainland Southeast Asia and their connection to a particular formation of borderlands for which it is necessary to find an adequate model linking state-formation to border construction. Given that many local fiefdoms, small kingdoms and polities existed in the area, it is of interest to investigate why all of these entities were absorbed in the lowland central-states – as colonization and its strict border-drawing was only one of many catalysts. The question remains what made the lowland states so attractive when a border polity was given the choice to link up with them or what allowed the central states to acquire these entities when the attraction was not mutual. This will bring in fundamental questions about the area as a place where power struggles played out, trade had to go through and knowledge was transferred.

This thesis argues that the final outcome of the border in its current form is the result of an ever expanding and contracting dynamics of the notion of territoriality and sovereignty whose agents where both the centers of the lowland powers as well as powerholders in the peripheral regions as mediators between different centers.

It might seem essentialist or determinist to ask why there is a border in the first place, why did it develop exactly where it developed, why did it happen to be between these two states, why isn't there another state buffering in between, but these questions are important when dealing with concepts of universal power-claims such as the Chinese Mandate of Heaven or to some degree the Galactic Polity Model where fixed, negotiated and compartmentalized borders are even not a necessity (ATWILL 2006, 14). It is quite easy to claim that Hobbesian ideas of borders first developed in the Westphalian system that then colonization efforts spread across and imposed on the rest of the world. Yet even this explanation falls short of why in universalistic ideas of statehood where the ruler reigns in varying degrees of intensity over the world the actual realm still had its limits and officials resorted to tributary systems with the far and the unknown (BORNE-MANN 2012, 127; DIENER/HAGEN 2011a, 5).

In a first step, this thesis will develop a model, linking state formation and border construction based on theories of space, control, networks, political and social dividers in a framework that allows accommodating the above-mentioned particularities of the region. In a second step, it examines the evidence how the centers' wishes to control territory and project sovereignty eventually led to the consolidation of a clear demarcated line. The lenses through which this development shall be examined will be presented in the following chapters to develop the model. A first task is to reconcile different – and by times very fluid or loose – perceptions of territoriality and projection of sovereignty within the framework of state formation as well as social practices regarding the development of the border-space, be they based on culture, economics or politics. A further step will be the definition of parameters that allow the variation of the state- and border-spaces in dimension and functionality. This shall help examining the polities' ability to contract and expand according to their intentions and agendas to control and penetrate territories in the borderlands. It will be shown in the end how these dynamics in the intentions and the ability to contract and expand territoriality and control is eventually leading to a congruence of the intention to exert control and to have this control manifested in a spatial view of possession and contained within a demarcated space – a border (cf. FRITZ/MENOCAL 2007, 11; LUSTICK 2004, 80).

Such a model with its ability to accommodate competing dynamics in interests and concepts will allow to track the formation of the border through time and space and to map the impact of confrontations and cooperation in its formation. Also, this model shall not run into the trap of solely adopting a view from the center but also attributing agency capacities to the periphery (BAUD/VAN SCHENDEL 1997, 212). This will be put to the test in the second grand chapter of this thesis.

1.1. Terminology

The terms border, boundary, frontier all indicate the limits of a society, be it in terms of culture, territory or other factors conceptualizing a contrast between the “self” and the “other”. The use of these terms within one's own language is often different in various disciplines let alone when trying to translate these concepts from other languages. This lack of conceptual consensus about the term brings about some confusion in the use of the words frontier, boundary and border. These terms are loaded with conceptual differences, starting from indicating the precise location of borders, over pointing simply at a dividing line to showing a fuzzy limit of state sovereignty and to describing a region rather than a line where a new entity begins.

Frontier means most commonly the fringe at the territorial, political and economic expansion into empty spaces. In political sciences, a border describes generally socially constructed differences that are playing out in a certain space, through which a clear line – the boundary – separates these spaces. In anthropology, the definition of a border stands for a clear line demarcating space whereas the boundary describes a space in which differences meet (BAUD/VAN SCHENDEL 1997, 213; PRESCOTT/TRIGGS 2008, 12; SOLOMON 1969, 2-3). This thesis will rely on the political terminology, which is also closer to the common use of these words. A boundary in that sense is the political divide as a result of state building, linking the politico-historical context to the logic of their creation and the historical circumstances.

1.2. Theoretical background

Starting out by describing the intersection of the two large fields this thesis is based on – border studies and state-formation – this chapter introduces the main developments, concepts and ideas in these fields and finishes by building a bridge between the two disciplines. As both analyze their subjects alone across time and in combination with other developments and factors across space, it will be necessary to develop a methodology that captures temporal and spatial developments of the interactions between state formation and border development.

1.2.1. The state of border studies

Border studies is a relatively recent field that formed during the 1960s around Julian Minghi and Victor Prescott as a branch of political geography. What started out at that time as a study of the actual lines demarcating territories – the border so to say – shifted towards the definition of borders as areas at which different ideas meet and through which those differences are manifested and communicated, presenting borders as a form of human practice that reiterates differences and that takes up and conceptualizes space (VAN HOUTUM et al. 2005, 14-15; KOLOSSOV et al. 2013, 2). Shifting away from the notion that borders are simply lines separating and stabilizing a system of states and demarcating sovereignty however doesn't mean that the factors state, sovereignty and territoriality are out of the picture when it comes to the formation of borders, but rather these are modified by ideas of identities, inclusion, exclusion and the development of spatial markers (PAASI 2011,17).

This development widened the scope of analyzing borders. It moved away from looking at them through only the lens of geopolitics or political geography and introduced social elements via culture studies, anthropology, sociology and economics, such as economic geography, political economy, or law. Given the multitude of angles and the different conceptualizations of what a border is, it is important to understand that no specific social theory can fully grasp the scope of border studies and provide a full understanding of the significance of borders as a space-fixer across various disciplines. Also, it is therefore difficult to pin the level of analysis of border studies down as it ranges from the locale up to the supra-state level (KOLOSSOV 2013,2).

1.2.1.1. Basic constructivism and spatial dimensions in border studies

Departing from the thinking of states as clearly demarcated entities, the border however is still set in a three-partite relationship between territory, sovereignty and identity, offering a playground for all kinds of schools and ideologies who are determined by different degrees of anti-determinism, anti-essentialism and different foci (VAN HOUTUM 2005, 673).

The field itself with its many interfaces and connections to all kinds of disciplines is very broad and dynamic, thus a comprehensive and complete documentation goes beyond the scope of this exercise. While there is not a single border theory but many transdisciplinary frameworks and concepts, the case of every single border needs to be evaluated individually (PAASI 2011, 27). The following chapter presents some basic methodologies and concepts of analysis which for the case of a socio-historical analysis of the Chinese-Southeast Asian borderlands are most relevant.

The various degrees of constructivist elements allow classifying schools from conservative ones such as classical geopolitics to more progressive ones like space sociology. Thus, the way of studying borders as studying the territorial limits of the nation-state, a tradition which was founded by Friedrich Ratzel, a founder of political geographical border studies as part of geopolitics, is the conservative limit of looking at borders and boundaries, based on the definition of states not as a collectivity of social action nested in a certain mindset but simply as a territory over which an actor has a monopoly of power (PRESCOTT/TRIGGS 2008, 7; AGNEW 1994, 66). The strong historicist and determinist tradition Ratzel stems from works on the assumption that states and borders are a historical necessity without much of a social component of self-organization in it. This means too that the strict demarcation and order-functions of borders is the reflection of political elites that for managerial reasons prefer fixed divisions over socio-spatial fluidity (PRESCOTT/TRIGGS 2008, 7; KOLOSSOV 2013, 4; SOLOMON 1969, 8).

It is important to understand that politics and power projections are only one of many factors that help answer questions such as where a border is located, how did it appear and change over time, which disputes did it help to settle or escalate and what consequences can be drawn from that. The wider the focus spreads from simply looking at a line, the more factors from social sciences need to be taken into account to find satisfying answers. Like this the more the line between the subject of where a border is located and how the border is socially constructed is blurred, the more prominent become questions along the line what borders and boundaries mean for people, what they project onto them and what alternatives there are to the singular lines (PRESCOTT/TRIGGS 2008, 30-31, 66). This also means that the distinction between natural and artificial borders fades in light of the more prominent role of social actions, meaning that given the existence of borders out of “othering” people, geographic markers such as rivers or mountains become less important. This conflates what is supposed to be natural and artificial, and provides explanations for borders that do not necessarily follow geographic lines (MINGHI 1963, 407).

Thus, on the other side of the spectrum, the border signifies simply the manifestation of a socially-constructed difference, owing the relativism in its focus to postmodern currents in social sciences. Borders in that sense are the result of the interpretation of a country as what it should be – a widening of the meaning of collective actions – and so produces a lens through which its inhabitants see the world and define themselves in opposition to “the others” (NEWMAN 1998,200).

It is widely accepted that clear demarcations of space and the creation of borderlands are the outcome of establishing modern states all over the world, states with clear centers and peripheries within the same territory that follow practices and have duties determined by their geographical location in relation to the center. This introduces a strong dualism in perception of the border. From the view of the centers, a border is a sharp line compartmentalizing the territory over which it has authority, yet from the periphery a border and the borderlands are fields of strong interactions where there is a constant recreation of states meeting each other, constant negotiation of territoriality and otherness, as well as opposition to whatever center is wielding influence. Thus, manipulating and circumventing the barriers of a border and so negating territoriality established by common practices of the state to divide the space into a “we” and “them” introduces flexibility for statehood and territoriality to expand and to retract (BAUD/VAN SCHENDEL 1997, 216; DIENER/HAGEN 2011a, 10).

In this sense, concepts of territoriality, their social-constructivist basis, their materialistic constraints and philosophical ideas out of which they are born don't allow for borders to be fixed, for

their development to be linear or for their simple existence to be stable or given or even natural. Rather social relations and networks construct borders in space in a dynamic way and these need to coincide with the territorial markers that are in place that are otherwise shifted when there is no overlap. This statement may sound trivial, yet it implicates that on top of the level of physical and well-defined borders can be put cultural, social, economic and religious borders that are less visible yet impact the compartmentalization of social actions in space (KOLOSSOV 2013, 2; HOBBSAWM 1992, 68). As a physical outcome of socio-spatial dynamics in which borders are constantly being made, borders and the action of bordering are becoming a process themselves. They are not fulfilling just a function but are a function of society (WILSON/DONNAN 2012, 16-17, 19-20).

The issue with this approach is – though it is attractive for the analysis of the shape of states – that given that borders of a state are a fact and fulfill certain functions it blurs the difference of what borders are for real and how to define what makes a border a border. Post-structuralist and post-modernist assumptions by claiming that borders are all man-made socially constructed features of “othering” are therefore not always helpful to find answers to questions related to why there are borders in the first place. Not only it is easy to dissolve the very idea of borders altogether as their function of admitting and excluding people is an act of tyranny, but also the factors that shaped a border do not play a role at all. Their assumptions follow a feedback-loop starting from the view that borders are given and then reiterated in social interactions. This might be true after the Westphalian compartmentalization of Europe – though the magnitude of social interactions of “othering” vis-à-vis the brute use of force, high-level negotiations and inheritance might be debatable there too – it is more difficult to uphold this claim for other areas of the world where alternatives to strict lines dividing states actually existed (KAISER 2012, 524; BRUNET-JAILLY 2012, 100-101; KROHN-HANSEN/NUSTAD 2005, 8).

Still, bringing in constructivist elements has the advantage of explaining the existence, size and shape of states not just by actions of central actors in a top-down fashion of great events such as wars, conquests and high-level negotiations but also by common practices in a bottom-up approach which helps avoiding the potential for politicizing “natural” borders. Thus, the “how” in the making and shaping of borders, the signs, symbols, institutions, representations and practices connected with it shall provide in border studies also agency to those for whom the border is an everyday fact of life. Instead of being reactive elements in a wider power-play this focus introduces the representation of national identities and the forms and stories by which borders are rep-

resented, enacted and symbolized. Such an approach complicates the analysis of a border because understanding and expressing identities often relates directly to whole schools within social theory such as postcolonialism or multiculturalism, yet their ability to abstract tends to create structured templates and one-size-fits-all models explaining the construction of borders by relying on universal concepts and not taking regional particularities into account. Based on approaches by Foucault, Bourdieu or Derrida – approaches which are very suitable for analyzing daily social constructions – this constructivist way of looking at borders has shortcomings with regard to the political dimension, economic constraints and also the influence of naturally occurring features of borders that sometimes are taken as demarcation lines of power out of convenience (WILSON et al. 2012, 2; SCOTT 2012, 86-87; O’LEARY 2004, 15; HOBBSAWM 1992, 15).

Thus, the consensus between the realist-geopolitical and constructivist extremes is that borders fulfill the purpose of differentiating differently constructed mindscapes from each other taking into account that they are more than political dividers. It also looks at dividers in terms of culture and economy, providing spatial patterns of social behavior, which in turn defines the impact of a border on the countries it separates and determines the viability of the border as a separator. This means that while acknowledging the function a border fulfills as demarcating a state, the fact that a border is a product of social practices and transactions needs to open the field so that while political limits play a role it is recognized that they are shaped by socio-territorial practices (MINGHI, 1963,428). Thus, borders are not only social institutions but also an institution of the state, marking sovereignty and the geographic extent to which exercising power is possible and within which the abstract notion of a state claims authority and manages all kinds of resources be they human, economic or natural (MURPHY, 2010).

Bringing in socio-territorial practices into geo-strategic realist assumptions widens the scope and methodologies of border studies further as they do not just focus on the line of and territories around the border, but also the lifestyles, ideas and functions of the people living in these areas play an important role: states can only divide the world when the people within their territory and especially the people at the borders are playing along with the practices of othering, fixing identities, controlling access and mediating flows of people, goods and knowledge (NEWMAN 1998,187).

A state can bring borderlands to follow such practices by leveraging its political clout vis-à-vis the local political clout and by boosting its own attractiveness as an alternative to local models and practices. This gives a state the power to set up borders as lines of demarcation to consolidate

its territory on the one side and filter what is coming in from the other side, or set up borders that cut through preexisting communities. Thus, the political power and the leverage a state has vis-à-vis the border territories, its willingness to use this power to establish its own territoriality and sovereignty and the match of these mechanisms with the already settled communities are important analytical parameters to determine the functionality of a border and the state's border policies. The better integrated the state's political influence with local communities is, the less challenging it becomes to accept border-policies or even the existence of the border. But for that the socially constructed border of the locals will need to match the politically constructed border from the wider polity (BRUNET-JAILLY 2009, 9; KINGSBURY 2003, 304-305; PRESCOTT/TRIGGS 2008, 23; SOLOMON 1969, 18-19).

The border becomes not only a line but also an empirical phenomenon that can be studied on a case-by-case basis, as generalizations are very difficult. A border is attributed a meaning and a way of perception, which allows drawing conclusions from behavioral approaches. Introducing poststructuralist ideas as well as ethnographic standpoints allow so to demarcate the influence of the border as well as its effects on those that are living in this space of influence: cultural and social borders are being recreated through and recreate political borders, affecting identities and ways of identification with the state and the wider society (PAASI 2011,17).

Spatial and geographic features, the ability to deploy force and show attraction do therefore play a top-down role in the motivation to set up borders, as does the practice of "othering" to construct borders bottom-up. When looking at the subject of this thesis, it will be therefore important to not only ask how the border came into being but also why there was a motivation to make sure that there is a "we" and a "them", what catalyzed this motivation into action and by what mechanisms this was incepted and conferred by top-down and bottom-up approaches. Only by answering these questions will it be clear how the construction of the border and the configuration and form, permeability and functions do interplay and so create a holistic model that takes into account the factors that lead up to the creation of a borderline and explains what motivated the compartmentalization of space in the first place (VAN HOUTUM 2002,42; DIENER/HAGEN 2011b, 192).

Everyday construction of borders includes on a more abstract level political discourses, interactions and set-ups of institutions to project authority and legitimacy, on a personalized level stereotypes, nationalist and transnationalist feelings, inclusion and exclusion in the individual social context. Given that these processes are ongoing and constantly reiterated collectively and individually, a border cannot be a permanent institution but a process that is never finalized (SCOTT

2012, 83-84; KROHN-HANSEN/NUSTAD 2005, 5, 6, 9). The dynamics of social actions gain a spatial component that should match the space that is provided for those actions to happen. Yet both, actions and space, are informing each other about where to take place, adding some temporal fluidity to the whole exercise and opening caveats for other factors outside the socially-constructed set of interactions to play a role. Through this, the discipline of border studies can easily be connected with other fields of social sciences that are related subject-wise based on the very fact that borders themselves are not given but constantly re-negotiated within and reiterated across societies. Borders do have a strong relational character, around which fundamental concepts such as identity, international order and “othering” as well as their interplay manifest. It makes it therefore necessary to discuss the concepts underlying the prisms through which one examines the border in relation to each other. Major prisms are territoriality, identity and marginalization. Building a national or a collective identity requires the definition of the territorial scope in which this identity can be upheld, leading to sometimes complex bordering issues when competing models of identity are available. Once a border is established, the aggregation of bordering-activities, such as the crossing, guarding or consolidating the edge of statehood, creates issues on all levels of analysis. This affects the international dimension of internal attempts to bring a political and social order onto the state as well as the degree of how these border-practices reflect on and influence the structuring of the state itself. Creating an identity for the purpose of othering, consolidating a concept of social and political order as well as constructing the border are mutually dependent and self-constituting, making the aspects surrounding their existence an integral part of their functions and nature. Individualization along and segmenting space into compartments can only work when there is an identity of the state that is accepted to be worth to demarcate and when there is a concept of order along which a border and its functions can be constructed (LAPID 2001, 7).

Looking at this basis, bordering can be seen either from a pragmatic angle by conceptualizing and generalizing practices of border creation or from a critical angle by questioning the mere existence of generalizable border categories. Such a frame is necessarily very broad and while there are merits in helping to understand how borders appear and what their impact is in social terms, critical and pragmatic approaches need to be consolidated in a way that match the analytical angle and the circumstances of the individual border (NEWMAN 2001, 147; SCOTT 2012, 85-86). When starting to analyze a border not only defining the level of analysis (scope) and the lenses or interfaces to methodologies through which one has a look at it is important, but also the interfaces

and relationships of formal – emanating from the state – and informal – emanating from society – border creation processes. Territorial control, security and sovereignty which lies at the heart of states and the everyday life, power relations and compartmentalization of social actions which define the practice and influence the states behavior so can form one coherent process. This dissolves the Westphalian desire of having a fixed boundary, shifts away from spatial fixity, and introduces a fluidity of transitional spaces in which the mismatch between political borders and ethnic or cultural boundaries are constantly softened. The introduction of these softening elements helped transforming analytical approaches to better grasp borders as something invented by society to manifest differences and distinctions between spaces and groups.

Given the intensity of interaction and the fluidity across the spaces, a borderland is per se a border-crossing-land reaching out on both sides of the border, shaping and impacting the life of the people living within. How far it reaches into the states and at what point the border doesn't influence the lives of the people anymore is difficult to tell, but how strong historical shaping-processes of the border influenced networks in the region can serve as a proxy to understand that reach. One can draw from this analysis that the main factors determining the borderlands and also its history are spatial dimensions of border-state interactions.

Given the spatial determinants of the borderland, VAN SCHENDEL (1997, 221-222) proposes a set of spaces depending on the degree how strong the existence of the border dominates life of the people. The border heartland is the most affected area by the existence of the border, where life and social practices are directly formed around and across the line – a constant adaptation process to border policies and intensity of territoriality and authority. The intermediate borderland is not as intensely affected by the border and the outer borderland only feels its existence under certain circumstances: in the daily life, the border is very remote, only some left-overs of uncertainty with regard to rapid political changes that may involve this area in the border dynamics are still there.

Thus, social relations and practices of territoriality, changing policies and geographic proximities provide different spatial compartments around the border on multiple levels, depending on for whom they were constructed: the spatial understanding of the central elites of the borderlands and the practices they use to recreate them differ from the understanding of a trader in a border-village. The differences shape social borders, politics construct the political borders, yet this may change over time, which means the historical reality of border-spaces is always in flux.

1.2.1.2. Temporal dimension of border studies

The previous analysis about the construction of borders and their emulation and reiteration in social practices, also included the fact that a border is still constructed around the central aspect of state territoriality. Territoriality is the central feature for an entity to be recognized as a state, yet the construction of borders and preservation of territoriality presents a conundrum as it directly connects state-identity with territory – a rather recent invention as for a long time the connection was with rulers or religions. However, the consolidation and state-building exercises led to the nation-state as a point of reference in the understanding of the development of countries – ignoring non-Westphalian alternatives and traditions, unless it is to show the emergence of modern states. While it can't be ignored that nation-states are a major source of political, cultural and social identity, either through bottom-up by tradition or top-down by planned construction, centering also border-studies around the concept of the nation-state, this form of statehood is the snapshot of one social practice to link the territories of the periphery with the center (KOLOSSOV 2013, 4). How these practices can change over time and what impact time has on spatial properties of a border is another important point to take into consideration.

The historical analysis of borders is especially important as over the last 200 years the nation state became the dominant model of spatially organizing the world with borders as crucial elements in this new system of states, embodying the territorial consolidation and taking possession of unclaimed areas. Historical circumstances as well as the choice of principles how to organize a state and how to define its role with regard to others shaped elite behavior in drawing demarcation lines. This means that changes over time are as important to understand as changes within space to get a grasp of why borders are where they are and fulfill the functions they do (BAUD/VAN SCHENDEL 1997, 213-214).

Borders, their meaning and their legitimacy are essentially inward-oriented, meaning that their existence is strongly related to the state governed from the center, the ideology around the existence of this state and perceptions of the border that are related to this ideology as well as the resources available to shape and form all of that. By these means, a state gains territoriality, which may be understood as an ideological discourse that transforms existing spaces, history, culture, economies into a space bound to and by the state. This can happen through evoking nationalist sentiments to sharpen the distinction against everything outside the established territory, internationalist sentiments to reduce this distinction and put the territory into a global network of equals,

or any other ideology that provides an answer how the space it occupies and transforms is related to other spaces (PAASI, 2011,14; cf. WALBERG 2011, 33; SMITH 2000, 3).

The temporal component comes with the effects that shifts in these practices and discourses bring over time depending on the principles by which a society or a state organizes itself. As all agents involved in constructing a border have the tendency to reify their legitimacy, intentions and motivations both within social and political spaces and within social and political borders, also the border itself and the practice of the state are not off limits for these changes. Looking at the world and its compartmentalization now is just a snapshot, ignoring the whole process and alternatives that led to the outcome. While territoriality is a key marker of statehood, it has been only recently that it became fixed – shifting territorialities over centuries were rather the norm than the exception (ACKLESON 2011, 246). As borders cannot exist without a state and the nation-state becoming the reference point of understanding borders, it is – beyond the taxonomy of social relations – necessary to understand changes over time in how states manifest themselves, on what guiding principles they rely on, how they function and how states use their borders for territorial, identity, security and emotional reasons so as to integrate society/societies with the state itself (PAASI, 2012, 2305-2307).

Changes in territoriality go hand in hand with changes in sovereignty, the right to legitimately use means of coercion to project power within the limits of one's own territory. For territoriality to be intact it has to be recognized inside the country as well as by the neighboring countries, accounting for an overlap between social and political borders. A shift in these may change sovereignty and the legitimacy of territorial claims, which may create a grey zone, making territoriality a very fluid concept over time (BRUNET-JAILLY 2009, 2; cf. MOSTOV 2008, 37, 57, 71; HAMEIRI 2010, 27).

Time-based changes depending on the principles by which a society or a state organizes itself emanate from the wish of having an exclusive territory through which the state can exercise power and organize its society and within which a society can form a suitable state structure. Therefore, any border has some degree of flexibility built into it, which account for the flexible legitimization of borders on more legal or cultural terms. Organically grown polities that just pushed forward into unchartered territories, claiming these regions when the existing communities were unable to halt this push, needed this flexibility in the process of their expansion as bureaucracy, politicians, nobility, traders, the military or economic players all had their own distinct perception and interest about territoriality. As each of these groups perceive the space of the border differ-

ently and through their involvement in the borderlands construct it differently, they shape the behavior of the state they constitute. As interests and the external circumstances change over time, the behavior of the state and the construction of border spaces are changing as well. How to resolve this fluidity depends largely on the cohesion of the state and how important the border is for the national economy and security. If the relationship of the central elites with regional elites is stable and if they are well integrated within the state, they will construct the border space in analogous lines as the center, bringing social borders and political borders closer to overlap. If not, the state may find it difficult to project power or may try to forcefully shift the picture in the right place (BAUD/VAN SCHENDEL 1997,217-219; KROHN-HANSEN/NUSTAD 2005, 10, 13; BROWN 1996, 20)

This already shows that the evolution of states and borders mutually condition themselves, adding to the spatial dimension a temporal, process-based dimension in the level of analysis. Sovereignty at the heart of the state-order does not happen out of the blue but is a lengthy process to align territory, identity and politics – complex procedures that take long time to yield results as they target social interactions themselves. The territorial factor or the basis of the territorial state of where these social actions take place is given by constraints that sovereignty sets up, security needs the state has to address and the spatial extent of a basic identity (NEWMAN 2001, 146-147). This provides a strong nexus not only between temporal and spatial factors in the construction of borders but also highlights the importance of a connection between state and social borders. The great merit of this approach is that it extends social actions and statecraft in the making of borders by adding power relations and power functions. As these change over time, the significance of borderlands and their meaning to the various actors is changing as well (KOLOSSOV/SCOTT 2013, 4).

VAN SCHENDEL (1997, 223-225; cf. MOSTOV 2008, 93, 100; FRITZ/MENOCAL 2007, 12-13; REID 2009, 38-39) provides a life cycle highlighting the temporal aspect of border-creation and the historical legacy embedded in it. Starting from the embryonic borderland in which there are no distinguishable borderlines and where political authority was not a function of territory but of alliances among leaders, situations arise when frontiers of different entities close in on each other. Not all of these areas should necessarily become borderlands, but where there will be borders such a situation usually precedes the formal borderline. Once there is agreement on such a line, the infant borderland boasts still of preexisting social and economic networks crossing the line and keeping the connection among the people across the border intact. So far, there is no

strong identity linked to the state and its territoriality and the border seems rather one potential outcome of many than an already existing reality. In the next stage of the adolescent borderland, reality hits in, yet there is still the idea of the time without this border. The border already confines social and economic interactions, old networks are weaker than before but haven't disappeared yet. The adult border land is characterized by acceptance of the reality of the border, reducing cross-border interaction and reshaping networks to follow the borderline. This is the point when a border is perceived as eternal and fixed in time and space, embedded in the minds and behavior of the people affected – from a “natural” fact it became a social fact, giving it new meaning and legitimacy. Once however it starts losing its political importance or the space changes in which the border is important, new networks emerge, exploiting the slow fading away of the border. If violence is involved when groups try to stop the process or fight against the border to protect their own interests, the eventual disintegration can become either quick and messy or be halted for a while. Either way, the border becomes less relevant as an organizing principle until it is defunct, meaning that it is essentially abolished and barriers are gone. New networks that do not need a border to exist may appear and subsequently the whole space changes.

Not all borders follow this life cycle in a linear process or go through all stages; however, this model can be extended to accommodate underlying shifts and disrupting processes by extending it with the spatial criteria of border-making presented above.

1.2.1.3. Criteria of demarcating space

Demarcation is a multi-level process: on the one hand, the border demarcates space itself, yet the way a state functions and a state is constructed provides the socio-spatial categories for borders to be able to bring order to society. What a border means to the people whom it includes or excludes, what it symbolizes, haptic factors such as the permeability are all different for different people, leading again to the point that every single border needs to be analyzed with its own individual lens, scope and within its own set of parameters so as to examine the way how social and state borders overlap. The closer this overlap, the less conflicting is the existence of state-borders and the easier cooperation and cross-border movement can happen and the easier it is demarcate space: The same holds true for competing interpretations of a common history and contradictions in social actions forging a “We” and a “They”. If these competing views cannot be resolved, any demarcation exercise will stay unfulfilled, leading in the worst case to territorial conflicts catalyzing violence as the institution border is being recreated on an emotional level that fosters feelings

of pain (WILSON 2012, 4; FRITZ/MENOCAL 2007, 15). When the state-given and social divides do not overlap, states often help themselves by using national symbols or more brute through language, culture or resettlement policies to create the coincidence between social and political borders by adding an emotional dimension to the borderlands (BAUD/VAN SCHENDEL 1997, 233). Border conflicts so are fostered as a form of identity politics that is re-iterated in politics and historiography, the constant creation of borders through social actions to mark a difference becomes a convenient method of social mobilization to mark a threat (cf. MORRIS-SUZUKI 2006, 13).

This first criterion of demarcating space – by fostering an overlap between state and social borders – needs to be complemented by criteria that set the groundwork for such an overlap to take place. As state borders by way of their creation cannot be absolute, and any map at any point of time is just a snapshot of various tacit agreements to let social practice create the border where it is now, one needs to take into account the fluidity when it comes to state sovereignty. This fluidity can be the result of the lengthy construction of differences along the border to match the territory of sovereignty or of the border's role as a catalyst in manifesting existing differences to establish a stronger sovereignty over an area. This allows reflecting changes in the differences along the borderline over time and the role of the border in bringing together sovereignty, border creation practices and territoriality. One can complement this kind of categorization with classifications about the genesis of the border: does it result from warfare or from an agreement, is its coming to existence mainly based on a function to perform within a trans-boundary system or rather functions serving only the state itself. Categorization with the help of sovereignty and modifications by accepting the fluidity in purpose and functions of the border makes the exercise less descriptive and rather focuses on the functional and political impacts of the border as a dynamic process in its own right. The border thus is not just an outcome anymore but gives input as well as output into the process of its own creation (NEWMAN 2011, 34-35; HAMEIRI 2010, 58; KAUP 2002, 864).

Sovereignty and territoriality are therefore not absolute but conditional upon constant justification that they are legitimate within a fluid environment (WILSON 2012, 11, 18). As sovereignty is informing the consensus of practices to create borders and vice versa, borders are allowed to shift and to erode, either when the state is in crisis and loses legitimacy or by greater developments such as globalization, supranational governance or higher degrees of interdependence. As territoriality stems from sovereignty, this means that state territoriality is a criterion for demarcating a

border only in absolute terms when the sovereignty over the territory is not in peril. As a criterion to have borders in the first place, territoriality is undermined by relational networks and mechanisms superseding state-power that are ordering the world beyond just fixed spaces (ANDERSON 2012, 143). The actions of such networks and their identification are not always bound to a specific territory. Their intention is mainly to challenge the state and its ideology by juxtaposing the fluid identity of themselves and the border as unfinished institution against the ideal of the state (BRUNET-JAILLY 2009, 6; cf. GIERSCH 2010, 218).

Territorial sovereignty as a fluid concept, depending on how stable the state is that exercises it and how well state borders and social borders are overlapping, can leave uncontrolled territories over which a state may have sovereignty claims but no possibility to shape them. This can be called de-territorialization as opposed to the Westphalian ideal of a state as a single entity exercising a normative control over the demarcation of its own territory. While those uncontrolled territories may exercise de-facto sovereignty over their territory and so shape the construction of borders, they do have relations with neighboring states, organizations and networks. In this way, controlled and uncontrolled areas, legitimate states and illegitimate entities form networks that penetrate into the process of constructing state borders, creating a multitude of formal and informal demarcation processes, blurring the state border. Along the lines of networks, there is a multitude of borders establishing sovereignty in different fields like politics or commerce, but none of them can project full sovereignty over the area across all fields. These lines depending on the resilience of these networks, economic prowess of the region and understanding with legitimate states can be far more important than formal state borders – influencing and altering the recreation-process of borderlines and adding tension to territorial claims (SALTER 2011, 65-67). The quality of the state and the various types of territorial control it can employ – political, economic, coercive, full, sporadic among others – gives a hint on how capable it is to control and demarcate space and its own fluidity as well as to generate power and control local elites from taking over power. The ability to control fluidity is therefore another criterion for demarcating space (DEAN 2011, 238-239). Control does not mean to restrict movement along global networks that do not care about fixe borders, or adjusting the intensity of movement, but rather awareness of the nodes of these networks and a strategy of including and excluding particular nodes (KOLOSSOV/SCOTT 2013, 4).

For the economic criterion of setting a border it is important to understand that capital can only circulate between competing spaces that are shaped by asymmetries and inequalities, so that a

border perpetuating this state of affair is necessary. Borders divide space between states and keep a certain economic level vis-à-vis other states in check, upholding differences so that capital allocation can happen (WILSON et al. 2012, 1). Markets so do have influence on the shape and functions of borders and borderlands, dividing labor and informing border-policies that in turn alter the creation-practices and may even add internal borderlines. On the one hand, markets would favor borders that are more open; on the other hand, they need the divide to gain yields. This allows them to play states against states, and so informing the border regime, perpetuating inequalities of people and goods across space – and sometimes even time – creating multi-dimensional markets across borders (BRUNET-JAILLY 2009,11). Borders become market enablers and economic dividers, fostering borderland interaction on a range from nonexistent via a minimum degree of exchange, to considerable interaction in integrated borderlands where all barriers are removed. The social and political ramifications of this are mainly based on distribution questions: the border brings through its economic influence new power relations into the borderland which in turn are based on the definition and construction of the social and territorial borders and the strategy of the state (BAUD/VAN SCHENDEL 1997, 221; PAASI 2011, 17).

This feeds into the idea of multiple borderlines for different actors as some can thrive and exploit the differences as if there is no border at all but just for the purpose of keeping the inequality in place, while for others this very same border can be a big obstacle to overcome.

Culture as a criterion provides the pitfall of essentialism, yet when analyzing power, territory and agency at and around borders, culture as a backdrop of practices to create the border and to engage in “othering”, as well as in facilitating cooperation, definition and recognition, does play an important part when trying to categorize the set-up of borders, the border-implication on and of policies as well as the shifting relationships among identity, territory and sovereignty. (WILSON 2012,10). Fears, images of friends and enemies, ideas of cultural realms depend on borders separating the people inside from those outside, creating multi-level spatial compartments that perpetuate asymmetries around borders and are altered by de-bordering and re-bordering trends. What trend has the upper hand at any moment depends largely on the perception of the state’s role in the eyes of the state itself and the people that live within. Cross-border cooperation, regional economies, infrastructure, power and authority so are in constant flux, re-defining their functions as how to fit in the paradigms of the border-regime, the re-creation of the statehood and affirmation of territoriality and legitimacy. In order to achieve this and adapt to the flux, cultural traits

inform the degree of openness (PAASI 2011, 11-12; HAMEIRI 2010, 54; VUVING 2006, 808; HOBBSAWM 1992, 5-6).

In conclusion, a border is a political construct based on sovereignty and informed by the projection of territoriality, and so reflect practices of state-control and social actions in dividing territory with practical consequences for those affected by the line, leading to adaptations of lifestyle or to challenging the status quo. This depends on the degree of authority a state is able to project. Thus, a border is posing challenges and opportunities for both the state and the borderland-population with both being able to use the border for their own socio-spatial intentions and activities. As these factors may all change over time, the border as institution is never complete or fixed in time and space but always depending on the socio-political necessities against the backdrop of historical circumstances, deeply affecting the formation and territorialization of states (BAUD/VAN SCHENDEL 1997, 211-212).

1.2.2. Considerations of the role of the state

As the term borderland is understood as a region within a state that is deeply affected by the existence of a border, the question comes up as to what functions does this area have for the state. For once, it is chosen as the limit to sovereignty and territoriality. With the establishment and subsequent demarcation and control of the border, the area around it is meant to support this process by providing the infrastructure to uphold this control and by being a signpost of where the actual power of the state ends. As neither the state nor the society can be the dominant force in such an area as they both mutually necessitate themselves for the creation of the border, a real imposition of authority on what function the border and the borderland should play doesn't quite work so that negotiations between regional societies and the central state need to bring a compromise on the roles. The state cannot simply impose a boundary or its idea of a nation but needs to find ways to reconcile its claim for territoriality with locally constructed social and territorial boundaries, restricting the state's power in the area and opening up opportunities for the local communities to make use of the state's resources and its need to maintain the border (BAUD/VAN SCHENDEL 1997, 215-216).

As the territory around a border is central to the manifestation of power relations, understanding its transformation over time is necessary to grasp a better understanding of how it shapes and gets shaped by the structure of states and impacts of state power. For example, borderlands that had a mediating role turn into buffer zones or even military regions when the state structure, the territo-

rialization process or the inter-state relations require it. Contrary to that, attributing more conciliatory border functions may ease tensions while continuing to delimit the territorial possession of the state. Everything of importance with regard to changing conditions of politics, policies, and economics has an impact on or take place in borderlands. Borders as institutions and processes are established primarily by political decisions – be it in the center or in the periphery – and furthered by social practices of re-establishing the border and giving it legitimacy so that no economic, social or political life of a complex society could exist without them (PAASI 2011, 15-16). Within the state, the border as institution is set up from mutual understandings, policies and attributed functions concerning territoriality, but is altered and modified by networks and the actual perception of sovereignty over the construction process, leading to complex interactions from top to bottom and vice versa. Thus, the strong relation between governance, state, society and border works as a transmission mechanism of functions and policies, and a reflection mechanism of the circumstances under which those occur (cf.PRESCOTT/TRIGGS 2008, 36-38).

Therefore the state in its various forms – as empire, nation state, national state, network state – is playing the most significant role in territorialization and therefore bordering processes. It is a central entity notwithstanding its actual form and finds itself in a field of cooperation and competition with other entities that have the same or similar tools of exploiting power relations at hand to demarcate territory (KRAMSCH 2012, 232).

The action of the state as the collective of governance and government with the aim of creating and maintaining its own existence, manifests itself in the shape and functions of the border as well as in the methods how to continuously create that border. Borders negotiate statehood as well as identities, yet the type of border is important to take into account: international borders, borders of territory or sovereignty, limits to power or political reach. With this in mind, one needs to analyse the border as a manifestation and benchmark of how territory, identity and the state are mutually related (WILSON et al. 2012, 3).

As various spatial and temporal factors determine territoriality as well as sovereignty – and vice versa – and the shape of the borders containing these principles, the meaning of sovereignty and territoriality is subject to constant changes. The increasing number of state borders, their multi-level characteristics, their fluidity in roles and functions as well as the complex process by which borders are made perceivable allows a single factor on any level to make a difference in changing an entire border and spaces that shape it. This is not only true for the formalized borders between states but also for informal or social borders that play a role in the behavior of states structuring

themselves and their societies. This is essential in a historical analysis of border-practices and discourses to pin down borders as processes and institutions or defining the underlying reasons why and to what degree borders materialized (PAASI 2011, 13).

Therefore the right choice of the level of analysis and the lens pointed at the border in terms of methodological approaches is important. For the project proposed here, a macro-level analysis targeting economic interaction and changing faces of economic policies as well as shifting ideas of statehood and the projection of power and authority within and outside state boundaries seem to be the most appropriate. Not only allows it to emphasize the role of the state in setting borders and includes the roles of neighboring states, but is also open to multi-level spatial borderland-construction, the mutual influence between border practices in the center and the periphery as well as the temporal flexibility and spatial fluidity in the process of demarcating a line.

The advantage of this approach lies in the possibility to reconcile spatial and temporal factors in the creation of borderlands within the framework of a historical analysis. Many studies emphasize the spatial over the temporal components and thus putting entire epochs into a taken-for-granted past and simply looking at the nation state. However, the practice of creating borders develops over time, attributes functions to the space against the backdrop of the historical circumstances and is deeply influenced by and influencing state structuring and the development of interstate relations. Furthermore, while emphasizing the elements of the state in the process, an approach with a temporal component allows focusing also on the variability and countercurrents that happen in such a process (O'DOWD 2012, 172).

1.2.3. The nexus between social and state borders

Having theorized how an overlap between social and state borders is a criterion for demarcating territory, it is necessary to understand how they are related and how everyday processes of border making work when creating political, social and cultural borders. It is evident that the parallel construction of states and borders, the nexus between setting up territorial borders and the creation of social borders require a deeper understanding of the mechanisms they are based on.

While borders emerge simultaneously with states and while there is a strong temporal component in the factors shaping these processes, one should not overlook the mentalities and circumstances in creating border categories. This puts state-determination of constructing a border and setting local identities in the region to fulfill this goal against the development of social identities out of a sense of locality in border regions (MALESEVIC 2006, 118-119, 228-229). While the state and

its development will always play a central role, the rigidity when dealing with a state-border needs to be attenuated by considering the relationship between borders, people living around them and their practices. This means that in addition to the multiple lines created through power-relations and state-actions, and in addition to the formation of borders by social actions on a macro-scale, there is a contribution to borderland-formation on different levels exploiting the relationship between spaces defined by borders and local societies and their every day practices (KOLOSSOV 2013, 8). Everyday practices such as economic, social, family and cultural activities incorporate the border, which either harden the border or lead to regionalization efforts of the borderland on both sides. These practices reflect social transformations, local identities and with them transformations of the border itself, as well as disruptions. Border regions reveal these aspects as they are defined by all historical memories, symbolisms, functions and local attitudes associated with the border. Everyday worlds of the inhabitants of border regions so are altered by how socio-political transformations and changes in social relations re-define perceptions of the border and of the people on the other side of it. Such alterations can have political roots but almost necessarily have political consequences as they re-configure social borders vis-à-vis state-borders, since both of them can serve as political tools of nationalization and mechanisms for defining social spaces (WILSON et al. 2012,5).

Nationalism is also linked to this construction of everyday-borders. Symbols, signs and narratives play a key-role when defining the “other” and so creating a border, often nested in memories that stem from a common history with the neighbors. Depending on how the narratives and memories are perceived this could alienate the border regions from each other and recreate identities and symbols for this political vision of the representation of the territory and the border of the state (WILSON 2012,6). These representations are shaped by traditions, education, mass media, political discourses and the conveyed picture of the national history and territory. The “national” is not only an outcome but also a determining factor of how social processes are structured, in what tradition they ought to be seen and with what kind of symbolisms they are charged when they are shaping and getting shaped by territoriality. Nationalism as a way of representing territory is not only an instrument of the state but also shaping the state’s behavior, self-recognition and image it wants to convey (ALBERT/BROCK 2001, 31).

The state in this process, despite its power and abilities, is not a freestanding entity, separated from the society over which it wields its mechanisms of control and on which it imposes its ideological effects. The central role of the state gives it an advantage in exercising its powers in the

production, re-production and policing of borders. Positioning its activities within a larger ideological framework gives legitimacy to the state and its subsequent actions such as disciplining people or setting a cult around a border to create a common “other” and so interfering deeply with the social construction of borders. Having blurred the lines between political and social borders, and having consolidated the information flows from one sphere to another, the state can make use of this grey zone and act with a lot of discretion, leading to a more pervasive exercise of power. This in turn can increase uncertainty among those affected by the ideological construction of the political border to the same degree as it increases the conviction and certainty among those whose way of constructing a border matches the political ideal. That way the state can play with the ideologies out of which it was created by the society and so can shape social practices, elite behavior and vested interests alike. In the end, the state can organize spaces and demarcate its influence through symbols. Through borders the state can in the end uphold its ideological effects, connecting the meaning of the border such as a guarantor of security or as a heritage of a great past directly with the state’s power. Apart from that, the ideological dimensions of state power is based on and becomes itself a social process, which sets an external constraint for activities within the state (GAINSBOROUGH 2009, 3-4).

This powerful role can also be weakened. External factors such as globalization or internal factors such as state-weakness may spill over the border and lead some degree of fragmentation and re-organization of the social world by providing different interpretations of nationalism and cross-border interactions. This in turn informs the making and shaping of the state-border as the creation of social borders and cultural borders are still very much connected to the territory on which they occur and within which they inform the symbolic production of the border. While on the one hand, an elite of politicians, academics or artists shape an idea of the territory and the state, on the other hand ideas of the same category are shaped by local social representations, symbols, images, prejudices and stereotypes. This leaves the agency with the affected people in the borderlands and still attributes the state a major role in interpreting the shape of its border to define who is in- or excluded (PAASI 2011, 17-18; BUCHANAN 2003, 244; HURRELL 2003, 287-288). This is curtailing the freedom of action of people to various degrees and creates different perceptions among different actors, which in turn informs the practice of building a border and of shaping the social and spatial compartments in which they live (WASTL-WALTER 2011, 2).

Both, local and state levels complement and influence each other, shape national identities and constantly compare the situation with how it might be perceived on the other side of the border. This is changing constantly as the situation of the country is changing under global pressures and processes but also as the everyday reality of the people tasked with constructing the border as well as their attitude to power and state-territory is changing as well. This kind of discourse about the border and territory of the state is a fundamental part in state-building as a state can through this discourse create symbols, signs and images to convey the idea of the state and its territory and so consolidate the process of border-making by instilling a national identity or feeling of belonging and solidarity. This gradually leads to an overlap of social and political borders (LUGO 1997, 56; HOBBSAWM 1992, 11). Thus, the consolidation of the territory and the management of social borders are intricately linked with how a state comes into existence in the first place.

1.2.4. Borders as result of state-formation and territorialization

Given that the state wields a considerable amount of control over its people and shapes their behavior, channels their activity and uses them for the state's own construction and interests, it is necessary to understand how a state is formed and through what ways its relations to the society in the border-creation processes are structured to understand the territorialization process in the formation of borders.

While the border is an institution of the state and the result of increased territorialization through state-formation, this historical process is largely based on outcomes of conflicts, negotiations and compromises among the political elites and socio-economic groups, which sooner or later reaches agreed limits at which social borders and the possible political borders meet. By contrast, state-building is less organic and much more force-driven, attempting to set up mechanisms of control and to establish a border that fits the ideal an elite has in mind. This is not a linear outward-oriented process, but a non-linear trajectory with repeated starting-points, changing goals and alternating means at hand to project power. What both have in common is that the process comes to a halt when power balances are reached and an internal equilibrium is established, followed by periods of conflicts. In each of these cycles, the borderland plays an important role as it defines the properties and extensiveness of the space a state can shape and feeds in its own dynamics into the process of state formation (GOODHAND 2012, 333; VUVING 2006, 807; LUSTICK 2004, 98). This affects the loyalty towards the state – a built state has to work harder achieving true loyalty than an organically grown state – and with it also the identification with the territory and

the way it is structured. State building and how it affects the border areas can be seen as a top-down socialization process whereby state formation leaves intact or fosters local forms of community and practices of bordering. Territorialization plays an important role in that: a formed state can exist with non-territorialized identities such as religious or ethnic affiliation, whereby a built state needs to merge its territorial claims with an identification with the territory and the containing border. The meaning of the border becomes therefore a central matter to the state as it shows the boundaries of its own power and ideals. It can regulate this power within the border by itself, yet outside the border it has to reach agreements with other states, limiting the scope of its use of power (MANSBACH/WILMER 2001, 59-60).

The state's tools for differentiation from other states and segmentation of its territorial claims are therefore far more complex than it can be shown on a map and based on pluralistic concepts entailing communities, society, needs for security, identity, which all feed into cycles of integration or fragmentation of territoriality and through that shape the borders. Westphalian ideas of borders are based on very normative social structures, delineated by strict lines, yet they cannot account for the border-construction in non-Western regions based on different functions states assumed in segmenting and structuring their own territoriality and consolidating the social realities within their claimed territory (ALBERT/BROCK 2001, 33). Territorial power in this sense has a strong social power component, the ability to control people, exploit resources, levy taxes and to provide protection, means of defense and an idea of belonging. Culture may increase this projection of power as a vessel of homogenization within the boundaries of a state, transported through religion or other spiritual bases of power that mandate the practice of power. These practices include the Mandate of Heaven, the merger of social and economic control as in feudal systems, property rights, or socially created barriers to capital accumulation. Numerous ways exist to use a "normed" culture for promoting territoriality and reinforcing borders yet the basic requirement is establishing a division and using control over resources on the ground paired with the authority on the higher echelons of the state. This creates the means to control a territory – the purest form of this would be the Westphalian system, yet there are current and historically less clear-cut forms that would fall into categories like transnationalism, supranationalism, tributary state systems or suzerainty. The concept of territorialization doesn't necessitate a clear demarcation of the territory, yet a clear demarcation requires a territorialized entity. Territory and with it the construction of states and the establishment of political authority is a useful shorthand to approach the question why borders are set up in the first place (ALBERT/BROCK 2001, 34; LING 2003, 88-89).

Territoriality facilitates political control in a manner that doesn't require a lot of political or economic capital as long as it is built on an accepted source of legitimacy which may decrease or change depending on whether the order provided by the authority delivers the public goods wanted by the population or whether the internal social structure changes due to accumulation of capital, the arrival of new elites and power houses or the need for the state to acquire new functions. These feed into the territoriality and so shape the fringes and borders of the state, instilling a feeling of unity among the people of the state's territory. If this feeling of unity builds a community of citizens that show a certain degree of solidarity among their peers and towards the state, one can speak about nation-building as a way to consolidate territorial rule as a multi-dimensional spatial arrangement (ALBERT/BROCK 2001,35).

What is functionally important for the subject of this thesis however is not so much how state-building and nation-building works internally but rather how it affects the fringes of territory. Territoriality brings authority into a space, the idea of a unified state gives territoriality a purpose as well as making it a bargaining chip in the outward-oriented interests of a state (ALBERT/BROCK 2001, 38, 41). Increasing the functionality of territoriality explains the striving of states to bring about the overlap of social and political borders, providing borders of society that become normative blocs of ordering the state or nation. The practices to reiterate the creation of the border should mold the population into an integrated society within which members are solidary among each other and which itself occupies a certain space. The more integrated, the stronger becomes the attachment to the space occupied and the closer political and social borders overlap. Yet, if the population of a state is more diversified, then relations of control get more important at the edges of territorial statehood, challenging the idea of a national community. This is again a two-way street, since the organization of political authority if it is interested in keeping its territoriality alive, has to react to the ways how different elements of the society combine. Therefore, shaping a normative territorial order and with it a clear-cut border is highly variable over time and strongly influenced by events and periods that disrupt this process. The concept of statehood, the way how territorial expansion is legitimized and authority over space and people is consolidated diverge for geographical, historical and economic reasons from state to state, rarely sharing the same concept of statehood and legitimacy. At a border, these concepts coalesce in the functioning of the boundary as it represents the formal, normative and sometimes even dogmatic construction of statehood (ALBERT/BROCK 2001, 42-43). Interactions at the edges of the state-space that sooner or later coalesce into a practices of bordering are influenced by and mirror the

state-building exercise which again is fundamentally based on creating legitimacy over territory, constructing a social representation and functionality of the state within a territorial representation of the state's power and embedding the presence of the state in pre-existing modes of social cohesion and networks. While within a Westphalian system a border clearly circumscribes a state, and so re-creates the whole state as a counter-proposal to whatever is on the other side of the line, statehood and the functioning of the border are more difficult to reconcile in non-Westphalian models, that don't rely on territorial boundaries to create a normative order of states. They intrinsically recognize borders of their own territorial reach, but these are not necessarily congruent with the bordering concepts of neighboring states, allowing for areas of spaces in which complex interactions between local cohesion, adherence to the state, normativity through territorial control and the projection of state and local interests occur. Territoriality so becomes a function of the inner organization of states and reflects the scope of legitimacy of the state's power as not something contained within a fixed frame but slowly fizzing out at the edges and overlapping with other concepts of territoriality (ALBERT/BROCK 2001, 44-45, 48).

State formation and state consolidation in this sense is more than a one-way imposition of centralized territoriality over a border space. Existing networks, local modes of cohesion and ordering space continue playing an important role as for once states when they expand their periphery leave the edges only poorly integrated within the new system, constricting the old space to some degree but opening opportunities for new elites to mediate between the old and the new way of ordering, between the center and the periphery, brokering the degree of state-penetration and so shaping the construction of the border with similar influence as the state by introducing its own concept of territoriality. This brokering-function over border areas often based in networks with initially commercial purposes thrives on tensions, discords and contradictions between and within the interests of the groups affected: local merchants, government officials, old elites or the ruling class in the center. What lies in the center of this behavior is the control of exploitation and monetization of resources. By doing so, these affected groups on the one hand introduce territorial expansion of the state and set a limit to its expansion, which they as new elites can control and communicate, furthering and limiting the power of the state. For the state, there are two options: coopting or destroying these networks, and so integrate these areas into the state's territoriality and make them governable through political or administrative intrusion. Networks in this way can further the control of the state and its edges by replicating the actions of border-creation or forcing the central governments to impose control over the frontiers as reaction to their defiance

against integrating into the state. The state however must be willing to deploy its resources and to centralize its means of power-projection to bring the area under a tighter control, to achieve a stable territorial and political order and to foster its sovereignty over the fringes of its territory. The state so can bring order and legality to practices that without its consent would be illegal and a sign of breakdown, if it shows its ability to project its authority and makes use of its means of control. The institutions helping to extract resources, levy taxes and re-create in their practices a normative idea of how a society should be ordered so can be recreated at the margins of control by involving rulers, private actors and networks in their set-up. The final outcome may differ from state to state and could entail solutions ranging from a total crushing of the local actors to a cooptation or even granting autonomy. The outcomes depend on how state and local actors can cooperate in extracting benefits – material or political. If the state manages to get a share of the extraction and thus a way of controlling the livelihood of the people, it receives revenues that allow it govern by accumulating and intensifying its own means of coercion vis-à-vis the aspirations of private actors and by encouraging sharing and investing revenues to foster the goodwill of the people. It's a bargaining process between cooptation of local elites and control over the activities of the wider population. This creates an environment in which the interplay of practices of social structuring around territorial availability of resources shapes the existence and perception of borders by allowing the state to play a freer hand in dealing with local elites who mutually need each other for their economic aims and territorialization exercises (GOODHAND 2012, 334-335; BAFOIL 2013, 5; MEEHAN 2011, 380-381; SCOTT 2009, 67; HAMEIRI 2010 45-46; O'LEARY 2004, 20).

1.2.5. State-sanctioned performance of otherness

Territoriality, autonomy, sovereignty and the border itself have an underlying commonality in the performing aspects they bring upon a space. Before the institutional set-up of territoriality and the making of an agreed border can even occur, there needs to be a performative dimension of bordering engrained in the people in the borderland: encountering the "Other" is evidence enough for a border. With territorialization efforts, encountering the other becomes embedded in attempts to turn power into control over a space where sometimes several claims of control may meet. Bordering so transforms from the simple encounter into a game of loyalties and adherences towards those who believe are in control. An area can perform its border-status by showing its loyalty to a different polity than the neighboring area. The ability to expand is limited by the means

that this polity or state uses to assert its control and territoriality by either cultural inclusion of the area, administrative means of control such as tax collection or control over the accumulation of capital and exploitation of resources. This adds another dimension to the performance of borders: the border is there where another administrative or economic order is in place for the benefit or under the claim of another ruler. The claim of authority over an area as such is not worth much as territorialization can only happen with a legitimizing performance embodied by the presence of the state in the form of institutions, delegates, properties or enforced laws. The border itself is then a place where different modi of state-performance clash. The place of this clash symbolizes the territoriality of a polity in case of a consolidated state-area, or a waxing and waning type of adherence and loyalty depending on how close the state can make itself felt in an area and how physically accessible this area might be for a projection of authority. A border in that sense is an event depending on the presence of the state as the main actor – an idea resonating very much with nearly all pre-Westphalian polities. Bordering can be so described as an ad-hoc process that happens under certain circumstances. What counts far more is the claim to and acceptance of authority across temporal and spatial parameters so that the border as a performance of othering can be enacted when it is necessary to uphold the idea of territoriality and sovereignty by ritualistic representations and performances ranging from armed border posts to simple acknowledgment of the “other”. Myths, deities and legends as well as the generally accepted shape of authority – be it constant over the whole country or fading the further away from the center – can help with this process. At the core of this performing of othering is the removal of internal barriers between the state and its fringes while setting up external ones so as to territorialize power by creating a sense of belonging based on a socialized politico-geographic space. The repetition of social practices of othering turns so into a performance of territoriality. As processes, othering and territoriality cannot be complete or permanent as they need to be maintained, which depends on the sense of territoriality, means of power projection and the agreed modus to exercise and shape sovereignty – all factors that are subject to change under the influence of politics spilling over from other polities, economic constraints or cultural adaptations. With these changes, the idea of sovereignty and territorialization may change and so does the concept of the border as fixed, fluid or fading margin of power projection. This has ramifications on the territorial and political determinants of social life at the border – and vice versa – so that the practice of establishing and maintaining the border may expand or contract according to the circumstances and the willingness and ability of the state to do so. With the waxing, waning and uneven penetration of authority, it is non-state actors and

networks who institutionalize the border-governance, mediate between the state, the locale and the other side and shape a multi-dimensional structure of interests and authorities around and across the border (COPLAN 2012, 508-512; O'DOWD 2010, 1035, 1039-1041).

1.3. States and borders as social actions

Othering, territorialization and overlapping social and political borders are the underlying process of state-building. They may take different forms or be based in different ideologies and ideas of power, authority and functionality of the state, but essentially these processes describe an economic, cultural and political process across a space shaping collective social practices, perceptions and views of the world. What constitutes a state is thus the territorial dimension of its social power, allowed by controlling people and resources and legitimized in its claim against the “other” and by doing so slowly making political and social borders in terms of their underlying practices congruent. Statehood and the definition of its margins becomes so the result of social actions and interactions, one aimed at forging cohesion and loyalty inside, the other aimed at distinguishing the outside, strongly related to attempts to order space by setting up borders. This means that territoriality itself is a necessary but not a sufficient pre-condition for a border as other dimensions of social practice rooted in economic activities, cultural development and political institutions have their own share in the contributions to the set-up of borders. The state and its border in this sense encompass and codify social change (ALBERT/BROCK 2001,36).

It is therefore important to look at the roots and mechanisms of state-building and by extension the creation of borders and definition of the “other”. The everyday construction happens on the basis of ideology, institutions, attitudes and the frame set within which agency is possible for the state and the local population. This happens across different levels, starting from the top with ideas of the territory that should belong to the state until it reaches the level on the ground with tax-collectors, enforcement of national laws and mechanisms to control or ease cross-border flows. This penetrates the space of the state and shapes its fringes by the practices it encourages and prescribes, shaped by and shaping political ideas of state-order and organization, cultural ideas of creating differences and classifying others as neighbors, partners or adversaries as well as economics in terms of self-interests regarding exploitation rights and taxes (SCOTT 2011, 134-135). Thus in the social interaction between the state and the border, the border is fulfilling different roles with different objectives. First, the state by the setting it gives to itself is structuring through interactions with the border-area and territorializing its own claims the shape and functionality of

the border. This provides legitimacy for the state and is testing out its range of viability. In this sense, the border is a state-organ, not endowed with agency merely by its existence, but only an agent in terms of its functionality for the state. This can allow determining in very abstract and political ways the underlying reasons of tensions around borders as well as attempts of states to shift borders to better fit to their claim and idea of territoriality. Second, by introducing social practices to create a border, a border can be regarded as a socio-cultural object, endowed with its own agency and determined not just by the state but also by those who are in charge to create it. Through this prism, a border is a result of state-power and authority as much as it is a construct of discourses and power relationships. Tensions and conflicts so become a result of the agency of the border, the relations it creates and the interests it shapes and are shaped around it. Third, a border is a social institution created by the social practices around it and so reflects in its functionality and role to play in the setting of the state changes of society, concepts of statehood and political transformations. Yet, as an institution itself it has a degree of agency informing actions of the society and the state it reflects. The result of it is the ability of the border to determine the strength of flows across itself, be it people, goods or knowledge, changing with the transformation of societal ideas on what role the border has to perform. These roles and the corresponding objectives are by no means clear cut and leave wide grey areas of overlap. However, to understand the role of the border and its coming into being as a result of social actions and interactions, this classification is very helpful.

1.4. Agency of borders

The border as a social action and the event and material based manifestation of the border means that borders and borderlands are not passive or reactive, rather they are agents in their own right. While a state is penetrating an area through its institutions, its economic and political capabilities and through measures to bring social and political borders to match territorial claims, there are social impulses from the borderlands that have great effects on the creation of borders and the assertion of claims. A border so cannot just appear, it is a product of consensus and may wax or wane with the development of the state, the resolution of conflicting claims and the preparedness of the borderland to play along. Such a process is per se not linear but rather cyclical and interrupted by a multitude of factors emanating from the center or the periphery of the state in question or counterparts of the adjacent entity. The impact on the borderlands on both sides of the border are mutually influencing and by that comparable – but not necessarily parallel –, connect-

ing the history and the shape of neighboring countries and explaining their rationales and actions with regard to their territorial claims. This on the one hand makes a strong historical perspective mandatory for a reasonable analysis of borders and borderlands as such changes and disruptions occur over time or show their impact with some delay. On the other hand, it requires a deeper analysis of the relationship between the border, the region and the state as well as between the region and the state of the neighboring countries. Effects can be local, regional or global, in the realms of politics, economics or culture, all affecting the structure of the border and the borderlands, the relation between them and the state and the inter-state relationships. The agency comes into play when borderlands inform the actions of their respective states and take a defining role in their own in historical transformations. The interplay between what is happening at the state level and what actions does the borderland take allows to identify cycles and disruptions in the development of the border itself and by extension the adaptation of ideas of territoriality and its administration. Changes in these ideas are difficult to impose and their effects can be long-lasting and may turn local disputes into military conflicts that mark the issue of clashing local ideas of borders and state-sponsored definitions of territoriality (VAN SCHENDEL, 1997, 235-237; CARTER 2010, 986; BROWN 1988, 54-55).

In the functionalist perspective, this kind of agency – emanating from the border or the state(s) – can be classified as either centrifugal, fragmenting, or centripetal, integrating in its character. This interplay defines the territorial outcome of the state as well as its organization model and the paradigm to structure its foreign relations. What events had a lasting impact on the agency and the interplay, and in what ways these were disrupting, needs to be analyzed on the basis of changes in the defining socio-politico-economic relations that determine the functionality and status of borderlands vis-à-vis the state. A state for once structures its relations to its parts as well as to its neighbors, but it does so by mediating through its areas and integrating them into the wider functionality, which gives them the opportunity to affect the character and actions of the state, a chance to opt in or out of the state-project, and bargaining power to determine the area's own structure and degree of autonomy. For the historical analysis of the formation of a border and the borderlands, this means too that historical facts from perspective of the state need to substantiate claims over areas and need to be rationalized within the creation of the state. The state as a socio-politico-economic entity determines its existence through processes that penetrate territory, and so their reach determines where a border is and what function it shall fulfill, regardless of how the function is determined by the border-area itself. This results in a spatial relationship be-

tween politics and geography that is determined by temporal fluctuations. Political sovereignty contained within formal limits is so just one possible outcome of many different variations depending on the relationship between functionality, territoriality and the exercise and means of sovereignty and authority. The agency of the border and the borderland is at the same time inward and outward-oriented. As an inward-looking institution, it can organize itself along the lines and needs of the two neighboring states influencing the distribution of territorial authority, the terms of division and separation. As an outward-oriented institution, a border affects integration and control of the state over the borderlands. It is therefore necessary to not only understand how borderlands, their culture, societies, politics and economies change due to outside influences, but also how they introduce transformations in the regional order, and what repercussions and changes from the outside shaped the borderlands (WILSON et al. 2012,11; SCOTT, 2011,128).

With any change in the border-state relationship come changes in state-to-state relationships and vice versa. These transformations include internal developments of social re-structuring, adoption of political systems, transformation of cultural norms, attitudes towards economic parameters, as well as external developments such as wars, annexation, diplomacy, and the structuring of relationships with neighbors. They shift and change power-relations and so influence the shape and function of borders and with it of the borderlands. Borderlands and the way their agency influences their existence and integration into a state are mediating the functions of a place where dual but not necessarily equal state power meets and so influence cultural relations over time while simultaneously staying highly localized and territorialized entities of a state. Without localization and territorialization, borderlands wouldn't even be able to fulfill their functions. In that sense, when looking at a borderland, one looks at multiple borderlands and borders at the same time, as their function, perception and purpose change through the lenses from what side of the border one is studying them. This means that one and the same line on the map serves different purposes of performance for different sides of the border, is embedded in a different structural setup and so consequently endowed with a different degree of agency, a different scalability of its impact on the regional order and so a different development and participation in its performance. The outcome is a compromise of internal and cross-border negotiations to determine the agency of the respective borderlands. Due to the necessity to continuously recreate and perform the border, the agency endowed with it comes with a strong participatory dimension: the population of the borderland, government and its institution like the military, border guards, tax collectors on both sides need to craft the capability of the borderland to be an agent itself. The formal performers of

bordering, such as the government and its representatives responsible for ensuring the state's territoriality are bound to strictly enforce a certain functionality of the border that matches with the territoriality of the state, while the more practical performers are tasked with executing filtering-processes at the border and to maintain the status quo. The populations of the borderlands thanks to the agency they enjoy are able to make use of some flexibility, undermining the strict container of territoriality and contesting or manifesting the meaning of the border. The agency of the border and the borderland therefore manifests on the one hand the political and economic order within the state and the anarchy of the inter-state system. The bordering actions range therefor from geopolitical considerations, economic needs to social practices in networks across borders, all of which have their grip on the shape and functions of the border and so influence its development through ideology, symbols, mediation, institutions and attitudes, that confirm or undermine the border and so nuance the direction of its agency (SCOTT, 2012, 84, 86-87; DIENER/HAGEN 2011b, 191; O'DOWD 2012, 159-160; CANEY 2005, 190).

The nexus between a border and the determination of the territorial extent of sovereignty and control as well as between border and state-separation is historically therefore not that clear as it is today and had been much fuzzier until the advent of the nation-state that consolidated some of the flexible traits of borderlands. The rigid definition of a border and the borderland in absolute terms is not a natural state of order, but rather a matter of definition that resulted from forging state-interests and borderland-needs into a compromise. The more general this compromise is formulated, the greater would be the degree of fuzziness of the line, creating grey areas in which the functional terms of the border of inclusion and exclusion would be far from clear. The agency of the border and the borderlands makes this often still the case though: a lack of overlap between political and social borders make borderlands a transition zone between different states, manifested in cross-border networks, that the borderland can nurture thanks to the degree of flexibility it enjoys and on which the borderland can capitalize thanks to the agency it fosters. Agency allows the creation and maintenance of such hybrid places where the belonging to one side or the other is not so clear cut as the state may see it, and where this grey-zone status is an essential part of the border's agency. This is the case for the borderlands of both sides, regardless of what functionality is imposed upon them. Affinity and affiliation in such a grey zone is far less state-centered but much more localized, making the neighbors across the borderline more important than the majority population. A borderland in the sense of a geographical area in which the authority of a state fuzzes out and gradually morphs into the geographical reach of the authority of

another state is by its definition fluctuating and not a clear cut-area stopping at the imposed single line, even though there are various motivations to seal the borders and preventing contact and exchange of both sides, such as avoiding secessions or claims to redraw the line. A borderland always extends over and builds an entity across the border, yet depending on the degree of rigidity of the borderline the ability of the area to form a functional region may be inhibited, forcing the population to orient itself towards the state rather than the border and their counterparts across it (NEWMAN 2011, 37; JENKINS 2002, 20, 30-3; STURGEON 2004, 481; cf. ABALAHIN 2011; CANEY 2005, 15). Thus, whether a borderland is a functional entity that can make full use of its agency-power is a function of how the state treats and sees it, as well as it is a function of how it introduces its ability to act in its relationship with the state.

This often depends on the extent of the borderland around the border: there is no symmetry necessary, it can be large on one side and limited on the other, both in spatial and cultural terms, yet in either case the economic and social activity and interactions influence and are influenced by the border, impacting the development and shaping a pattern of agency. In terms of agency, this means that a state sometimes may be required to allocate resources or may use force to influence the local population and to show their neighbors how strongly integrated the region is within the state. Means are the promotion of human development, capitalizing on existing networks for trade and information, but also turning the region into a military outpost, reducing the agency of the region to zero while maximizing the influence of the state. How this happens depends on the relation to the border and degree of its contestation, as well as the image the state has of the region – whether it is reliable and loyal or unruly and secessionist – which accounts for characteristics that can change significantly once on the other side of the border. Thus the range of possible agency is determined by penetration and control of the state as well as openness and economic independence of cross-border networks. This leads to two extreme scenarios. One is where the borderland solely serves the purpose of delimiting and isolating the state in spatial terms, the other one is when the border forms a transitional zone of cooperation and exchange. In the latter case, the area may be a zone in which both sides try to assert their differences and uniqueness, or it may not be an abrupt ending of one entity but a continuous passage from one to another, creating a spatial hybridity, a very own sense of identity and an agency that is in many instances autonomous from the state (NEWMAN 2011, 20, 38; PRESCOTT/TRIGGS 2008, 34-35).

While the factors above describe the room for agency in terms of social interactions and their construction, political limits also have repercussions on borderland-state relations, the capacity of

regions to act on their own behalf and shape the creation of borders. Borders in the political sense are mostly understood as delimiting a space within which the state enjoys authority – congruent with the role of territoriality. Yet demarcation and management must be state-driven as it is the state's core-interest to attribute a functionality to the border and use it in the construction of its foreign relations. The region in this sense only is allowed to have agency where the penetration of the state's self-interest is limited insofar as it wouldn't show any effects on the perpetuation of this self-interest. The superseding level of state-state relations determines the agency of the border which in turn influences life and social activities of the state within political and territorial constraints. With it come certain ideas of historical narratives and marker-symbols in political landscapes associated with the border. Agency has thus a political limit given by the political identity of the state which it diffuses across its territory. A border is an element of the political identity and the position of the state in relation to other states in the world system – inherently constructed on the side of the state with only a limited role to play for the borderland where the state allowed it. While it has been established that the discourse of borders finds its roots in state-building, agency of the borderland can be rather interpreted as an appropriation of space where state-building hasn't penetrated with state symbols and narratives insofar as it would represent an interpretation of the relations to the other side. When in the state-integration process both, interpretation of trans-border relations and agency of the borderlands converge, one may talk about integration increasing the agency of the borderland (KOLOSSOV 2011, 172-173; SHARP 2008, 64).

1.5. Integrating borderlands: state-action within the national and international system

The determining role of state actions in shaping the borders and their functionality as well as in limiting their agency requires analyzing the parameters of state-action by which borderlands are incorporated into the state-setting and differentiated vis-à-vis the borderland on the other side of the border. Representation and resistance are important limiting factors providing an imagery of the state as benefactor or opponent informed by symbols of power usage and the goals the state sets. The use and exercise of power keeps the territoriality in place and with it the state and its penetration in the region, even though constraints may be different from area to area and actual policies may change over time in their constraining character. Yet the borders and their functions are still tangible and visible, splitting territory and parametrizing the integration of the area in different terms with their respective states. This informs the cultural construction of borders be-

tween communities and between states, sometimes reducing areas to images constructed by the state and shaped through the implementation of policies in these areas (WILSON 2012,6).

An analysis needs to take the social dynamics and historical development of these policies for each border individually into account to determine how territoriality was shaped over time and in space. As the state in the border areas defines itself through its authority and territoriality, its parameters of asserting control are distributed between economic and coercive factors. In economic terms, merchants in a border area with their networks and control over information and resources wield power independently of the state, so that their integration depends highly on how the state guides the economic situation in this area. As this happens through the fiscal system, the way it fits with the regional economy determines the reach of the state and the integration of resources and their extraction into national supply chains and merchants into the national power hierarchy. On the coercive side, the process is more straight-forward by a simple top-down transmission to form and transform the area to keep control. The borderland in its function as transmission area for international trade with its local capitalists together with being a link to the hinterland may attenuate the use of coercion if local commercial power can balance central means of coercion. This allows determining geographic patterns of the intensity of coercion and the absence or presence of capital, knowledge and governance structures in control of resources, such as households, clans, feudal organizations, as parameters of negotiation power vis-à-vis the wielders of coercion and their way of conquering and controlling the area. All in all, territoriality and the penetration of the state serves the aim of setting up a system to command people and resources, covering the costs to keep the state running and financing its activities to further the state's ambitions. The conditions set by economic and coercive terms of the ruling class vary over time and among countries, meaning that different combinations led to different perceptions, allies and enemies, different structures and organization of state power in border areas and different strategies for the extraction of resources (TILLY 1992, 130-137; BOIX 2010, 25-26). The effects of these strategies result into how thick the layer of governance may be: too strong coercion let people flee to areas with only thin levels of penetration, a generally too thin governance fosters the advent of autonomous landlords. The economic governance can so determine the sizes of armies, changes of hegemony and territory, and by the interwoven character of economic and coercive activity places every region at an intersection of a top-down – control-based – and bottom-up – market-based – hierarchy. Depending on how strong each factor of exploitation and domination is – a strong exchange-based community generating revenues for the state will see less control, while a

strong control-based community won't generate a lot of economic activity – there are organizational consequences that vary between countries and their activities depend on the weight of these factors as well as their own historical genesis (TILLY 1992, 127, 160; cf. BOIX 2010, 18; SOLOMON 1969, 15).

The major commonality among all states is their willingness to devote a lot of resources and adapt their social organization for war and its preparation, be it inner-territorial wars or wars with other entities to help expand the territorial control. The status of empire, meaning one entity is in control over one or more other distinct entities, can be the result of such warfare, that is perpetuated by the replacement of one empire by another, and leading in the end to colonial possessions. Within that, the borderland fulfills the vital duty of keeping the territory intact and so must never be a bargaining chip between countries. Administrative practices and concepts of sharp borders, drawing maps, sealing unequal treaties shall shield those areas from becoming tempting targets for other powers to conquer. Upholding sovereignty in these areas is not an easy task and requires resources as well as negotiating aptitude at the end of a major war, that shakes up the wider international system of greater powers that normally should guarantee stability among its members and between itself and smaller entities. Yet in a struggle for hegemony, who is more in control and shows more influence depends on geographic locality, technology and the position in the hierarchy (TILLY, 1992, 167, 176, 179; CANEY 2005, 150; O'LEARY 2004, 20-21; LUSTICK 2004, 92-93).

This feeds into a trend of agglomeration. Smaller entities disappear, empires with fuzzy borders consolidate themselves and a few dominating players shape the states and their connections, making state formation a very external process of control, coercion and influence projection as opposed to an internal model of national consolidation. External wars are a result of internal efforts to tame populations within the remit of control of the state and to bargain compromises to build monopolies of force and control – and by doing so: constructing states in whose structures the struggles and compromises that brought them into existence are embedded, narrowing the limits in which struggles for power may occur. This happens through international norms, colonization, bureaucratic practices and standard models for borders, eventually narrowing the path for state formation onto the track of the national state (TILLY 1992, 180-183).

Territorialization happens so on an administrative as well as a belligerent path that rationalizes entities into well defined-states – a process that spread all over the world and catalyzed in the end by international organizations. In a patrimonial structure, kin groups, feudal aristocracies or war-

riors serve as power brokers, maximizing their territory and tributary revenue and instigate wars when such a group showed weakness. Yet with the necessity of gaining revenues for state-endeavors, classes, social organizations and collective interests started limiting the state's ability to go to war and rulers needed to engage in both, external and internal brokerage with competitors, commercial classes and knowledge classes, leading to a decision between territory or tribute: if the state gets too demanding, the citizens outrun the state. The consolidation of class interests leads to nationalization, internally and externally, defragmenting sovereignty, fending off competitors and limiting the competition for territory as cooptation or repression – either way works to tame class-interests – require lots of resources. From patrimonialism over the integration of networks as power brokers to nationalization and specialization, one can observe a pattern: once a state manages to incorporate capital and the economic class in its pursuit of territoriality, it can build its force on brokerage, then incorporate its force into the state structure through nationalization and consolidation of class interests and then specialize it through negotiation channels. The national state with its institutions allowing for taxation and revenue for state-interests as a compromise between forced extraction and concentrated economic activity won out against other forms of governance and with it the clearly demarcated border the state necessitates. With powerful states having expelled rivals from their territories and the development of efficient warfare control and expansion of territoriality as well as a centralized, differentiated and autonomous state apparatus, this form of statehood with the help of revenues generated by economic activities could reproduce itself across the world, and clustering territories into neat entities. Colonialism and the motivation to create secure areas and buffer zones for protective reasons helped in this regard (TILLY 1992, 181-190; WIMMER 2013, 4, 24; SOLOMON 1969, 24-25).

The above described model of state actions to integrate and consolidate their territoriality as internal and external processes of state-formation opens a range of questions this thesis tries to answer for the case of the Chinese-Southeast Asian borderland. Given that the connection of smaller entities and aggregation of their interests led to state-building in the first place, how come in the vast border-area no long lasting entity could establish itself? And by extension, what made them join their respective state? Given that occupying a position in international trade and exchange of knowledge as well as a providing a link to the hinterland is both fulfilled for most entities in this border region, and given their centrality in cross-border exchanges, why couldn't they develop a relative power great enough to challenge the states of which they are a part now?

The picture this chapter described is a complex process on different levels from the local to the international with factors interacting within and across these levels, integrating and alienating local and state-actors, based on policies of economic and political integration within a territory to strike compromises over the dichotomy of economic and coercive concentration. The state – regardless of its form as empire, national state, duchy or galactic polity – as a social action set up to gain wealth and power through means of capital and coercion, and as an outcome of bargains and compromises of class interests and consolidation efforts around national goals with borders to delimit its authority and territoriality helps to understand how a border region was formed within the context of the very statehood and its changes and adaptations. To answer the postulated questions requires to view a border region as a polity in its own right influenced and penetrated by the state, yet not necessarily part of statehood given its unique functionality and agency (cf. GIERSCH 2011, 37-39; PRESCOTT/TRIGGS 2008, 10). Yet it has to be applied to any particular border individually given the variable settings of border-state, state-state and borderland-borderland relationships, as well as the means the state employs to integrate and consolidate its territoriality and so attributes functionality to, allows agency for and strikes compromises with borderlands over their meaning and functions for the state. To bring this theoretical background into a workable foundation, a model needs to account for the different factors on different levels accounting for collective action in state-building, penetration of statehood, forging compromises, integrating territoriality and creating a unique borderland-landscape that finds itself in a tension of being a link for transnational exchanges as well as a playball for territorial interest projection.

1.6. The nexus of border-creation and insitutionalization

One can argue that greater integration of the borderlands has more to do with the continuous thickening of governance across a territory than the millimeter-exact protection of the state's territory. The nexus of creating fixed borders as opposed to fuzzy areas in which authority is fading and state building can be traced to this concept of thickening governance across an area. Borders are after all constructions of their own period, depending on the states capability to govern and project authority. Institutions build the crucial link between the creation of statehood, the penetration of governance and finally the establishment of territoriality (PERDUE, 2005, 514-515).

While the discussion of the mutual influence of authority and territoriality is a hen-egg-question, it is becoming clear that to form its territory a state needs to vertically and horizontally penetrate the area. Horizontal penetration is the claim of the state to the area, using means to ensure loyalty

and disincentivize defection by deploying passports, armies, border guards, while vertical penetration describes the building of institutions to fix the area as integral part of the state. As it is people who construct the border, it is not surprising that it is also people that need to be territorially fixed for making the state happen in a border-area by providing material and organizational resources as well as symbols and actions to underpin the claim: border-posts, currency, narratives, as sense of belonging by providing security and stability (PERDUE, 2005, 43-44; DIENER/HAGEN 2011a, 4). For providing all of this, institutions are necessary, that when set up in places increase the thickness of governance and allow to clearly demarcate a state. Without the borders, a state would fizzle out at the fringes and would soon collapse as it is the borders that grant stability and entail enough flexibility to adapt to new circumstances (FUKUYAMA 2012, 13-15, 19). Institutions embody shared beliefs and ideas that keep a state in a territorially stable shape as they allow for greater social cohesion, reward cooperation among people, strengthen norms – and by their specific rituals and status of sometimes even national religion or nationally agreed organizational principles of society delineate communities from one another – fueling the creation of a border (FUKUYAMA 2012, 37-38). Imposing a normative behavior on people enforced by institutional power incentivizes cooperation and in turn thickens the governance of the state in an area, especially as it helps with large scale mobilization for war and expansion (FUKUYAMA 2012, 62-63, 442). Institutions to regulate the exchange of knowledge and goods is another factor in letting the state into a territory as the more intense yet mediated contact between locals and foreigners, new techniques and the faster classification and spreading of news may alter the local attitude towards the state. The result is the recognition of authority of a ruler over the territory by the local population, the border comes into play where the recognition ends and the recognition of another ruler begins.

What is becoming clear is that the border so becomes a social institution that determines the geographic scope of the practice of organizing a society, whereby one can speak of a competition between states over whose model is more attractive. Factors are the capacity to provide security, the likelihood to go to war, practices of law and justice and the provision of public goods (PERDUE 2005, 18-19). But as a state encroaches on a territory to expand its border, it has never been just an empty space: there has always been some kind of social organization present, the question being why it didn't become a state itself. Organizational structures often give the answer. Decentralized, networked organizations resulting from rough geographical terrain – as it is the case for northern Southeast Asia or Southern China – or in places that do not allow or do not have the

means for fixed agriculture rely on reciprocal cohesion patterns without permanent institutionalized political authority and administrative capacity to govern the areas they inhabit, so that against the – territory-based as opposed to personal ties-based – authority of a fully-fledged state with means of coercion to impose an institutionalized, impersonal structure they are more or less powerless (FUKUYAMA 2012, 76-77, 80).

Economic growth, social mobilization for state-goals and ideas about legitimacy are fueling the stratification of the state and complexity of its organization and vice-versa (FUKUYAMA 2014, 52). With an ever more complex internal organization to provide for the needs of the population and the ruling class, also the need to absorb the surrounding areas and demarcate territory, over which it can impose its organizational structure and use it for its own development, becomes greater which leads to a thickening of the layer of governance and creating sharper borders. While this might be true in lowlands, inhospitable terrain and low population density – factors that prevented the building of states in remote areas in the first place – makes it difficult for the encroaching state to project its authority as it is difficult to provide the necessary infrastructure and reach a critical mass of people with ease. The territorial concept of a boundary as opposed to the concept based on direct control over people can hardly get a foothold as the horizontal penetration and the thickness of governance is barely sufficient and new institutions can only be put on top of already existing modalities of cooperation (FUKUYAMA 2012, 90-93, 438).

Institutionalized rules with a geographic scope – which applies to the border as an institution in its own right –, acceptance or opposition to these institutions and the conservation of these institutions over generations, their coherence and stability need to be reinforced by norms and rituals, which only works when there is an investment into them based on the recognition of their value for society. Their dependence on a high population density, a critical mass of benefactors of these institutions, makes this difficult to achieve in border areas as long as no one is there to benefit from them and as long as no one freely succumbs to the institution, there is no incentive for anyone else to do so (FUKUYAMA 2012, 450-452, 455-456; JENNE 2014, 10). This collective action failure can explain in many reasons why even though there were no empty spaces, institutionalization didn't take place, why the construction of a clear border was an arduous exercise and why violence on both sides – the existing local population and the state – were so common to resist or impose the new model. Accepting a new structure of social organization that may even prove disruptive to the previous organizational model depends on the benefits that can be obtained.

Borderlands play a significant role as places in between – not really empty places but areas in which the organizational clout and the potential for a cohesive social structure is fairly low in comparison to the core of the state. How institutions of state-building interact with areas that do not provide the same underlying prerogatives that allowed these institutions to come into existence in the first place needs to be considered when developing a model of the development of borderlands. Southeast Asia has been borrowing a lot from India in Therevada-influenced states and from China in Vietnam, yet modes of social organization always underwent a process of hybridization and adaptation to already existing cultural practices. Thus, when I use the term state in this thesis, I keep the definition of the state and its teleology open, as the parameters of what constitutes a state by the Western understanding do not apply to the fuzzy concepts of statehood and borders at least in pre-colonial Southeast Asia (WOOD 2011, 25).

It becomes evident that the region this thesis takes as its subject is not just pieces of land adjacent to a line but a social space with its own dynamics and history, connected to the rest of the world and shaped by cyclical and linear factors of state-building making it a marginalized area at the edge of states, whose formation trajectories varied widely at the times they first encountered each other's territories. While concepts of their state-building efforts vary, the marginalization process went hand in hand with territorialization efforts of these states, changing their substance from transcendental unities to social organizations whose aim it is to territorialize space. The normativity of territorialization and its markers are not only an organizing principle but a social construction feeding into the perception of marginalization which in turn causes resistance or acceptance at the border regions. Territorialization as such is not just a state effort but a mold for the normative understanding of society and community as well. This is not to say that non-territorialization based factors – such as world-historical connections – also impacted the shaping of these borderlands to become marginalized entities at the edges of larger states (LAPID 2001, 28; KROHN-HANSEN/NUSTAD 2005, 19-20).

1.7. The case for Southeast-Asian – Chinese borderlands: a global perspective

The analysis starts with the independence of Vietnam from Chinese control in 938, when a first clear demarcation came into being, governed by principles adopted from China. Other entities were already developing at that time, with their own distinctive governance models and visions of territoriality and statehood. The case of Southeast Asia-China is particularly interesting not only as drastically different forms of statehood ranging from Confucianist-centralized states to galactic

polity models encountered each other at the border, but especially as the formation of these borders is a function of territoriality and incorporation of the area, making it a marginalized periphery whose location and functionality was a negotiation-process spanning several centuries. This chapter will trace the territorialization and incorporation of this area from Southeast Asia as well as from China and providing a consolidated view in the end. Apart from a mere territorialization and expansion efforts, the marginalization and the making of this periphery which finally substantiated as a border between two world regions was also dependent on a range of global influences that showed their impact through the strong network of exchange and information this area was embedded in. I will also show that while the states of Southeast Asia were constantly in flux and China as an entity was continuously changing, their focus on expansion, governance and institution-building was not an aim in itself but the result of other events, leading them to incorporate and change the area in both a cyclical and linear manner of penetration up to the point incorporation meant marginalization and the region became a border. This global and highly abstracted overview of the interdependencies of states in their formation process, borders, local actors and global influences leading to territorialization and incorporation will serve as the starting point for the development of the model.

1.7.1. The view from Southeast Asia

While there were some white spots on the map where the belonging to a polity was not really clear, it would be misleading to assume that states with strong centers and unclear peripheries automatically mean that borders were of secondary importance until the colonial era arrived. While there might be instances where this holds true there is ample evidence that borders mattered early on. The imperial court of Vietnam was at least with the fall of the Southern Song dynasty concerned with its borders. Weak governance of the border doesn't imply that the periphery was automatically vague. The perception of borders as demarcating "the other" and therefore accounting for an unsafe livelihood in the area also goes back far into the pre-colonial age, showing that while the periphery may be weakly governed, a place where the "us" ends and the "other" begins was often firmly established in the peoples' minds (GAINSBOROUGH 2009, 2-3). These factors support a consideration of this borderland not as a place that got its shape finally through colonialism, but as a non-linear development that happened with the evolution of pre-colonial governance systems and the interplay of their respective ideas of territoriality and statehood. What this means for the people living in these areas and for the social development of their live-

lihoods depends so on the manifestation of state authority along the border as well as the tension and views on historical legacies, politics and geopolitics wrapped around the border and the borderlands (DEAN 2011,220). Southeast Asia's past with different polities competing and coexisting without a single major dominating power in the region but a mosaic of smaller entities incorporated into states by a complex network of loyalties and dependencies offer multiple dimensions of state authority manifestation alongside different conceptions of statehood, that finally consolidated along a border. The process how this happened and the question why it led to the result we see today is the core of this thesis.

The state in Therevada-Southeast Asia was for a long time elusive in its role and hidden behind a preoccupation with nationhood and modernization, structuring the state as traditional, colonial or modern and ignoring how it is human practice that accounts for the creation of borders and spreading territoriality in the first place and accounting for a wide diversity in agencies and leadership styles among the countries and across the history. Because of this agency and the state's authority to implement binding rules, the state existed in Southeast Asia as well in China before the idea of a nation appeared, in which all actors are stakeholders and their interests get consolidated in governance. Differences lay in the modes of creating legitimacy, the role of bureaucracy and how control over territory is performed, making the encounter at the border particularly interesting. Other factors that set this region apart and shape the basis of a state are charisma – as an essential tool to establish legitimacy for actions and demanding obedience – as well as concepts of ownership. Charisma to get the recognition for being a leader, together with patrimonialism and bureaucracy as factors that condition each other, feeds into ideas how ownership should be designed. Large scale efforts to construct irrigation projects to secure the existence of communities had a corollary that communal ownership of land is preferred to private ownership with bureaucracy and the state apparatus using the surplus in form of taxes as their own economic basis. The state so could economically demarcate – and was demarcated by its economic exploits – its territoriality, making its evolution a cyclical rather than linear endeavor (DAY 2002, 2-5).

This introduces the importance of relations of powers that may go beyond the limits of the state and that influence the ability to set borders. The state exists and operates on the basis of its own power relations as a superstructure as opposed to a number of other power relations that operate outside the scope of the state and its territory, inevitably leading to conflicts and compromises and the establishment of mechanisms over multiple social locations by which the state achieves its territoriality (DAY 2002, 6-7).

In Southeast Asian states, kings as exemplary centers of a galactic polity, connected with their territories and people by ritual and were legitimized by charisma, putting personal qualities and ceremonial knowledge at the center of the state penetrating its territory. The networked structure of this way of organization makes any kingship a center, leading to politically unstable situations as the territoriality is not defined, boundaries not fixed and the provision of public goods such as security in exchange for loyalty was rather fluid as it didn't depend on the authority of the ruler but rather on his ability to deliver results. Needless to say, such a system is very patrimonial and personalized, where the place of people within the hierarchy plays a far more important role than the functioning of the bureaucracy. The networked mandala-polities of Theravada mainland Southeast Asia are far less states with a border but rather an assertion of the entities' own uniqueness, filling social actions – including bordering – with a cultural meaning (DAY 2002, 7-11).

A political center managed by charismatic leaders, organizing their elites and engaging in exemplary rituals needs a catalyst for creating territoriality by binding the loyalty of people. This step includes the provision of public goods, distribution of merit and prosperity, as it was the case in Pagan. The use of power needs be converted in prosperity so as to achieve authority and territoriality as a precondition for setting a border (DAY 2002, 12-13; CANEY 2005, 150).

The border of Southeast Asia with China is insofar interesting in that regard as the influences from India in what is today Myanmar and Laos and from China in today's Vietnam didn't lead to fully fledged adoption of state-concepts but rather a localization into preexisting patterns and practices of social organization, which more than before those concepts arrived were based on networks, shifting loyalties and exemplary behavior by the king and not so much on the provision of public goods, security, mobilization, which were only coming in on the next stage when it was necessary to consolidate territory.

Vietnam is a basket case of how political culture can be a product of outside ideas of statehood and civilization – in this case from China – and preexisting concepts such as prowess and clan-lineages as well as religion – Theravada Buddhism from India versus Mahayana Buddhism from China. The adoption of institutions, writing and bureaucracy helped the spread of statehood, but it was the elasticity in the preexisting patterns that allowed their local adaptation. From that, it becomes clear that the idea of a clear border demarcating the Vietnamese Lý-Dynasty as an entity distinct from China is more of importance than it was in places where the social organization was based on lineages and personal relations. Each of these strands though lead to their own political culture, to their own concept of borders and importance they attribute to them (DAY 2002, 20).

The role of cultural concepts, human practices and agency as well as trends in rationalization and bureaucratic centralization so led to differences in centers and peripheries and sometimes were at odds with each other. While many lowland cultures, despite the fact their rulers claimed to be god-kings or emperors disposing of unchecked powers, showed a shift to greater centralization and impersonal bureaucracy, highland entities didn't develop such institutions to be strong enough to compete with the lowland. The lowland states on the other hand with kings vested with huge powers couldn't claim full authority and absolute rule as they still had to deal with autonomous lineages, tribes and other social groups not integrated in or fleeing from the state structure that owned their land and even their lives. Laws were not meant to enforce individual rights or define the purpose of the state as a collective action but cement status and hierarchy – the rest was up to cultural interaction. Thus, authority and sovereignty weren't absolute as they relied on the acceptance of people who were not territorially bound to one king due to a lack of coordinated administrative rule. The lack of diplomacy, mutual recognition, concepts of private ownership, fiscal practices to fund war waging and comprehensible legal codes for social control were due to the fact the state itself was not territorially bound and thus couldn't provide these services. The result was a hybridization of concepts from the center and the locale creating very complex interplays between the state, its elites, local populations and borderlanders over how thick governance shall be and whether the penetration of the state is justified – in other words: what form power shall take (DAY 2002, 21-25).

DAY (2002, 34) gives a comprehensive definition of the state in Southeast Asia encompassing these deliberations:

The state is a complex agent that acts through culturally constructed repertoires of potent, rational, authoritative, magical, symbolic, and illusory practices, institutions, and concepts. The state is distinct from yet interactive with societal forces, in ways that vary according to time and place. The state regulates power and morality and organizes space, time, and identity in the face of resistance to its authority to do so.

This includes the fuzziness of statehood based on cultural approaches to authority, territoriality, overlapping localization processes of sometimes conflicting foreign concepts of statehood in the history of state-making in Southeast Asia. The state in this sense is a complex agent created out of human practices and consisting of multiple internal networks, conflicts, compromises that are

shaped around time and in space. Also, this definition implies that there is no sharp boundary between state and collective action from society as the process of state building requires the active participation and acceptance of the state by society and vice versa. This means, that a state is never a monolithic or complete mode of collective action and that by its foundations, states in Southeast Asia are not meant to be fixed entities but rather fluid, even provisional, ones so that when looking at borders, one has to see them as contact zones to establish relations, exert coercion, take on conflicts that help settling the disputes of the question what form power and its exercise shall take. These internal struggles and external conflicts shape actions of a state and allow changing it over time, and their solution attributes power and authority to the state, embodied by means of coercion and rewarded by the accumulation of capital as well as loyalty from families, clans, tribes groups as a way to exercise state control. This means that state-society actions can take a coercive turn but are also changing and by far not ubiquitous, which makes the integration of borderlands and the acceptance of any state in such an area a difficult task.

The state in Southeast Asia based on fluid networks and relations in politics, but also economics and religion cannot be attributed a coherent and rational administrative structural form, however the means of penetration it has through culture and state-sanctioned cooperative networks do allow creating borders around ideological and geographic spaces – just that these borders emanating from the same fluidity as the institutions out of which they are created are fluid as well. Violence is a means that can come in handy to make up for the derivativeness and hybridity of the states' institutions to define the boundaries that shape their statehood and give the constructivist foundations of practices a push to more coherence and rationality (cf. JENNE 2014, 11-12; BOIX 2010, 8-9).

Fluidity and territorialization however are difficult to reconcile so as to generate a deeper understanding of the creation of the Sino-Southeast Asian border. The above-described fluidity in institutions and allegiance to a state works as long as the state has a relation with people themselves and not with the territory they live in – which was for long the case in Southeast Asia. Territorialization was either rapidly extended or thwarted, depending on the prowess of the ruler, commercial and demographic growth or cultural or political tensions that halt consolidation (LIEBERMAN 2010, 2-3).

Exploiting family structures, administrative practices and ritualistic incorporation of pre-existing practices allow the state to show dominance and separate its claimed territory from other states by binding the population to it as a matter of reputation and status that comes with belonging to the

state. In the same way, this practice can lead to resistance and a re-traditionalization of practices as it often was the case later on as a reaction to colonialism (DAY 2002, 191-192, 194). In either way, the participation in the state was structured in a way that it could bring spiritual and commercial wealth, so that acceptance of the state relied on whether its organization could actually incorporate pre-existing spiritual and commercial practices in the public service. Bureaucratic office, status and wealth need to resonate with pre-existing markers of status and commercial and spiritual wealth in order to be accepted if the state expands into new territories. On the other hand the integration of new people, be it foreigners or locals can bring new techniques and skills in running and managing a territory, founding a symbiotic relationship between state administration, economic integration and human development – if the conditions are right (LIEBERMAN 2010, 15-16; DAY 2002, 2001-2002). Taxation and the regulation of commercial activities were another institution to achieve territoriality by binding people to the state. It kept wealth in check that it doesn't become threatening to the state's order and authority but provided public goods to bring areas into well-regulated states. Without these revenues, any state with a diversified bureaucracy was bound to collapse under the weight of the mechanisms to administer it. Expansion of territory and finding new sources of income were thus key drivers of territorialization, which in turn necessitated a greater penetration of the state (DAY 200, 206). In the end, the territorialization requires a specialized and accepted bureaucracy so that it can set rules for belonging to the state. The struggle between those who welcome the state penetration – as its practices resonates with already existing practices – and those who resist informs where the borders are to be set. In this way, broader patterns of social organization and ritual could flow from the center into the periphery, increasing the level of territoriality and so the boundary of the state. This accounts for some reduction of fluidity – even though crisis shattering the foundations of states still occurred so that the final territorial consolidation of the polities didn't happen until the end of the 17th century (LIEBERMAN 2010,19).

When looking at the formation of the three states of Southeast Asia bordering China, one can observe these patterns: Pagan – the predecessor of Myanmar – and Đại Việt, the newly independent polity which later shall become Vietnam were lowland entities, adopting Indian statecraft in the former and Chinese practices in the latter case. With better administrative practices and improved agriculture, both started their own path of territorial consolidation and extension. Vietnam's first indigenous rulers after a millennium of being a Chinese protectorate incorporated many features of the Chinese administrative practices such as a bureaucracy serving in the spirit of Confucianist

ideals, schools and competitive exams for public service that was organized in an impersonal way rather than based on family ties. However these were features set on top of those perceived lines along which a traditional Vietnamese state should be structured. So it is not a surprise that under the Lý dynasty interaction of families, spirits, royal lineage constructed to a mystic past were exploited to create a state different from what the Chinese have left. The state and the Buddhist clergy went on a reform path of the religion to control religious practices in the villages, casting popular beliefs, Buddhism and Confucianist practices into a national religion praising the authority of the dynasty. This helped the state to penetrate areas outside the Red River basin through multiple channels and to incorporate existing power structures by adapting the state's properties to the pre-existing conditions, setting state-institutions on top of already existing practices. Effective control however wasn't possible: the uplands and remote interior areas rested independent for a long time to come, especially since in the 13th and 14th century all greater low-land entities were attacked and their central administration even collapsed. Reasons for this were a too quick try at consolidating the territorialization of marginal areas, which created resentment among the local population. Other reasons were the large migration of Tai-peoples and as the consolidation wasn't strong enough a too high degree of autonomy for local power-holders. The subsequent fragmentation into smaller kingdoms that were not in tributary relations with larger centers thwarted territorialization efforts so that what is now the border area was an area of fluid small-scale kingdoms (LIEBERMAN 2010, 23-27; DAY 2002, 108-113; REID 2009, 7-8; BROWN 1997, 18; CHITTICK 2015, 146). Only in the 15th century with the adoption of a full-blown Chinese-style administration with civil service examination and the appointment of civil servants also in remote areas as part of a general colonization process from the lowland helped to consolidate at least the Northern part of Vietnam in terms of territory. Also, actors within the state such as Buddhist institutions were ripped off a lot of their wealth and autonomy from the 16th century onward so as to allow the ruler and the bureaucracy to be the source of all power and prosperity (LIEBERMAN 2010, 36).

Pagan and what later shall become Lan Na adopted the galactic polity model, whereby the power of the ruler was strongest in the center and decreased with distance: the closer an area, the stronger the administrating family was tied to the king, while far away areas were ruled as tributaries. While they were all tied to the leader by patronage and family ties the inherent instability caused constant power-fluctuations, affecting the territoriality in a sense that it was not fixed or demarcated. Claiming agricultural land, ritualistic practices and alliances were helpful, but the multi-

tude of actors and their partial concentration of resources undermined territorialization (LIEBERMAN 2010,33). The galactic polity model, in which the ruler is on top of a hierarchy that was cosmically given, does not rely on fixed territory per se, but rather on cosmological spaces controlled by the state. Territory can be considered as just another space the state can control and over which it can administer and include into ritualistic practices to legitimize itself. The cosmological concept of ruler has an ordering power through rituals and laws over lands and so can expand the thickness of governance in areas: be it through the promotion of new techniques in agriculture or written contracts over land leases. By recording rituals and transactions in writing, the state can define its territory in which it can act and perform rituals by excluding certain people from it or granting access. This still does not lead to clear cut territories but reduces the degree of fluidity in territorialization which can still be enforced by means of coercion. In this way the state could bring manpower and territory under control not least for tax collection purposes to continue expand its territory. This is an innate border-setting exercise for which the bureaucracy and ritualistic practices have to interact to claim, demarcate and administer territory. In a sense, the state penetrates an area through ritualistic means which then turn into concrete bureaucratic practices for administration (DAY 2002, 190). This system was not self-sustaining as the ruler was indispensable as a ritualistic mediator between earth and cosmos, military leader and coordinator of patronage, yet his ability to wield coercion trumps the lack of stability in his territory. However, the great autonomy and independent powers attributed to tributaries especially in the less accessible areas of the state in combination with only modest centralized control over resources and manpower made these areas more or less independent kingdoms loosely associated with their galactic center (LIEBERMAN 2010, 34-35). Until the 16th century, reconsolidation efforts went on, whereby even then claims to inhospitable and difficult to reach highlands were not more than claims while economic activity, demographic growth and administrative bodies concentrated in and around the centers that existed before: the Red River valley and the Irrawaddy basin. New was that Tai-migration produced two new states in the area of what shall become Laos and northern Thailand: Lan Na and Lan Sang were filling a void that existed for centuries. A territorial unity, however, was from the standpoint of resources and state capacity difficult to uphold and to manage so that claims remained claims without substantial territorialization efforts outside the ones necessary to keep the states on a path towards prosperity and strength (LIEBERMAN 2010, 27-28). However, some entities during that time with greater access to resources undertook centralization reforms, streamlined administrative practices and en-

gaged in in warfare. The states fought each other over their territory and paths of consolidation, such as Toungoo that conquered what is today Myanmar, parts of Thailand and Laos. The result was generally more efficient census and taxation systems, that penetrated the territory and apart from tax income and labor for large scale projects and more warfare, this process increased the territorialization effect of the state as well as its thickness of governance. Former nearly autonomous tributary polities were incorporated in the administrative structure of the state, as the center monopolized the awarding of financial and status-based privileges, and increased its coercive capacities to interfere in the polities of its tributaries (LIEBERMAN 2010, pp 28-29, 34-37).

At the same time, the lowland-states managed to construct a set of identification markers by using political consolidation and demographic growth to make religious practices, languages and rituals flow from the center to the provinces as well as by spreading elite practices to lower social classes. Largely this process compounded allegiance to the state, underlying the political ties by social practices and cultural adaptation. This process is however not to be understood as a standardization-process as practices, cults and literary traditions mixed wildly and influenced each other. The given context of a fluid structuring of the territory also allowed a very lenient attitude towards practices in the provinces. The strengthening of ties to the central governments happened by the control over knowledge, literacy and general ideas about power and space in the hand of monastic networks and delegations and emissaries of the courts as well as by mimicking practices of the lowland centers in the periphery. The role of religious institutions is not to be underestimated: courts together with the Sangha in Theravada-states joined hands to push the understanding of religious texts deeper into the countryside by establishing Theravada Buddhist monasteries. In Vietnam, Neo-Confucianism as of the 15th century spread first among the elites and then to lower classes as well as in the periphery, increasing the acceptance of Chinese ideas about law, statehood and scholarship. Eventually the geographic reach was not absolute but rather spotty, but the effects had large ramifications: trade and cultural links had a mutually promoting effect, increasing the penetration of border-areas and frontier regions. These networks of commerce and knowledge shaped consumption patterns as well as ways of life that became increasingly hybrid. Yet, as central and periphery-culture became spatially closer and tax demands were rising, frictions came up that had to be abated and encompassed within a potential identity, in which the same texts and symbols were allowed to mean different things to different people – allowing a trade-off between ideological normativity and territoriality. This trade-off allowed using these markers to exploit networks and standardization for political allegiance of the periphery with the

center and to capitalize on these symbols to erect boundaries against foreigners to protect claims over resources – in essence, an exercise in mobilization. This recourse to symbols of allegiance was especially likely at times and in places where the costs of avoiding secessions were very high, a competitor could be easily identified by different symbols and locals could incorporate these symbols into their own identification markers, linking them to a political entity. This means that these kinds of identities were far from stable but expanded and receded depending on how much they were leveraged, making any boundary based on markers of allegiance and identification very soft. Only over time, when there was a case of constant external threat, a thick-enough layer of governance and sufficiently dense networks of trade, culture and political influence, these boundaries could harden if the well-being of the periphery was linked strong enough to the situation of the political center. This was a strategy that can be found in Burma and Vietnam, where the markers of the respective lowland ethnicities and their language were invoked to improve administrative practices, strengthen identification with the throne and safeguarding their territories (LIEBERMAN 2010, 37-41; SCOTT 2009, 113-114, 155-156; HENLEY 1995, 292-293; LEE 2011, 59; cf. GREEN 2013, 199; O’LEARY 2004, 57).

Yet, borders were only a vague concept for most of the time, even during wars, after conquests or with increased administrative capacities since sovereignty was not a concept rooted in the people but emanating from the ruler, whose realm was universal rather than culture-specific or bound by territory. Having prosperous centers with strong networks penetrating into the periphery is one side of the medal, but in the end most of the tributaries retained a high degree of autonomy throughout their history, tied only individually and informally to the sovereign whose ritualistic and cultural primacy had to be accepted as a distant standard. Thus, integration on any level, be it economic, political or cultural remained contested well into the time of colonization, since lowland culture could not develop the normativity due to fluid and shifting identification markers and territorial ambiguity meandering between ex- and inclusion (LIEBERMAN 2010, 41-43).

This process left over around seven major kingdoms; however, these were far from territorially consolidated entities but remained ill defined within and outside their borders. Warfare and rapid expansion exhausted the countries that were not able to guard their borders and police their territory, so that in the end these entities found themselves in cycles of collapse and revival. In the main lowland corridors political entities contested their neighbors so that it was only in the 19th century that the whole of mainland Southeast Asia was fully consolidated between three lowland states: Vietnam, Siam and Burma. In the 17th and 18th century these three entities got a hold of

their territory, such as Burma incorporating Tai-states, Siam extending control over the area of Laos and Cambodia and Vietnam – albeit divided – consolidated its reign over the highlands. These states collapsed again between 1752 and 1786 but getting control over commercial growth, demography, better governance in the provinces and public finances exhausted from warfare helped the reconsolidation and prepared and easy entrance for colonial rule, which introduced concepts of national territory and systematic exclusive approaches to the construction of borders (LIEBERMAN 2010, 28-31, 44).

From what has been described so far, a basic pattern emerges: growing economic and military advantages of the lowland due to cultural standardization and stronger ties with other powers outside Southeast Asia – India and China – allowed lowland states to develop networks, accumulate knowledge, capital and as a corollary also means of coercion, entering mutually beneficial cycles of population growth and prosperity. One factor for example was the increased overland imports from Yunnan and Guangxi as of the 17th century as well as Chinese mines in Northern Mainland Southeast Asia which had both the effect of policing the border more closely for collecting tolls but also of granting more autonomy for letting Chinese mines operate to generate taxes. Using these means to penetrate the provinces the states claimed by leveraging their bureaucratic networks, cooperating with monastic networks and increasing trade, the states managed to become political and cultural authorities with denser tax networks and ever extending patronage systems. It is however interesting to see that border-cities with large markets were similarly privileged as port cities vis-à-vis interior provincial areas that relied mainly on agricultural taxes (SCOTT 2009, 49, 51). This wealth helped to barter a degree of autonomy, but sooner or later the mechanisms of state-consolidation integrated the borderlands in a stringent way. Migration from the center to the periphery to preach the gospel of the throne and vice versa to benefit from the lowland prosperity also had a strong integrating effect due to the commodification of upland products for bulk markets and economic specialization in border areas with rare and expensive agricultural and mineral resources. Strengthening trade networks and commercial infrastructure, agricultural intensification and new crops made integration more attractive for the periphery for getting access to larger markets, improving division of labor and getting their share of the rising prosperity. Advantages in wealth, technology, military, popular mobilization and attractive cultural identification markers were however also the foundation for exclusiveness, warfare and greater territorial extension, while growing dependency on the center helped territorial consolidation and integration up to a point of crisis – be it in trade, large scale war, catastrophes or rebellions: wealth and people were

concentrated in the dominant lowland states, it was in their best interest to increase territory, markets and access to goods by using coercive and wealth accumulating means such as deportations, tribute and trade (SCOTT 2009 43, 47). Overextension led to crisis when the core could not control its territory anymore, but as soon a degree of consolidation was reached, it fueled more expansion for the benefit of the lowland centers which were so able to gain the means for even more conquests.

Therefore, in the bigger picture, the major lowland entities showed in this pattern a linear development of administrative consolidation, yet a cyclical pattern in their territorialization with subsequent periods of consolidation, fragmentation and interregna. These large cycles of territorial, economic and social disintegration fragmentation and consolidation had impacts on the borders as well. While the states refined their territorial and administrative control in the course of their expansion and demarcation – since continuous expansion required continuous internal reform for better control – , they also concentrated resources, modified systems of extraction and coercion and heavily relied on patronage networks to keep their territoriality intact (SCOTT 2009, 32-33, 35, 94-95; LUSTICK 2004, 98; DOORNBOS 2006, 8-10; HOBBSAWM 1992, 80-81). Yet, every great wave of consolidation that reduced the number of states put the new rulers in front of the task to incorporate ever distant and diverse communities, which increased the danger of rebellions. Fluid systems of social markers, paired with control via a rank system depending on the ruler in Theravada-states promoted cycles of warfare-destruction followed by domestic reform – expanding and contracting the territorial reach of governance. In Vietnam, the distinction between military and the intelligentsia provided a similar pattern with both classes taking turns in shaping the administrative reach of territorialization: standardization and administrative penetration took turns with military conquests in attempting to centralize and consolidate the country (SCOTT 2009 104-105; DOORNBOS 2006, 142; cf. VU/SHARROCK 2014; SOLOMON 1969, 34).

This penetration and increasing thickness of governance, greater mobility and intensified exchange helped the introduction of ever further reaching patronage and cooptation models with local elites adopting the structure of the state to cement and increase their own social status and power. This was partly due to the need to react to the greater mobility and opening of political and commercial spaces making the control over the local population more difficult, partly due to the new opportunities the state-system brought with regard to taxes and income. Negotiating the relationship between local elites and central governments brought mutual benefits: the state ac-

quired access to new resources and had a say in the consolidation of the territory while local elites got their place in the new hierarchy. With this crystallization of territoriality also came an ebb and flow of greater homogenization and uniformity of religion, language and ethnicity. These patterns caused either resistance, resignation or acceptance among the people on the borderlands but given the material superiority of the lowland states either case resulted in greater assimilation – not only due to means of coercion but also soft power. Theravada Buddhism and Neo-Confucianism both favored political centralization, the reliance of the state on these monastic networks for providing education as well as these religions' central position in the administration of the states required anyone who wants to become a member of the bureaucracy to adopt their philosophies which included accepting the throne as a source of stability, legitimacy and regulation (SCHEIDEL 2007, 9-10; MOSTOV 2008, 134; STURGEON 2004, 466, 481; JENNE 2014, 7-8; JENNE 2014, 7-8; BELL 2003, 58; REID 2009, 7-8). All in all, the elements were in place to forge a greater territorial identification with the central leadership: official culture, social markers, economic networks as well as means of coercion, while warfare made the border people more accepting of central governance and integration for security. Yet as we have seen, these processes, especially in the borderlands were heavily interrupted in every phase of collapse emanating from the central lowland entities or from external threats such as conquests, with borders shifting, contracting or simply fading in a similar ways in which the central power waxed and waned, as in times of interregna or internal crises no central lowland governing entity had the resources to control their peripheries.

Among the lowland states, none had such a developed and continuous administration as Đại Việt, while the inter and intra-state competitions of the Theravada-states promoted flexibility and fluidity, with local governance based on trial and error, especially in times of waxing or waning territoriality. Borders were therefore never a fixed institution but a snapshot of accumulated administrative practices and the status of consolidation of the central states: border settlements, promotion of networks over long distances and models of patronage only worked when the states were in power to govern with the necessary means of coercion, economic and cultural capital – markers of consolidation of territorial statehood (SCOTT 2009, 37-38, 142; LUSTICK 2004, 79-80). The Southeast Asian side of the border was thus characterized by cycles of consolidation and fragmentation, increasing and fading territoriality, absorption and secession of borderlands, affected by interstate warfare, trade, cultural markers, ideologies and population growth and promotion of majority ethnicity. Each of these factors encouraged territorial integration to some de-

gree, intensified competition, strengthened administrations until subsequent periods of disintegration took their toll – lost battles, civil wars, natural catastrophes, or outside factors such as spill-overs from rebellions, famines etc. While this side of the borderland was marked by an interplay of gradual administrative integration as well as cyclical territorialization, the Chinese side showed properties that are far more gradual in its integration efforts and definition of where its territory should end.

1.7.2. The view from the Chinese side

At the starting point of this analysis when Vietnam became an independent entity under the Lý-dynasty, China already had experience in state building and territorialization efforts going back many centuries. Trial and error with strict centralization and rather lax kinship-based social systems generated a structure of the Chinese state in the form of the empire sanctioned by the Mandate of Heaven that was attributed universal applicability as well as by an internal strictly hierarchical rationalized and institutionalized administration that strove a balance between penetration by policy emanating from the central government, tributary ties to the rest of the region and patrimonial pockets in less accessible areas. This was complemented by a rigid understanding of Chineseness rooted in script, language, social organization and transmitted through the bureaucracy that spanned the entire territory so that even during times of interregna, foreign powers on the throne or temporary disintegration the idea of China as a unified empire was a stable factor in the minds of social actors. This also meant that during times of expansion, the penetrating factors of the bureaucracy whether by appeal or coercion urged the newly incorporated entities to Sinitize. Imperial China therefore did not have to relate to ethereal elements in its governance to consolidate its territory but had mechanisms to directly influence populations and tie them tightly into the framework of the state through logistics, taxes, systems of granaries, corvée labour and military service. The military was since the Han dynasty under control of civilian ministers, higher posts that could endanger the dynasty were often left vacant on purpose. Out of this stems an understanding of territoriality that separates the world into cultural spheres of civilized-Chinese and barbarian (SCOTT 2009, 109-110; 326-327; SHIN 2006, 204-205).

The border or in some cases like the Northwest or Southwest frontier was therefore far less fluid than of the Southeast Asian counterparts since a clear distinction of who belongs to the empire and who does not was a mix of military conquest, intensification of tributary relations and gradual Sinization. This border between China and the barbarian lands needed to be protected and also

served as a posting-ground for over-ambitious military officers who could pose a threat to the dynasty. Thus, the border out of internal state organization and state-interests became more and more reinforced, while military prowess and infrastructure within the state was gradually replaced by civilian officers who relied on their authority qua office rather than qua mobilization. The normativity in this idea of legitimacy based on education and adherence to legalism rooted in a deep understanding of scripts and philosophy allowed the expansion and stronger incorporation of territory since it was not ethnically biased. However, the state as such relied heavily on the Mandate of Heaven, which when it got lost, invited problems of fragmentation, weakening of borders and violation of territoriality. Dynastic infighting, natural catastrophes, famines, floods, misery, internal rebellions as well as capturing of the state by patrimonial structures all could bring a dynasty to fall but not the empire since feudalism was swiped out and a court with enormous ceremonial and political legitimacy didn't leave room for it. What happened instead was that actors carved out their local pockets of influence and inserted themselves into the state apparatus. In this sense, the state was a fixed constant, legitimized qua mandate and not a fluid entity as in Southeast Asia. This means too though that whatever happened with the state also affected the borderlands by transmission (FUKUYAMA 2012, 134-145).

It was during the emergence of this highly rationalized attitude to statehood and territory that China during the Han dynasty made inroads into its Southwestern areas, where it incorporated the Red River area. Famine, internal rebellions, the return of patrimonialism as well as occupation and ransacking of border areas by barbarians contributed to the impression that the Han lost their Mandate of Heaven, an interregnum was about to start. Due to the relative weakness of the Southern Liang dynasty, the lack of a unified central state and China in an interregnum, a brief window of 60 years pushed the Chinese out of this area before the Sui-dynasty, that managed to unify the country, re-integrated the Red River area into China where it stayed until the end of the Tang dynasty. It happened as the Chinese state was the best organized social actor thanks to its impersonal bureaucracy, a dense web of administrative offices all over the country and immense power and legitimacy stemming from the Mandate of Heaven so that even after any disintegration the aim of the new actors was always to re-create the central state by replicating the institutions inherited from the Han in their own territory to legitimize themselves as being worthy of the Mandate. A strong state combined with a strong culture defining China by a shared language, script, literature, bureaucracy, history, standardized institutions in education and administration

and a value system recreated the idea of a strong unified China even when the state disintegrated (FUKUYAMA 2012, 14-148).

The border always marked a watershed between culture, and any encounter led to some degree of Sinicization either because invaders understood that they cannot rule a colossus of a country like that without adopting its institutions or because in new territories, to gain advantages from China it meant to accept and adapt to the new institutions. While first tributary relations only caused weak adoption on this level, a real integration only happened – and was only considered as feasible from the Chinese side – when the new area adopted Chinese culture and rituals – a process that could span centuries (FUKUYAMA 2012, 148-150). Coming from the idea that ruling over the whole territory is paramount to maintain order and the Mandate of Heaven, was a strict separation of territory with vaguely defined markers of inclusion and exclusion, and thus also a border or frontier (cf. LARY 2007, 181-182). In times of crisis though this rigidity was diluted, either by conquests on the side of the barbarians, secessionist tendencies in some provinces, intermarriage of Chinese officials with the local population and a more lax oversight of the border-regime since resources were needed elsewhere. This was particularly obvious at the ends of the Han dynasty – Vietnam managed to achieve a short window of independence – the end of the Sui/Tang-dynasty – Vietnam got fully independent – and at the end of the Yuan-dynasty – at which Vietnam's tributary relations to the Chinese throne were substantially reduced.

What makes this cycle of decadent decline, chaos from the barbarians and institutional renewal of a new dynasty so interesting however is not just the China-Vietnam relationship across dynasties, but also the area of the future border to be. During the Han Dynasty China expanded southwards, entered what is today Yunnan and set up the Yongchang Prefecture which left Yunnan more or less independent. After its collapse subsequent dynasties all set up the border-region as a prefecture, but even though the indigenous chieftains nominally submitted to the Chinese state, China never really penetrated the area or managed to rule it until the Yuan dynasty. More interestingly even, during the time of Chinese power in Vietnam, the powerful kingdom of Nanzhao started to become a unified state in the 7th century ruled over what is going to be the Dali kingdom and only much later become Yunnan, Guizhou and Guangxi (YANG 2008a).

Nanzhao became a regional kingdom in the 8th century; tributary relations were established with the Sui-dynasty. Although China didn't establish any authority over this region at that time, the Chinese influence in culture is not to underestimate, as Nanzhao and later Dali used Chinese script, made Buddhism a state religion and borrowed heavily from the Chinese political structure.

It also continued incorporating chieftains and local authorities with a similar flexibility as its Southeast Asian neighbors, though with a more rigid idea of a border (YANG M. 2008, 3-4). The Tang-dynasty sponsored local chieftains, but didn't really rule or control this area. Nanzhao prospered, set up its own institutions and competed and cooperated in the region with China and Tubo, while the Tang under pressure from Central Asia tried to make use of Nanzhao against Tibet, reinforced at the same time its border against this belligerent state and tried to incorporate it into the Chinese state. When the Tang-dynasty got weakened, Nanzhao took its chance, plundered Sichuan as well as Annam, both parts of the Chinese state. Nanzhao was rich thanks to trade, in a fortunate geographical location so that it was useful for both Tibet and China to keep each other in check and therefore always had a choice with whom to ally to best serve its own interest. It became so powerful that Tang-China couldn't contain the threat emanating from this unruly state, while the continued tributary relations actually provided the rulers of Nanzhao with the legitimacy to expand its territory and impose tributary relations onto its newly acquired territories – especially in Northern Myanmar over the Pyu, Michen and Zhenla (YANG, 2008C, 7-9, 11). Trade buttressed Nanzhao's rise and the flourishing cities in the region, as it connected several lowland states of Southeast Asia among each other and with China, especially from the 8th to the 13th century. Entities in close contact or even tributary relations did not only include the already mentioned Pyu but also Pagan (Pugan), Miruo, Kunlun, Bosi, Luzhenla, Shuizhenla, Canbanguo, Nüwangguo, Daqinpoluomen, Xiaoqinpoluomen, Kamarupa, and so on. Lucrative trade and the drive to control, as well as keeping Tubo and Tang-China at a distance with shifting cooperation fueled military campaigns against the Southern neighbors, especially the states in Myanmar and exceptionally what was to become Vietnam. The effects were twofold: First, Nanzhao strengthened its regional dominance. Second, given the tributary relations of Nanzhao to the Tang, it helped imperial China to update its knowledge of Southeast Asia. While trade flourished, the border between Nanzhao and imperial China hardened given the aggressive stance of the southern kingdom and increasing needs of the Tang dynasty to defend itself against foreign powers. However on the Southern edge of Nanzhao, Yongchang – a border city established by the Han dynasty to make inroads into the province – developed to become a major trading center, demarcating a point at which different cultures, states and economies meet (YANG 2008B, 16-17) While the border between China and Nanzhao hardened, Nanzhao became more and more a master of its own. Despite that, the Chinese regarded it as a strategic token in its fight against the Tubo-kingdom. The ever more aggressive expansionist strategy of Nanzhao led to the point at

which the tributary relationship with Tang China was cut, the ruler became an emperor and the country renamed itself Dali Kingdom, refusing Chinese suzerainty. The frequent clashes and the drain on resources and the economic misery the fights with Nanzhao had on Tang-China led to unrest at the borders of Tang-China so that finally the Tang Dynasty lost its ability to attack or even incorporate Nanzhao in its imperial reach. The loss in resources and manpower to contain Nanzhao's reach weakened the Tang-Dynasty's other border regimes to a degree that it finally was overrun and sacked by barbarians from the West, lost its Vietnamese outpost and incurred a huge destabilization in the social fabric in its southern provinces (YANG 2008C, 13-15).

The foundation of the Dali Kingdom fell roughly at the same time as the independence of Vietnam and the foundation of the Song-Dynasty. What was new was that while Dali kept Nanzhao's territory, the new state was by far not as aggressive as its predecessor. It sought acceptance by tributary relations with the Song-Dynasty, yet Nanzhao's reputation as a troublemaker that contributed to the fall of the Tang-Dynasty let the Song Dynasty to a very cautious approach towards Dali: the losses of the previous dynasty induced restraint when it came down to expansion strategies, so that the Song had no interest in conquering Dali, while new pressure from the Central Asian kingdoms forced the Song to become more pragmatic and less dogmatic when dealing with barbarians. The border between China and Dali was therefore intensified by a very defensive policy in the Southwest, trying to isolate Dali so as to concentrate on the northern borders. Dali in its isolation could consolidate its power by adopting Chinese administrative practices and spreading Buddhism as a state religion, incorporating chieftains where possible and imposing feudal or tributary relations in inaccessible areas where necessary and so thickening its own reach of governance. Its interest to establish relations with the Song were repeatedly turned down, even though it was in the interest of both sides to have a peaceful border for stability and prosperity on both sides – just the means to achieve it differed. The Song Dynasty was wary to extend participation in its tributary system or bestow imperial titles to the Dali ruler – both of which later happened after all – but the experience of Nanzhao and troubles on the Northern border made the Song keeping Dali at arm's length. Exchange and relations were drastically reduced, trade diminished and skepticism of Dali ran high. On the side of Dali, China was seen as a source of prosperity and legitimacy – after all there was interaction in trade and knowledge through Confucianist schools and Buddhist missionaries (YANG, 2008C, 17-19; MARSH 2015, 102-103). It was only the Mongols, conquering the Southern Song that brought Dali into China as an integral part, establishing administrative structures, spreading out the Chinese military organization of garrisons

and military villages, introducing a multilevel bureaucratic system and including native chiefdoms into the state administration – thus wrapping the Southwest into the governance of the Empire while leaving at least at the beginning traditional governance structures intact. The fall of the Yuan and advent of the Ming dynasty changed the parameters of the incorporation of the Southwest: as the Mongols kept Yunnan after the fall of their dynasty, the Ming resorted to force even though no other Chinese dynasty ever managed to extend its administration into the area effectively. Driven by the neo-Confucian call to spread power and values, a re-establishment of a strongly Sinocentric world-view as part of self-legitimation, and fear of the ability to re-use Nanzhao's tactics to start a Southern military campaign at any time, the Ming launched a campaign, defeated the remaining Mongolians, destroyed local powerful chieftains that hitherto were only connected with Yuan and Dali via tributary relations, crushed rebellions and established, consolidated and furthered central control. Economic and cultural integration into the empire started soon after, making Yunnan a permanent part of China: infrastructure, trade routes, currencies, bureaucratic examinations, taxation systems, networks of granaries, schools, Confucian temples, all penetrated the former Dali territory, transforming local culture and allegiance to the ruler in a way that soon a border materialized vis-à-vis the barbarians further south. Large scale immigration during the Ming and Qing dynasties and the introduction of Chinese customs helped in this process during which Chinese culture could grow and penetrate against all kinds of resistance as it was strongly backed by the court. The power-balance shifted, so that over time local chieftains and resistance against the Chinese state were gradually superseded by the Chinese cultural and administrative practices (YANG 2008C, 21-23, YANG 2008E, 13, 15, 19, 30; cf. GREEN 2013, 113). Increased trade networks, Han-Chinese immigration into the border-area and new practices of governance shaped also economic patterns, especially during the later Ming and Qing dynasty. Military colonization and first attempts at steering peasant migration together with the reform of chieftains and tax systems established a dense and thick system of governance over the territory as far as it was possible to reach. This set the foundation of the later Qing-colonization and incorporation, a process that spanned again centuries (YANG 2008A, 4). Agricultural expansion, industrialization, population growth and commercialization cemented ties with the Chinese state that relied on the prosperity of the region to guard the Southern border. Self-sufficiency was therefore a paramount aim of the state so as to keep its territoriality in the Southwestern provinces intact. Economic growth also helped pacifying the remaining chieftain-pockets as it connected isolated enclaves into the greater Chinese trading system, so that in the end Yunnan was born as a

fully-fledged political-economic entity at the border – civilized and incorporated in China, representing Chineseness, while diversifying the state as well (YANG 2008F, 17-19). This status quo was to be challenged only later on during Panthay rebellion, the Taiping uprising and the Civil War.

This very general description of the formation of China's border with Southeast Asia shows that while on the Chinese side there was a very gradual and linear administrative approach to expansion and incorporation with far less waxing and waning as in the Southeast Asian counterparts, the process hinged very much on the state itself and less on its practices. The relationship between China and its Southwestern border region showed a constant change from autonomy towards incorporation, rooted in the relationship between China and the preceding states and chieftains. However, with a gradual strengthening of central authority over the frontier region – whereby war and conquest played a crucial role, as well as the ability to accumulate the means of coercion to execute it – the border became quite hard, limited only by rebellions and claims to autonomy when the court increased exploitation. It also shows that the fate and history of this region was not isolated or predestined to merge with the larger neighbor, but rather shaped by an interplay of internal struggles of the state, the rise of other powers such as Tubo and how this area organized itself, like in the form of the Nanzhao and Dali kingdoms. With the final conquest and penetration of administrative practices during the Yuan dynasty came the era in which centralization, control and territorial consolidation started, backed by a huge cultural influence in administration, education and immigration, strengthening the ties to the central state and hardening the border against the barbarians. With administrative and institutional changes, the state got a stronger foothold in this border-region, spreading from cities to provinces thanks to increased infrastructure projects, a denser web of control, taxation systems and trade (YANG 2008D, 29-30). The impact outside factors had on this process do not warrant to regard this area in isolation but as a major intersection of Southeast Asia, East Asia and given the ties with Tibet also Central Asia. Ties with Vietnam – be it as a Chinese province or as an independent Đại Việt were very strong until the advent of the Ming dynasty through trade and information flows as well as access to the Chinese court mediating messages through its Southernmost province to and from Nanzhao and Dali. Laos and Myanmar were also closely connected to this area, even sometimes incorporated through tributary relations (YANG 2008B, 7-8).

The impact of China's northern borders and of its attitude towards Tibet on the relations between China and Nanzhao/Dali shows this high degree of interconnectivity in watershed moments, due

to which the border-region in this thesis shouldn't be regarded as a monolithic dividing bloc since a geographic, historical, political or cultural division of this area cannot be supported for analytical purposes of its development but rather as a nod in the web of highly complex, fluid and shifting interstate-relations with mutual interdependencies and influencing factors that happened to become the home of a border separating East from Southeast Asia. As YANG (2008G, 3-4) described, this whole region needs to be regarded in a global context of inter-dependency and relations. Interactions of China with what is to become Yunnan followed a cyclical pattern in its intensity but a linear pattern in its administrative penetration – both accounted for by other factors than direct relations between the province and the dynasty: foreign powers such as the Tubo or the Xiongnu diverting, shifting and concentrating trade interests and expansionist activities of Nanzhao/Dali themselves brought the area into Chinese territoriality concepts in several waves, while the area also became a rival in its own right with its own borders for its own protection of interests.

1.7.3. A consolidated view: global and systemic mutual influences

Since the time-span covers a millennium, it is possible to recognize trends and patterns in the various forms of social organizations within the pre-colonial states and their practices of organizing their territoriality. It is clear that every state had an idea about its limitation, yet the means how this idea was translated into territory and social practices to demarcate it varied widely. Any state had an interest in at least knowing about the flow of goods, people and ideas in its territory and any state had for its own survival a vested interest in engaging with its neighbors. The flexibility-options built into the way states forge their territorialization and by that also their borders as well as a clear recognition of the fluidity of territoriality, authority and sovereignty plus taking into account the mutuality of the information-process between borders, society and the state will allow in the model a degree of abstraction that might not be useful for direct comparisons between pre- and post-colonial state forms but very useful in showing the temporal and spatial changes of territoriality and authority in the form of disrupted cycles.

Imperial colonization happened to both ethnically Han-Chinese and non-Han minorities. While it only happened in already conquered territory in the South, it didn't stretch beyond the boundaries of what China regarded the civilized world. So that even though Yuan and later the Ming dynasty successfully colonized, penetrated the area and established its border, there was no path-dependency for it to happen in this form at that time under the above described circumstances.

Ming-China, who was quite aggressive and expansionist on the Southern side and defensive on the North – as opposed to Tang China’s strategy – managed to incorporate Yunnan and Guizhou yet Vietnam – showing a similar web of interconnectivity – remained lost for China. The formation of this border and the disappearance of all major entities of the region that wielded considerable control and power were not naturally given but strongly influenced the distinction of Southeast and East Asia. Without understanding the various incorporation-processes coming from what is today Myanmar, Laos and Vietnam from the south and China from the north, it is not possible to understand how the separation of these two world regions via an imagined boundary in our current understanding happened. A global perspective is necessary to understand the role of kingdoms like that of Nanzhao and Dali in what is today China, as well as Lan Na – today’s Laos –several Hmong kingdoms and a plethora of Burmese entities in shaping today’s distinction between East and Southeast Asia. To fully grasp their contribution to the development not only of their respective final states but also the border that separates them, a cross-regional view is necessary to explain why a border appeared there. Each of these entities have their own historical world but are deeply interconnected, whereby their interactions finally shaped regional boundaries, even though Yunnan had been more Southeast Asian than Chinese most of the time, Lan Na less Thai or Lao and Vietnam less Vietnamese than the national histories may suggest. Given the interconnectivity, it was not single states making this area border-region but it was transregional power struggles with multiple interdependencies with regional and sometimes global implications between central states and states in the region that let kingdoms disappear to the degree of self-marginalization at the boundary of China and Southeast Asia. The making of the border as such is not a mere derivative of state-building but a global actor influencing trajectories of states and being influenced by global currents these states encounter.

All in all, the border and the borderland is the result of state-building, that marginalized the area through an increasing penetration of territorialization practices, while the flow of people, goods and knowledge in these borderlands always existed and only became a cross-border practice – ironically affirming the existence of the border – with the establishment of the state. The state thus plays a key-role in defining a border through the practices it employed to project its sovereignty outside its borders and authority within its borders, a process depending on many factors on different scales, that essentially marginalized a world-region in a cyclical evolution of regional and transnational politics, shifting local and state interests as reaction to these politics, trade and

local dynamics, letting the ability of the state to penetrate this territory wax and wane according to the circumstances at any given point of time. While the establishment of the state as a territorial entity plays a crucial role in shaping the border, its colorful development shall not be regarded as a challenge to the state or the Chinese-Southeast Asian border itself but rather as an outcome of interlocked processes on various scales that defines the space of the states in question (DEAN 2011, 239; cf. MOSTOV 2008, 55, 80; HOBBSAWM 1992, 19). Thus, the socio-economic-political context of the borderlands and the border evolved over time as a result of historic events which themselves were informed by alignments of factors across local, regional national and transnational scales, accounting not only for a high degree of fluidity in the elements to investigate for analyzing the development of the borderlands but also for a high degree of fluidity of the territorialization efforts themselves. The evolution of this border is therefore both cause and effect of a multitude of factors and actors participating in its making, influencing and being influenced by local, regional, national and transnational evolutions, internal and external power relations, transnational trade and dependencies between and across centers and the border area itself. I argue therefore that there is no reason to assume that this border-region was meant to become a peripheral area of major states but was shaped and influenced by state-building activities, regional and global developments that were highly interconnected as well as a strong sense of agency of the local population and vice versa. Trying to establish a conceptual link between the factors of state formation, internal colonization, cultural penetration, administrative modernization and consolidation, threats faced by central states, global trade and knowledge, I will show that this border was shaped by global and systemic factors as well as state-expansion which will in combination allow getting a deeper understanding of the topic. Cyclical and linear factors on all sides as pointed out above incorporated and by times alienated this area before they finally marginalized it in a structure of territorial states, leading to an incorporated border between two regions, transforming through and along parameters with global impacts this external but organized area into a periphery.

1.8. Development of the Model

Borders are always an expression of relative power between states themselves in political and military terms, economic models, cultural markers, social organizations, administrative strength as well as between periphery and centers. In this sense, they are constructed to mark differences and manifest separations by institutionalizing them, grown historically out of political concerns

as we have seen between the Song dynasty and Dali, or created artificially by introducing differences where only few existed before, as we will see in process of incorporation of smaller chieftains. Apart from separating entities, borders also act as mediators for trade, people and knowledge, opening or closing in the wider political context, and thus allowing borderlands to evolve, develop and achieve a certain degree of agency. As markers of political entities, the Chinese-Southeast Asian border also coincides in large parts with cultural, ethnic or religious borders. What makes it interesting though is that the political appropriation of the cultural or economic space to make the border coincide was highly entangled with the state formation process, which both mutually reinforced each other on both sides of the border – providing a triangle of impacts, whose processes could last very long. A third parameter that needs to be taken into account is that the way the border was performed on all sides and the expressions and tools used to substantiate territorial claims and manage the space varied a lot between what should become China, Vietnam, Myanmar and Laos – and with it the functions the region performed in terms of social, economic and political conditions. Apart from these factors, as the border area in this case was not an empty space, but an area that should become marginalized as a border-area that was strongly interconnected with the wider world, a model for its evolution needs to take into account not only the direct influences of the incorporating central polities, but also social, political and cultural factors on the global level that indirectly shaped and impacted the performance and functionality of the border. Interferences between these factors, such as tensions between institutional-administrative interests, military and security needs, functionality of the state and the course of global history as a result of interactions between regions as well as states also need to find consideration. While power-relations are important as a reflection of different interests that manifest around the border, one should not forget that many interdependent factors create and construct these relations, impacting on their equally constructed outcome of a border (NEWMAN 2011, 33-34; TARLING 2006, 13; VUVING 2006, 810).

Given the complex interplay and interdependent factors in the construction of a border as result of territorialization, marginalization as well as centralization efforts, a multi-step model would be appropriate to clearly capture the processes and effects encompassing the dynamics of the many shifting parts that led to the existence of this border. This by no means suggests a border theory – borders are by default characterized by relations and functions closely related to the state they surround and the conditions this state is facing, and thus highly individual – , but is meant to be understood as a prism that sheds a new light on the formation of the states around this border, the

social processes that needed to interact to provide this situation as well as interdependencies of these processes on multiple levels across different entities and relative to time that will help constructing not only a comprehensive analysis of the how and why a border appeared there in the first place but also making inroads into an understanding of this area as an agent in its own right, away from often employed center-periphery dynamics. A dynamic model, that allows to trace these concepts over time will allow to understand the formation of the border and the borderlands as a result of marginalization due to territorialization is not an inevitable outcome due to path-dependencies, but rather the interplay of multi-faceted factors, in which the area as an agent in its own right wielded considerable influence and was not just a derivative of centralized state-building efforts. It shall be shown that on the other hand ensuing marginalization due to the different strategies of territorialization had as a result the understanding of this area as being derived from statehood due to the parameters of national integration and due to cyclically changing circumstances that tied these lands closer to a center even though with Lan Na, Nanzhao, Dali or later on also Hmong powerful entities existed that were highly interconnected as a brokers of trade, knowledge, power and security.

Therefore, by virtue of mediating between centers or having a center of their own, borders can only be analysed as a part of socio-economic-political developments affecting the whole region. The interconnections of a border area – before or after it was incorporated into a centralized state – make it a very complex social actor related to various social, economic and political discourses and social practices and realities (PAASI, 2011, 27-28). For the development of this model, which is rather a template to encompass the specific context of this region over time, it is necessary to take into account what factors are shaping these contexts and how to reconcile these in a development characterized by numerous moving elements, overlapping influences and ever changing relations between different actors that all have their own ability to act. To capture these dynamics in a coherent manner, I would therefore propose a multi-level model, arranged in sections dealing with functionality of the area, influences pushing and pulling the borderlands, power relations and the cyclical nature of territorialization efforts, taking the social practices of producing and reproducing borders not only as a process but also as an outcome of the institutionalization of territory and statehood. To derive a model it is therefore necessary to understand the role of the state and its responsibility for the shaping and making of a border. After all it is states that have an interest in expanding their influence, expanding their governance and territorializing as a way to penetrate space for the sake of maintaining or increasing power, ensuring prosperity

and providing order and cohesion. To achieve these aims, administrations need to incorporate and modify structures of local governance and policy – either slowly and steadily through ever tighter connections between state and what shall become its border area or abruptly through war to impose the markers of adherence (PAASI 2011, 14-15; WIMMER 2013, 115-116). Institutionalization hence thrives on formal and informal markers and symbols, and so is not only a general practice of already existing states demarcating their territory but does play an integral part in the making of the territory even before a border – and thus a borderland – exists. Spatiality of the complex process of making a borderland so rests on practices that range on different scales from local to global, are time-dependent and often the result of special circumstances on a much larger scale than a mere center-periphery relation (PAASI 2011, 28). Bringing these scales and influences together is the second aim of the model.

Transdisciplinary approaches, that are necessary for a full comprehensive account of this endeavor, entailing concepts ranging from climatology over political science to identity narratives, would be beyond the scope of this thesis, which focuses therefore more on the politico-social development and interactions between the states and political entities in the Southeast Asian-Chinese frontier. It will concentrate on the role of the state in territorialization and spatiality through the establishment of social markers and nationalist narratives, world historical accounts of the connectivity of this borderland with the rest of the world, political and economic interdependencies in these processes as well as power relations. Along these conceptual dimensions and relations, the model should shed a light on the dynamics of creating this marginal area through the lense of its creation, re-creation and functionality, relating the specific local context to the broader development of the whole region (cf. PAASI 2011, 18-19; AMIN et al. 2003,6).

The third aim of this model is to overcome a normative rift in the current discussion on border studies, between relational thinkers who often adhere to post-nationalist and transnationalist schools of thought arguing against bounded territories and seeing borders generally as regressive markers of territorial authority, while political scientists of the realist school, describing the same phenomenon using terms such as “embedded statism” or “territorial trap” to emphasize the power of the state (PAASI 2011, 22). The model presented will not make a value judgment of whether the border needs to be erased, but rather uses the questioning of the relations between territorialized space and state power to analyze the interplay of the processes that created the border and continued to reproduce it. The analysis of the impact of interconnectivity and relationality of the area and its inhabitants on the marginalization towards becoming a border area is then not a fac-

tor to delegitimize the border but rather adding a piece to the puzzle, enlarging the perspective of how territoriality and sovereignty interact within the region and not just the state itself. This allows on the one hand to define the scope of agency of the borderland as well as of the state, freeing governance and territory from a perceived one-to-one-relation (PAASI 2011, 22) while building a bridge between state-action, participation, spatiality and territorialization. Such an approach allows to investigate how challenging and sometimes circumstantial the development of the border was without actually challenging its existence or ignoring the importance and parameters of relations between states and the administrative dynamics within them. The focus unit is therefore not the individual, but the border area enveloping the border as a social actor – the focus point is not the life at the border but rather the interplay of factors on a regional, national and transnational scale that attributed the border to this area and what practices were deployed to maintain this role as a function of territoriality and statehood. The understanding of the border and the borderlands is therefore not one based on a static outcome but rather as a historically contingent process, that was deeply influenced by institution- and state-building exercises within the states they surround as well as developments on the regional and transnational level. In this context, grasping the complex interplay of the border-area as a factor in the history of the state-building processes and as a negotiated outcome of conflicts and cooperation over a long period of time that greatly shaped the nationalist understanding of the state beyond simply marking political control and authority but as an expression of waxing and waning territoriality contingent upon internal and external influences is the last aim of the model. The power, shape and location of the border so becomes highly context-dependent, and while territoriality still is the key to actually understand the making of a border, the form of this territoriality is not necessarily driven by the state as a form of “national imagination and socialization” (PAASI 2011, 25) alone.

1.8.1. The top-down approach to territoriality and border making

Borders are a constructed means of separation and control over who and what gets in and out, modified by the perception of danger, political and economic interests and needs for defense. Culture does play a role since the creation is often coined as a reflection of the interests of the collective that is surrounded by this border, to keep out influences that are perceived as detrimental to the territory and the state. With politics, economics and culture playing a crucial role, power elites of the state have the most vested interests in what the border shall look like, and what role the borderlands shall play. Borders are needed not only for protection and legitimacy of

the government but also as a manifest of social codes that separate internal from external interests. The internal state-interests interact on many scales with interests of external actors, in the process of which political and economic aims need to be reconciled on both sides to agree on the border. With changing environments on regional, local, transnational and global scales, the outcome is, as for example in the case of the integration of Dali starting during the Song-Dynasty, often dependent not just on the mere interest of one or two states but developments on a much broader scale with many more moving parts. The border itself determines the parameters of exclusion and inclusion, with the borderland often an “in-between”, perpetuating the spatial structuring as an institution, managed from two or more centers to control the movement of people, goods and ideas in line with their own state-interest (NEWMAN 2011, 35-36; HOBSBAWM 1992, 7-8). Dali again serves an example which as an independent entity sought close relationships with the Song-Dynasty, and let the border on its side be quite permeable to ideas, goods and people, while Song China opted for a hard border on its side, only letting through horses for waging war against the Mongolians (YANG 2008C, 25-26). The function of the border in managing and controlling what happens to the territory is generated out of similar parameters: state-interests in controlling economic, political and culture affairs on its territory vis-à-vis its neighbors. Thus, the role of the border is not God-given but requires power elites to set it in the first place as an agent of control over the parameters of their own territoriality. The multilateral aspects of state-involvement in border-setting play therefore a crucial part, and the states’ interests in political, economic and cultural terms determine the aspects of the final shape. Pyu and Dali in this sense were mainly driven by trade and set their border based on a tributary relationship that was supposed to be beneficial for both sides. Đại Việt and Nanzhao or Dali had strong political considerations when managing their border, political and economic interests of Nanzhao interfered strongly with the run-up to and how Tang-China managed the independence of Đại Việt. This also means that the creation of a border, the marginalization of the border-area can be challenged in interstate-relations in multiple aspects of their bilateral dealings or because of changes in political and economic global conditions, leading to change and adaptations to better reflect territorial and political realities (NEWMAN 2011, 35-36). This division of political, cultural and economic spaces creates the territory of the respective states, who order their own territory through institutionalization, administrative penetration and governance-practices at different levels to allow the border to fulfill its purpose (PAASI 2011, 14; SCOTT 2012, 83).

Thus, borders and borderlands in this case are a result of territorialization efforts, or as in the case of the Theravada-States of Southeast Asia also a derivative of state-making, but this is not to say that they did not play an active role and agency in the consolidation and formation of the state (WILSON/DONNAN 2012, 10). Rather, on the macro-level of interstate-relations borderlands were often subjugated under the influence of bartering for political power and control of central states among their attempts to influence each other, which crossed and left traces in the borderlands themselves. Borderlands were put in the service of the stabilization on the international level of how relations shall be conducted between states – often on a tributary basis – but also fostered the inner consolidation of an order characterized by stable power relations and means to enforce their interests. Territoriality as a building bloc of the state was a long process, therefore it shouldn't be presupposed, but rather analysed as an important string in the development of the border that is closely related to the creation of a territorialized social organization in political, societal, economic and cultural processes (LAPID 2001, 7-8). To understand this interplay, it is necessary to take into account the complexity of the interconnections of states with the borderland and what kind of role each of them play for the formation of the border, leading up to some kind of hybridity in culture, political understanding of territoriality and economic practices (HEYMAN 2012, 49-50). History, institutionalization and power-processes between states have an influence on this formation, as do networks of relationship crossing the border-areas, making them not free-floating or detached from the macro-level of state-interaction but deeply involved in them, both in the creation and later on management process of the border (HEYMAN 2012 61).

Given the prominent role of the state and its effort to territorialize, the first part of the model will deal with this top-down influence in the making of the border and the borderland before moving on to the complex bottom-up and intra-regional power relations. The borderlands in question appear as far-flung peripheries from the respective centers of the states they separate. Either by distance when one thinks of Beijing or by accessibility when taking into account the mountainous terrain of the border area. Geographically, culturally and economically, the connections between these areas and the state-centers have been weak for a very long time, so that the incorporation in a statist construction is to a large degree the result of state-sanctioned territorialization, which in turn as DEAN (2011, 222) points out becomes the main perspective of the role of these lands in national history. While this is by far not sufficient for a comprehensive overview given the many shifting and fluid influences, this view plays an important role as without it and the process of

territorialization, the generation of this borderland in this area with these specific properties would not have happened. Territoriality is therefore the key for states to maintain themselves and their order, as it allows asserting control over people, resources and relationships of power over a geographical area. Actors such as states carve out spaces for their existence, yet they remain fragile and weak in the regional context if this action doesn't achieve territorial control by extending authority (DEAN 2011, 230-231; GROTENHUIS 2016, 90). States are not wielding their authority alone across empty spaces, but are rather interconnected with other states, which all have a similar interest: staying in power and being able to extract resources, exploit people, wage wars, foster their security, and expand their prowess. The state is constructed to bring the means for doing that to the holders of power, who can set up mechanisms to define their territorial reach (WALTZ 1979, 131). Any state-like entity that has emerged since the 10th century showed measures of expansion and territorial and administrative consolidation, and found itself in immediate competition with other claimants to territorial control. Their internal organization was by times highly specialized and normative, as in the case of Đại Việt, Dali or the Mon and Shan States, sometimes characterized just by loose connections of tribal territories competing with their more organized neighbors. From this point of view, the area was characterized by fragile and fluctuating influences, but these fluctuations emanated from states themselves who tried to achieve absolute gains vis-à-vis their neighbors whereby the institutional capacity of administering the entity for these gains determines the size and thus also location, status and integration of borders and borderlands. The resulting kaleidoscope of multiple hierarchical and waxing and waning overlapping territories – especially in the border-area of what is today Myanmar and Laos given their adoption of the galactic polity model – created spaces that were captured by more powerful lowland-states, who could loosely connect them within their political unity to attribute them the role of buffer-zones to protect their prosperity, tipping of a cycle of incentivizing a more normative administration and consolidation of the states: as states rely on domestic resource extraction for their survival and prosperity, they need to set up institutions to reap those gains so that these institutions and the delineation of the states includes the influence of economic actors and their preferences that they mediate through the collectivity of their interactions within a state (O'DOWD 2012, 162; ATWILL 2006, 14; MCMAHON 2009, 86; TROCKI 2009, 342-343; JENNE 2014 7-8; FRITZ/MENOCAL 2007, 13; cf. MATTLI 1999).

In the case of the Southeast Asian-Chinese borderlands, the historical evolution on all sides of the border is different due to the individual state policies, modalities of relatedness of the state and

the border area to the wider East- and Southeast Asian political processes. But even though these spatial practices were so different and often overlapping, they all established an agreed territory of where their authority ends through cycles of co-existence, competition and clashes and long periods of time of overlapping territorialities.

What the model needs to capture therefore is in a gist how factors such as administrative reform and expansion impacted on the different evolutions of the role of the state and changed it as an infinite entity in time and space to one defined by concepts of sovereignty and administrative control over a territory. The state for these purpose used different methods. Symbols, such as maps supporting police and military control, markers such as anthems and pledges of loyalty bound people to the territory, and especially in the case of Vietnam, a historiography that showed the state in its current form as an eternal nation, whose development followed a grand design that existed since times immemorial, and thereby marginalized the fringes (VUVING 2006 808; KIM 2015, 269-270).

From the point of view of the state, who in many ways shaped the narrative of the borderland as destined to protect the core from China in the case of Đại Việt and Vietnam, or as the borderland as an integral part of the country inhabited by cousins of the lowland in case of Konbaung-Myanmar, or taking the incorporation of the area as a practical necessity to avoid uprisings as in the case of Dali and Yuan-China – later dynasties regarded this step as a civilizing mission – the area and its marginalized position is nothing but the product of interaction between states during their respective formation-processes (SHIN 2006, 17, 206; MICHAUD 2010, 198; SCOTT 2009, 23; cf. BROWN 1988, 62-63; O’LEARY 2004, 22). The shortcomings of this view are manifold. It provides the trap of a lowland-centrist or ethno-centrist view in historiography as in the case of Vietnam, reduces a deeply interconnected world region to the role of a passive and largely empty space that was up for grabs, limits the agency of the region and levels out the differences between territorial claim and actual territorial control – a dichotomy that was salient in Southeast Asia from the 16th to the 18th century. The border area is to a large degree the product of interaction between states and territorialization, but these were not the only shaping factors in this regard: statecraft, culture, the spread of social markers as well as economic integration into national value chains – such as granary-networks in Yunnan and Guizhou during the Ming and Qing-dynasty – all influenced the actions and reactions on both the side of the state and its future periphery (PERDUE 2005, 365; O’DOWD 2010, 1044; cf. WANG 2005a, 11-12). The states interacted

with each other across this space, but this space was by no means empty and had its fair share of influence in shaping these interactions and determining how strongly it shall be affected by them. While the political and economic ties do play an important role in the creation of borders, as they both fulfill the role of demarcating political and economic entities but also mediating the flow of trade and political and economic cooperation, it is also necessary to look into the social and cultural aspects that borders and the borderlands perform. The China-Southeast Asian border is to some degree an artificial product of political developments, moderated through economic capabilities, but it didn't appear out of the blue. At any point, its creation was dependent on a coherent set of political and economic factors that made sense from the point of view of the central governments – artificial creation in terms of drawing arbitrary lines on maps was not widespread before the advent of colonialism. So, the reality of the border and the genesis of a borderland happened hand in hand in the view of the states, but less so for the people in the borderlands for whom the border was less dependent on political and economic developments on a macro-scale but rather historical self-images and perceptions of social groups in their territory, leading sometimes to clashes and resistance. Culture, especially cultural markers, transformation of practices and integration and cooptation of cultural traits within administrative practices has therefore the potential to construct a separation along the border and support unification with the state. At the same time, the experience of separation and integration into the state causes a shared experience among those who are in contact across the border, which unites them regarding the potential of resistance. However, a unified state with an integrated administration and means of cultural markers at hand to appropriate the territory for its own means can make use of this ambiguity by marginalizing the territory to allow some degree of laissez-faire autonomy that is limited by the strengthening of the state's interests in having this border. A trade-off between authority and territoriality on the one hand and at least a degree of cultural autonomy on the other hand allows the border to perform according to the state-centered interests while keeping the area calm and attached to its territory (BAUD/VAN SCHENDEL 1997, 242; WIMMER 2013, 115; cf. TAN 2004, 183).

At the heart of the state interest lies the confirmation and maintenance of its territorial reach of control while instrumentalizing the outside as the competitor or even enemy over resources, stability and unity, which needs containment by propping a uniformed political, economic and administrative space against it. This space mediates and controls interaction and represents the watershed of power-division, facilitating control and domination and promoting social change. State

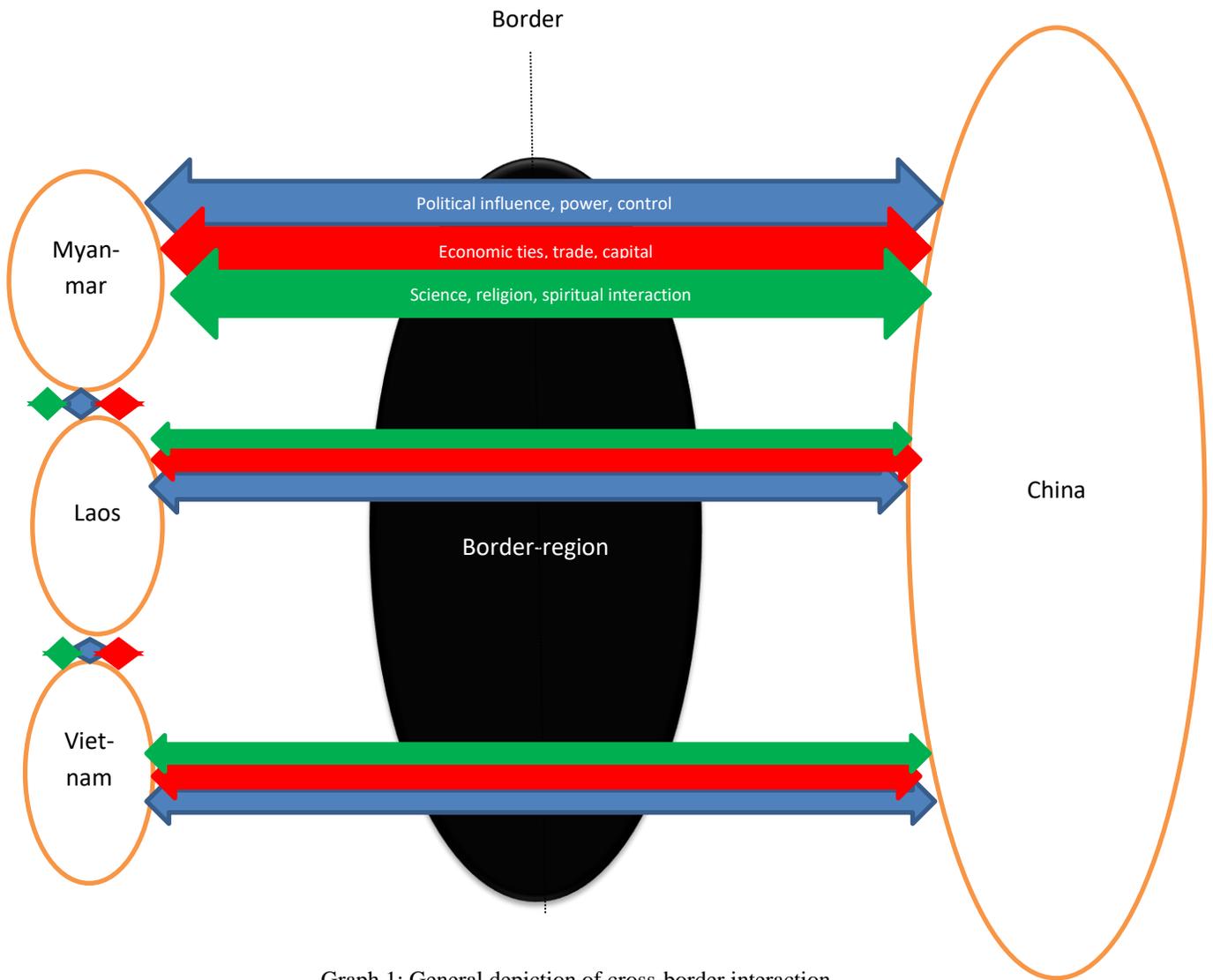
power, trade, internal administration and military strength therefore influence the border and vice versa due to the state-to-state interactions in these fields that shape facts about territoriality and reach which not always coincide with the practices of the people affected by it. Yet the border is as real in its implications for states and their interactions as well as the people directly affected by it and their cross-border relations – the focus of interpretation may just be different. The border for the state demarcates and communicates space and actual statehood, hence is a reality in itself and not a fabricated imagination. It affects and shapes new contexts for the borderlands that also shape contexts regarding the border – but given the fluidity of shifting pieces that made the border happen in a coherent way it cannot be deconstructed as a reality, just because practices prevail that do not fit the purpose of the border itself. Given the state interests, this space is highly politicized as a zone to protect a community, yet the territorial reach of it and the authority that comes with managing and maintaining the space is a given factor, continued through politics, interstate-relations and cultural and social markers. These define how the neighbors are not part of the state itself from a political, economic and territorial point of view that also shifts into the cultural realm where the border constructs a difference along the line of sometimes politicized markers such as anthems and coats of arms, and meditates influences and ideas from abroad – thus bordering and ordering space along the territorial aims of the state (VAN HOUTUM 2011, 51-54; YOHSIMATSU 2008, 82).

In economic terms, the border serves as a stumbling block but doesn't stop trade in goods, people, services passing through, making it not only a barrier but also a bridge (BROCK 2001, 36). As the border is a process of interstate relations, also its purpose is an institutionalized process in this flow of people, goods and ideas that require administrative management and adaptation for the territoriality to stay intact (WILSON et al. 2012, 19). This can take the shape of tributary relations, toll-posts, or monastic centers. What makes it more complicated is the fact that several state centers are operating across the same border-area, creating a situation in which political, economic and cultural networks overlap – not just because of the understanding of territoriality as a galactic polity model as in the case of Theravada-states, but also because the relations between state, border-elites and local people are enmeshed into wider networks that are not consistent with the political boundaries. While a single state tries to maintain exclusive control over its borderland, making the border as a symbol of its sovereignty once it is created, state-power has limits due to international political and economic ties, be they formal as in the case of mutual reconnaissance and the uptake of tributary relations as Dali did with many of its Southern neighbors

but failed to do with China or informal, such as ethnic alliances across borders in the case of the Hmong or other people. These local political networks limit the power of the state and provide a degree of agency of the borderland across which the state acts and interacts with other states, while connecting both sides and so accessing political resources and leverages of several states. If these networks are strong, they may materialize their interests, as for example Nanzhao did, rivaling several centers at once. Diminishing the influence of such networks is sometimes crucial to a pacified border, often achieved by assimilation of borderlands to make them resemble more their interior counterparts. Both Vietnam and the Burmese states have a long history in this regard, to demarcate the state and achieve the negotiated territorial stability between themselves and their Chinese neighbor. On the other hand, these networks can be deployed and strengthened to subvert the attempts of the neighboring countries for their own territorial goals, as it happened with China's attempts to expand beyond its current border. The international connection on a macro-level gets therefore complicated and influenced by the agency of the border-region itself. Power relations and power politics on the state level as well as between centers and borderlands are a crucial factor when trying to understand the genesis of a border, as they shape the ability to control the area and keep checks on the activities of the neighbors. Whatever the constellation of the power-play, the result may be a pacified, unruly or outright secessionist area depending on how the power structure integrates the interests of both the borderland and the states negotiating over it, as well as how strongly the state manages to penetrate the area, can integrate means of coercion for its own benefit, enforces state rule while taking local concerns into account, reduces local power holders to resist and can assert control over local political and economic activities. These factors are all determined by the parameters of state-building as well as the inter-state interactions when negotiating the role the borderland has to play (BAUD/VAN SCHENDEL 1997, 225-229). Striking a balance between the multilateral set of interests across many sectors on the national and transnational scale is therefore the key for the state to manage its territory, security, political model and its border (BRUNET-JAILLY 2012, 102). Important markers in these processes are nation-building, colonialism and post-colonial experiences, economic transformations and geopolitical involvements with their impacts not only on the political, economic and cultural propensities of the state but also on state-society relations, state-legitimacy, the monopoly of power and economic and political integration. These are marked also by the social, economic and political characteristics of the neighbors that find themselves connected in shared global interests about what role for the state to regulate these affairs within their territory and along their border.

States therefore determine their border, transnational and international networks and interests of the borderlands may play a significant role regarding linkages and leverage but the last word is the result of inter and intra-state negotiations and trade-offs of interests (SCOTT 2012, 88; McDOUGALL et al. 2012, 177-178; HOBBSAWM 1992, 28). The historical materialization of the border and the role of the borderland is therefore dependent on state policies, economic and political experiences and cultural transmission, that distinctly belong to the state and its territorial shape, embodied by institutions that reflect the image the state has of itself and that it wants to show to its neighbors. This leads to a coexistence of different political cultures and regulatory logics that penetrate one and the same borderland and emanate from different states as well as local practices reflecting competing social and statist normativities, the experience of marginalization of being a border-area and historical functionalities, such as trade-routes (GRIMSON 2012, 208, KRAMSCH 2012, 231; RAEYMAEKERS 2012, 319). The heritage of an area that for a long time was not organized through relationships of rational territorialized containers of power, is still vivid in the borderlands, providing numerous economic, social and cultural links to more than one state and actively engaging into the crossing of state-interests through its territory – not only bordering but also bridging divides that may exist on the intra-state scale (VAN HOUTUM 2012, 406).

The plurality and fluidity of these processes, their relational nature, and the different perceptions of what territoriality actually means for the respective states is a starting-point to analyse the development of the Southeast-Asian-Chinese borderland. From what has been written so far it is possible to identify the set of influencing factors in inter-state relations that penetrate and are mediated through borderlands: politics and security, economic interests, trade and prosperity, cultural, religious and knowledge-based interests. The following graph shall give an idea how these factors interact across the borderlands and shall graphically depict the interdependencies of inter-state relations on the borderland from the point of view of the current states.



Graph 1: General depiction of cross-border interaction

The functions of this border and the border-region have continuously changed over the course of history, so it is necessary that while keeping this pattern of mutual influence across different sectors between different entities as one shaping in mind, it has to be seen in its historical context at any given point in time. Power, politics, social organization and the emphasis on historical legacies changed the relative importance of these states and with it also the shape of the border-region – as continuous perception of a boundary, fragmented between different states, nested within it or some hybrid form over which control was sparse but organizational consolidation wasn't possible either. With this in mind, it is possible to start from this first step to develop patterns of and solutions to contestations, negotiations and the parameters of the creation of the border itself. While

these shapes represent to some degree a territorial distribution of the state-actors, they should rather be understood as complex spatial phenomena that influence each other and show great dynamics in their transformations, interaction in power-relations and territoriality to create the distinctions along the fields – political, social, cultural, economic – in which they need to interact to survive and prosper (WASTL-WALTER 2011, 1; BAUD/VAN SCHENDEL 1997 216). Since territoriality is at the core of statehood and the inter-state relations that define the border in its ability to separate, connect or mediate political, economic and cultural developments, it is possible to state based on this first part of the model, that territorialization is not a singular process towards one aim but a meandering amalgamation of multiple interrelated processes, operating across these elements shown in graph 1. The top-down dimension of the model allows us to see territoriality not as a fixed or linear parameter, but as evolving over multiple dimensions, waxing and waning in the fluidity of inter-state relations and local, national and international power-plays. It is not a stabilizing force in itself, but rather the outcome of interacting forces across the space of the territory (LAPID 2001, 8 – 9).

1.8.2. Bottom-up parameters in the bordering and territorialization process

Having established the paramount role of states, their formation and relations among each other in the creation of borders as a result of territorialization efforts, the top-down perspective misses however the interplay of cause and effect of these processes on the ground. States are socially constructed along shared ideas, practices and interactions, who reach their limit when they meet a different set of ideas, practices and interactions they cannot compete with either because of material constraints, incompatibility, or lack of administrative strength to consolidate these ideas (LUSTICK 2004, 79-80; DOORNBOS 2006, 43-44). Borders are nothing more than a consequence of how state-power was reflected in the interdependencies among the states, implying flexible and contested lines, delimiting territory often more on a map than in reality, so that the meaning of the border can change when the relation among the actors are changing and so that legitimizing arguments are adapted to new circumstances, such as changes in legal traditions or emphasis on cultural distinctions. Over time this flexibility disappears as the strongest actors in the network – notably the state itself – claim their absolute sovereignty over a territory. Borders are in most cases a brainchild of the capitals, modified by circumstances on the ground in an interplay of means of capital, coercion and cooptation of regional elites and negotiated with other capitals: the Southeast-Asian Chinese border is to a large degree grown organically through an

ebb and flow of territorial claims and modes of integration. These were sometimes interrupted by international events, the struggle of elite groups to get their interests implemented and always characterized by a strong state-involvement that modulates these struggles by implementing measures for state-cohesion and adapting its stance towards regional population and elites as well as its presence in the borderland to the strategic and economic importance of the border. The conciliation of these different perspectives – such as resistance against assimilation attempts, fight against separatists or the attitude towards smuggling – depends also on how well the regional elites are integrated into the networks of state-power so that they can become important allies for the state to control and claim the borderland. States try to shift the base of the legitimacy of the regional elites from the regional embedding of power-relations towards a legitimacy that rests purely on their service to the state itself for taxes, tribute, discipline and expansionist projects. The case of the Hmong-kingdom under Hoang Yen Chao and Hoang Tuong during the French rule in Northern Vietnam illustrates that as its legitimacy purely rested on the ability to control the influx of communist elements from China as opposed to their original role as leader and protector of their people. Relying on both the state and their own independent power-base they do have leverage against the state to oppose centralizing policies (BAUD/VAN SCHENDEL 1997, 217-219; STURGEON 2004, 466; WIMMER 2013, 153). The local population in the borderlands determines the social dynamics of the region through its relations to the regional elites and the states on both sides of the border and by defining the structure of their territory out of their local conceptions of power-relations. The influence of the local population on power-relations is defined by – simultaneously as it defines – the social, economic and political situation in and interactions between the two states: ethnic or religious divides, state-induced otherness, markers of different competing political and economic visions for the territory are reflected in the borderlands (BAUD/VAN SCHENDEL 1997, 219-220; HASTINGS 1996, 30).

States can interact with other states on these issues, but on the ground they accumulate means of capital and coercion to shape the dynamics between the center and the borderland and influence the relation between borderlands, using social markers, providing security, introducing practices that tie people to the center and penetrate the area with modes of governance and administration. The status of a border-region is something that is not only being imposed on an entity that was incorporated as a buffer on the fringes, but rather needs to be actively created through interactions between the state, the borderland and their counterparts on the other side of the border. This can be understood as a dynamic to give the region a purpose for the state – namely as a bridge or

buffer-zone – for which this area needs to transform itself: the border-area simply doesn't exist by itself, but rather needs to be created according to the circumstances surrounding the border, the needs as well as the shape and structure of the state and its relations (YIFTACHEL 2004, 360; GAT/YAKOBSON 2013, 309-310; VU 2010, 159). Thus after the interplay to territorialize the space within the state, a process of marginalization needs to set in to make the area a border-area. States are never finite in terms of material, economic or institutional constraints that inform their boundaries, but rather constantly evolving through intra-state negotiations about structure, governance and authority as well as intra-border region negotiations over sovereignty and territoriality. While on the level of states this issue is resolved on a different scale, in the case of bottom-up dynamics this needs to happen on the intra-regional, inter-regional and intra-state and inter-state scale, to accurately depict which factors influenced in what way the resolution of different concepts of territoriality in case of clashes and overlaps – galactic polity model, Neo-Confucian centralism, tributary states and unchartered territory – against the backdrop of drastically different experiences and views on statehood and borders. To some degree the borderland is a derivative of the state building process but given that it is in the case of the Southeast-Asian-Chinese border not an unchartered territory, it needs to be seen as an entity in its own right, that possesses its own ability to act, and whose marginal position in the state-structures is not an imposition but the outcome of a complex social, political and economic interplay between and among the region(s) and central state(s). This part will introduce a systemic approach combining the dimensions of inter-state, intrastate, inter-region and intra-region relations, which will be the basis in the continuing analysis of the development of the borderlands as to what degree border-regions acted to become marginalized in the state structure and what roles they managed to appropriate that deviate from the orthodox understanding of the borderlands. It is inevitable given the geographic scope of this thesis to also take a closer look on how the Zomia-idea will fit into this. I argue that the agency embodied in the bottom-up approach allows to reconcile the territoriality-marginalization-approach in connection with statehood and inter-state politics with Zomia as border areas are able act and react to developments in this network of power relations on every scale they are being part of, impacting territorialization efforts, thickness of governance and penetration of administrative practices, while navigating global trends and dependencies as world-regions in their own right.

This interplay is not just an ad-hoc picture of the border-situation but the result of deep socio-historical processes, in which the area embraced or resisted the border, the incorporation into the

territorial state, the penetration of the lowland societies and their practices and the territorialization efforts (HEYMAN 2012, 48). The question is therefore how to bring this evolution into a model that takes into account the situation on the ground and the multifaceted interplay with state, regional and global systemic influences, that account for the non-linear evolution of the border. HEYMAN (2012, 48, 54) describes the bottom-up sociohistorical process as the interplay of three inheritances: cultural lineage that has hybridized with subsequent state culture, mixture of two preexisting cultural formations and polarization in which cultures are established as opposites by their interaction. The problem with this approach is that while it considers the bottom-up nature of territorialization and border-setting through interaction, it assumes a natural process, like an osmosis, omitting the relations that steer such an evolution. By doing so, the outcome is inevitable and only dependent on the basic cultural parameters that are meeting in the area, stripping the border-area – and the state for that matter – of a substantial agency to interact in power-relations, opt-in or refuse the border-situation and choose between a wide range of transnational relations to further their own aims: forces that draw a space into a territory are not uni-linear vectors of penetration, but rather an array of multiple directions of mutual influence, through which the bottom is enabled to direct its interests upwards and doesn't remain passive (MOSTOV 2008, 23; CANEY 2005, 31, 149; SCOTT 2009, 8-9).

In terms of the political economy of state-building, this means that the nearly universal course of states to start from capitalist production, which informs nationalism and later forges a national state, that claims sovereignty and independence, territorialization is not only a function of penetration of this mode of production – together with other factors – but also of how they are received, accepted or resisted in a border-area, as they go hand in hand with a monopolization of means of coercion, standardization of political and administrative governance practices and also the sometimes forced introduction of cultural markers. However, hardly any state until the establishment of the post-World War II order was as strong at the border as it was at its core, meaning that political and symbolic power wasn't strong or attractive enough to get accepted by the people living in these areas. Rather, geographical limits were ill-defined, jurisdictions overlapped and practices were informed by many different cultural inheritances thanks to a lot of options, while state-power needed to compete with, adapt to and accept the realities that were set by the local situation, and using indirect ways through elites or other privileged groups to penetrate the area. That's the way how China for example swallowed Yunnan, making it a border region while before it was a multicultural hub with global relations. Territorial expansion therefore is a matter of

principle, while territorial fixity a matter of self-determination. Both however happen in spaces with their own aims and principles, and need to interact and balance each other for achieving a border. Territorialization and bordering is in this sense partly a civilizing mission of the unruly hinterlands, partly a show of force, partly proselyting efforts to spread advanced governance and technology, but always a confrontation and interaction with already existing structures and forms of governance, that carve out their own influence in this process through alliances, taking advantages of overlaps and conflicts (O'DOWD 2012, 161; cf. TAN 2004, 100, 104-105, 111).

ANDERSON (2012, 140-142) points out how state-territoriality is not only a top-down approach but also driven by bottom-up factors that shape in their own way the acceptance of space-control and classification of territory in terms of what or who can cross and what or who belongs to the territory. Lines might be drawn in a top-down way, but the policing of these borders and their legitimacy depend on the social meanings attributed to them by those who are affected the most by finding a role within the new state-territoriality. What he proposes is therefore a multiple track approach of political integration and consolidation in the form of nationalism – the top-down component – complemented by an economic bottom-up component whose acceptance is at the basis of the formative process leading to territoriality, while rejection undermines this process.

Both of them are not independent from each other but mutually constituting, so that economic bottom-up integration and participation in the state furthers political top-down consolidation of the territory. An example would be the tributary systems of Myanmar in the 16th to 18th century, out of which political integration formed the pre-colonial state under one dynasty, using economic attraction – bottom-up – for exploitation and territorialization – top-down. This separation of top-down and bottom-up approaches are useful for the territorialization efforts, as it allows diminishing local agency through accepting an attractive model while furthering the state's goals. Also, it can be varied from depoliticized economic laissez-faire as the widest separation possible to almost no separation in economies with state-owned-enterprises, allowing for an adaptation towards a model that is attractive enough for being accepted at the margins (DOORNBOS 2006, 43-44; SCOTT 2009, 91, 334; STURGEON 2005, 463-465).

Given the bottom-up chain of power-transmission through agency of the border-region itself, this region is not only influenced by the state but also has impacts on state-building processes that are reflected at the border. Nanzhaos's behavior towards the Tang-Dynasty deeply influenced the state-consolidation and institution building even after its fall and re-construction as Dali, not only

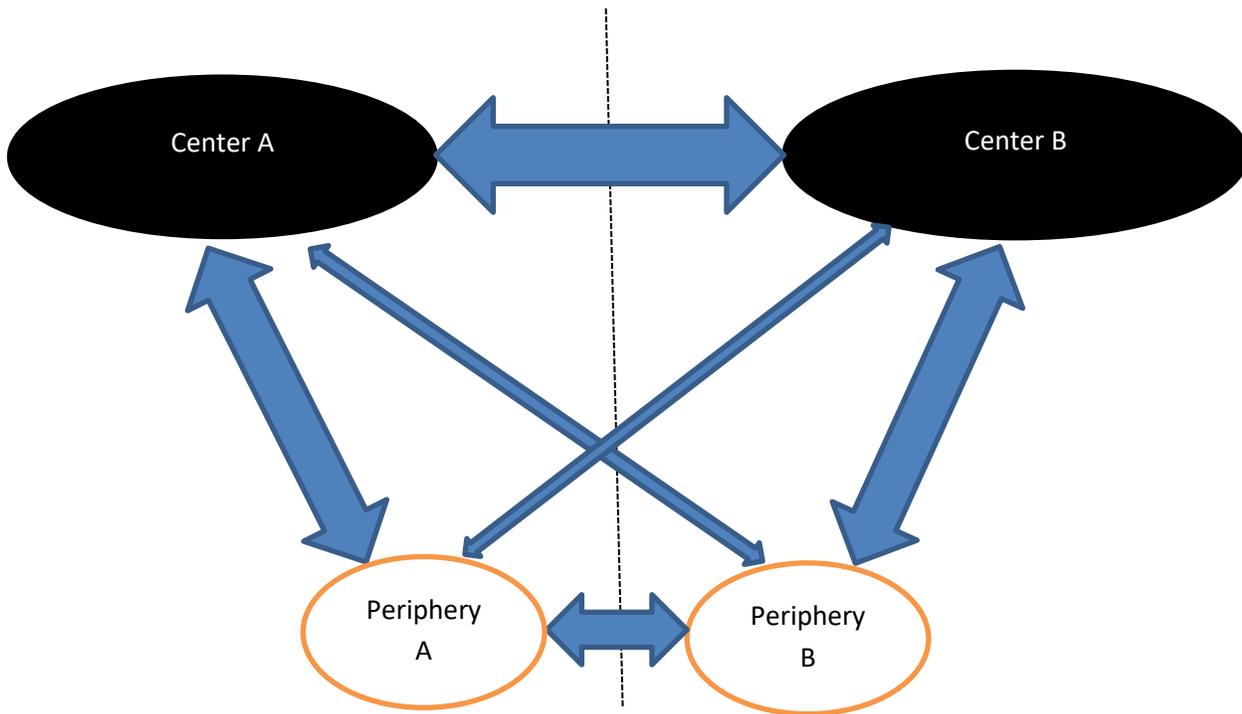
regarding power-relations but also the acceptance and spreading of knowledge and religions and trade (CHANG 2015, 245; GOH 2010, 142-143; YANG 2008b, 17, 19).

Given that, these interactions are not only based on economic terms and power relations but also intraregional influences and factors mutually impinging on and creating central-periphery relations. The border-region can act on its own as an agent vis-à-vis the center but for some reason is made a peripheral region. The key to analyse the question from a bottom-up perspective of why it became marginalized and did not stay or become an entity in its own right is an understanding of how the constrained fluidity in interregional, intraregional, inter-state and intra-state is affected and shaped by what set of actors, how these actors can be identified in maneuvering the interplay of economic, political, social including institutional, administrative and bureaucratic factors and what actions and motivations finally marked the step of this region becoming a border-region.

On a more granular level of analysis, the regional attitude towards accumulation and leveraging of power and capital, ideas on land rights and use of resources, and the interplay of accepting or refusing to be incorporated into the state through bureaucratic, ritualistic, administrative and institutional practices play an important role with regard to popular mobilization and mediation of these factors for the purpose of territorialization. Outside the Westphalian context of pre-colonial Southeast Asia this also means, that the inclusion and marginalization of the border area didn't happen in a linear way but rather in a constant expansion and retreat of spheres of the state, caused by the different modalities of territorialization and state-organization. The Mandate of Heaven, the Galactic Polity model and different administrative structures waxed and waned in this region, modulating their reach and intensity given the situation on the ground between granting laissez-faire autonomy and dogmatic integration. I argue that based on the waxing and waning of territorial reach as a function of top-down power relations, the quality and intensity of this penetration of the area as a function of bottom-up interaction with states and polities, depends on the nature of the interaction between these models in the area, that is mediated through interactions between local population, regional elites and the ruling class of the state. The outcome depends on the nature and purpose of singular clashes that cement certain relationships and eventually led to the marginalization of the region as a border-region.

According to BAUD/VAN SCHENDEL (1997, 229-230; cf. HENRIKSON 2011, 86) this pattern is a double set of actors and relation on both sides of the emanating border, as the society in a border region deals with two different states, claiming sovereignty over two halves of the borderland and providing opt-in and opt-out options for either side. To materialize their claims, the state

needs to leap into the organization of the borderland societies and their elites, convinces them of the attractiveness of becoming a part of the state and provides services that would make them perpetually opt for belonging to it as a part of the constant reproduction of the border and marginalization of the area as a borderland.



Graph 2: Model of social interactions across the border area (cf. BAUD/VAN SCHENDEL 1997, 219)

At the same time, given that there is not only one option, the relations of the state to the elite and the populations are under a strain as the state needs to constantly assure their status as borderland society to show control over its part of the borderland, while this assuring needs to be accepted by the people or constructed through economic or coercive means by the state (STANILAND 2012, 249). The agency of the border societies and the different capacities of the state to integrate the territory depending on its internal organization provide for either rebellious or quiet situations on each half of the border, leading to four different scenarios:

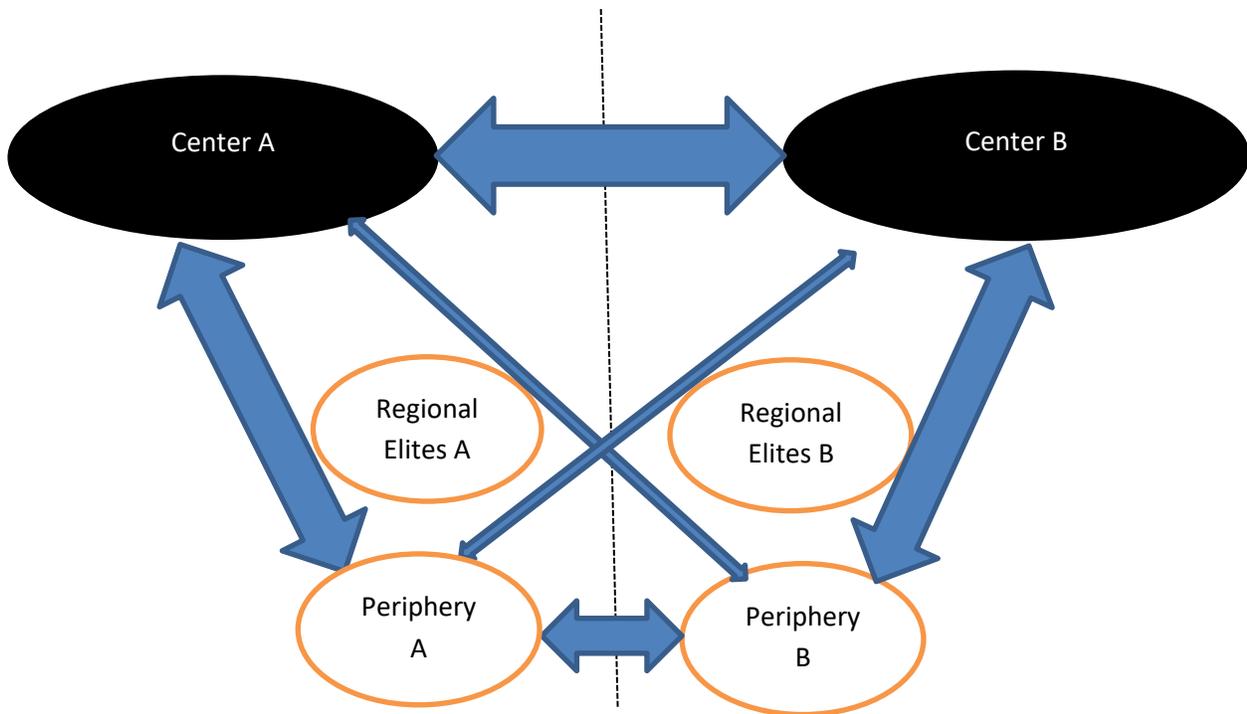
Borderland 1	Borderland 2
Quiet	Quiet
Quiet	Rebellious
Rebellious	Quiet
Rebellious	Rebellious

Table 1: Possible constellations of internal situations of states at the border

When different state-building projects compete, such as a state in the cycle of territorial expansion meets a polity in its own process of consolidation, the spatial intersection of these projects can cause instability at the border, making it rebellious or also outright violent. Antagonisms are reactivated and divisions pronounced – often as a rationalization and externalization of the conflicts within the state itself. A border area is therefore a set of alternatives how to govern and how to create a state with the power to disrupt core-state interests and to shift the balance of economic and political power in its own interest in cycles of peace and rebellion (O’DOWD 2012, 165-166). The border between Southeast Asia and China went through all these stages in different cycles. While the Myanmar-Nanzhao-border was at relative peace due to stable tributary relations and a degree of state consolidation that didn’t impact much on the social fabric of the borderland, the Vietnam-China border was unruly on both sides given the demise of the Tang-dynasty and the independence of the country – also promulgated by Nanzhao who kept its border to Vietnam in peace. Later, the Tay Son-uprising made the Vietnamese side of the Chinese-Vietnamese border unruly, yet the rest of the borders were quiet on both sides (YANG 2008a, 1, 10, YANG 2008b, 25; cf. DUTTON 2006). While the cycles were not interlocked on all sides, but to some degree influenced each other, the pattern of influence of bottom-up and top-down impacts is individual for every single border-society and depends on how the state on either side expands and contracts, and how much the expansion and attempts at integration interrupts preexisting patterns and networks of trade and exchange as well as how strongly the border area in its role of connecting two economic and political systems is integrated into the global system of governance and therefore influenced by fluctuations on the macro-economic and macro-political level. These fluctuations in turn also inform the attitude of the border-population towards the state, for example resistance against laws restricting cross-border commerce, taxes, state-sanctioned forced labor, or also intensification of commercial activity when the state brings conducive policies to fruition (BAUD/VAN SCHENDEL 1997, 230; SCOTT 2009, 129; LUSTICK 2004, 81-83; TAN 2004,

124). Agency and the options presented help the border-population to act on their own behalf whether to integrate in one of the states or oppose them altogether. While Nanzhao opposed becoming part of China or any Southeast Asian polity, its successor opted for a radically different approach as it promised more benefits given the reduced flow of commodities of the trade routes running through Dali, and the state itself being a tribute-receiver from its Southeast Asian neighbors (YANG 2008b, 17-18; YANG 2008c, 14, 17-18).

While for the local population engaging in petty trade and commerce and keeping kinship and friendship ties across the borderland the integration into a state that requires a borderline is often not a big interruption of their daily routines, this process has to be mediated through power elites according to the terms of their needs and visions for their space at various times. This, paired with opt-in and opt-out opportunities that are sometimes omitted and sometimes seized, accounts for the cyclical nature of borderland integration and subsequent times of rebellion and peace (SCHEIDEL 2007, 9-10; BROWN 1988, 52-53; O'LEARY 2004, 24; LUSTICK 2004, 86, 89; GAT/YAKOBSON 2013, 38). Power elites play a central role as they decide how to manage their territory and whether they accept the marginalization of it as a border-region in return of managing the border and organize the crossings. At no level of analysis therefore – local, regional or state-level – and no border-type like visible or invisible, formal or informal, the creation of a border as a result of territorialization, integration and marginalization can dispense with a power component – be it top-down coming from the state or bottom-up shaped by action of the local structures. These elites can decide when and for what interest their region can become a border-region and if it did, how borders shall be built, opened or removed – decisions they can only take as long as they are in power. This power-component and its dependence on time-related factors needs to be part of any framework or model to allow an overarching analysis of borders no matter at which level (KOLOSSOV 2013, 6; BAUD/VAN SCHENDEL 1997, 214, 217-219; LUSTICK 2004, 94-95; JENNE 2014, 9). An example would be the short-lived Hmong-kingdom in Northern Indochina or the Sipsong Chau Tai polity during the era of French colonization that enjoyed autonomy to a large degree in exchange of keeping these territories calm and to prevent the chaos in China from spilling over to the colony. It was a decision made by the elites, namely Đèo Văn Tri to opt for supporting the state, even though resistance grew among the local population against the French and their interference, eventually leading to rebellions and an opening of the border to ideas from China (DAVIS 2017, 125-127, 137-138).



Graph 3: Locating elites in the social cross-border interactions (cf. BAUD/VAN SCHENDEL 1997, 219)

The actors and their relations in the diagram place them as agents of control, order and organizations with their own interests at the intersection of territories, power and state (WILSON 2012, 5). Agency is thus not necessarily autonomous decision-making but the ability to act in a complex web of interactions with stakeholders on the local, regional and national level, who pursue to push through their interests regarding the borderland. They are beset with influences emanating from inter- and intra-regional and state activities, shaping the options of local actors at hand and the leverage they can use in the integration and marginalization-process. The underlying social, economic and political relations are uneven and show their impact in structural arrangements through penetration and contestation of territorialization and administrative institutionalization that may lead to a division and separation of the elements even though they remain connected. An example would be the horse-trade across the region emanating from Nanzhao/Dali which so was influenced by the warring interests of those who needed horses and which could so project its power arising from its distinctive export into these states geographically, while the social life was largely shaped by currents on the global level, such as the spread of Neo-Confucianism and the ebb and flow in Buddhism's popularity. These influences open the life of people in the border-region towards political and social structures from elsewhere while the elites mediate how strong

this influence and its underlying relations shall become – it lies in this negotiation of how to shape the area where the integration and opting for one state occurs and marginalization gets accepted. Hybridization on the bottom of the relational web in terms of adoption of political and economic thinking and attachment to local, regional and supranational perspectives is a first step to opt and thus to marginalize the area, so that a border is set up (RAYEMAEEKERS 2012, 319; JOHNSON/MICHAELSEN 1997, 31; HEYMAN 2012, 51; WILSON/HASTINGS 2012, 19; SCOTT 2012, 89; YANG 2008b). After all Dali opted to adopt Chinese symbols of power to get accepted – a process that had its popular roots already since the Han-dynasty – and after the Mongolian conquest it remained within the Chinese empire as a marginal province and not as the world region it used to be (YANG 2008a, 7; 10-11; YANG 2008c, 1, 20-21).

Governing practices only materialize and lose their hybridity after the imposition of the border when territorialization was successful and at least a relative state of peace remains in the border-area. This is achieved when the state and the border area agree on the universal principles of their territorialization – either through negotiation or by force. The result is the applicability of state-sanctioned legal systems, administrative penetration by public officials to implement it, an increasing thickness of governance binding the border to the state, transforming perceptions and ways of life towards an exclusive idea of participating in the state. At the same time, marginalization sets in as the peculiar status of being a border-area includes elements of being outside the state-system because networks across the border and the overlapping influence of multiple states are regardless of the negotiations of the elites part of the collective regional agency, which cannot be replaced by new social markers of political legitimation – even though the state is far more dominant. The border is so a mix of waxing and waning policy penetration and political manipulation on the side of the center and the periphery alike in all states sharing the border (MCDUGALL/PHILIPS 2012, 191-193; JENNE 2014, 7-8; CARTIER 2011, 967-968). The means for that included on the state-side government officials to survey, occupy and defend the border, maps not to indicate but to state factual claims of territory, educational efforts – such as the Sangha in Myanmar or Confucian schools in Đại Việt – to bind the region through knowledge of the state to the state. On the side of the border-region, wise choices of multiple alliances, the carving out of strategies to pursue its own interests, and rebellions allowed that treaties either didn't reflect the reality on the ground or could only get signed in a piecemeal fashion. The sheer fear of the border to be violated, infiltrated or invaded by the neighbor and the awareness of overlaps in jurisdiction and governance models required states to find ways to deal with their borders

in a stick and carrot way. Often autonomy for local practices were granted in exchange for unequivocal loyalty to the state – the Hmong and the French would be an example. Sometimes punishing missions and nationalization efforts served this aim like Myanmar during much of its time of independence; or long nationalist penetration, cultural assimilation and territorial integration into a rigid administration as in China. Each of these ways provoked reactions making it either a peaceful or rebellious borderland: if a political border doesn't coincide with a cultural border, it is being made to coincide through gradual attachment to and acceptance of the state and its institutions and practices by the border-population. In dealing with the process of acceptance political, institutional, economic and cultural markers of the state is where bottom-up agency shows its strength, reducing or reinforcing the state in the region, altering its sovereignty and defining the role of the area itself (GRIMSON 2012, 200-202, 206: cf. FRENCH 2017, 122).

As neither of the states along the Southeast-Asian-Chinese border were fully-fledged territorial entities from the beginning but cyclically expanded and contracted, they swallowed already pre-existing entities, which acted for themselves and reacted to the expansion, producing a complex interplay of affiliations. This resulted in ever-changing terms of engagement between state and periphery in which the local population played a big role and which also reshaped the lowland-states through the relational dynamics of interaction, making the border not just an end of the state but competition ground between models of social organization and attractiveness of the state as well as power relations across, within and between regions and states, creating complex interdependencies. Along these interdependencies both actors, the state, elites and population of the borderlands tried to operate for their own advantage – be it by exploiting conflicts for their own autonomy such as the remnants of the Mac-dynasty did in the Vietnamese borderlands or by adopting features to get integrated as did Dali. Politics and non-state actors mimic the state for their own benefits, while the bottom-up agency with its networks spanning different administrative and political spaces allows creating a difference. With territorial consolidation based on a pacified border-area then sets in marginalization (KRAMSCH 2012, 232-233; NEWMAN 2012, 242; GOODHAND 2012, 345-347; HENRIKSON 2011, 85).

In the process leading up to that, the symmetry of the interdependencies and relations is in constant flux: how states interact with their peripheries and vice versa, with other states, and how peripheries act with other states and peripheries may change due to their own interests. The involvement of states and peripheral regions in the international system – not only neighboring countries or regions but through networks, trade and alignment of political interests also further

beyond the immediate vicinity – impacts on the state-border area relationship and vice versa, which needs to be either reconfirmed, renegotiated or revised. While once established the situation of the border-area is dependent mainly on the national-level relationships, having the opportunity to opt for alternatives can change the structure of the regional order, making other relationships more important for the situation of the borderland. An example would be the alignment of Nanzhao with Xiongnu with a direct impact on the independence of Đại Việt as lack of resources to fight off Xiongnu considerably weakened the Tang-dynasties foothold in its southern provinces. Interests of states and border-regions can so interact independently from national lines and so shaping and deepening relations according to their needs and using opportunities that arise out of the constellation of interests elsewhere. The thickness of the arrows in graph 1 is therefore changing given the political and economic constellations at any point of time, so that the intensity of interaction, attitudes and responses vary all the time – stabilized only when a setting occurs that is perceived to be advantageous for all sides. This fluctuation of relationship-intensities as a result of power-constellations, ideas, interests and institutions changes the role and structure of the border and the borderlands as well as how states and borderlands can find a compromise in their respective aims and ambitions, varying between harmonious solutions or tense conflicts (HENRIKSON 2011 86-87; ACKLESON 2011, 246; MARKUSSE 2011, 352; JENNE 2014, 6-7; GIERSCH 2011, 48; WIMMER 2013, 198-199).

Given the ebb and flow of state-penetration, acceptance and resistance against it, local agency based on – also changing – self-interests and the changing nature of the networks and relations between states, regional elites and local population, shaped by and shaping political, economic and cultural processes in the whole region, imply that this process of becoming a borderland is not a linear one but depending on the set of political, economic and cultural circumstances at different historical moments. This leads to decisions affecting the bottom-up attitude to the territorialization-process and the evolution of the asymmetric power-relations within and across the region and states that finally marginalized the area as a border-region.

1.8.3. Merging top-down and bottom-up approaches: asymmetric equilibria

Given the constantly shifting interdependencies and power relations materialized in the borderland and around territorialization and marginalization processes, a border and the adjacent borderlands are not fixated in time but the outcome of state-organization, the structure of internal and external power relations and the means deployed to integrate the border and the borderland.

Internal and external circumstances in the region and the state determine their functionality, through which the border-area itself informs the state in its decision-making in territorialization processes and the making of power-relations. The strong top-down influence of the state and the bottom-up-processes in the network of power-relations that modify the territorialization and marginalization efforts need to be reconciled in a way that takes into account the agency of the borderland as well as its dependence at any point of time on the circumstances of interregional, intraregional, interstate and intra-state relations. Of what has been established so far, one can see that a borderland does not appear unexpectedly but is determined by a range of factors and relations that are competing trends towards centralization as opposed trends towards autonomy, which eventually stabilize along negotiated parameters of state-elite-region-relations.

The border so is a semi-permeable membrane acting in both directions whose shape and permeability is influenced by the state as well as the actors bound in power-relations around it. Given that any activity concerning the border has a material dimension in terms of goods and territory as well as a subjective component in terms of interest projections of the state, local elites and the local population of how their respective role shall be reflected in the functioning of the border-area, any activity of shaping the border and pinning down a border-area is accompanied by tensions and conflicts. These tensions and the way they are handled determine the permeability of the border, reducing or increasing the leverage of the actors and can either loosen or cement power relations and so shaping the outcome of the border and its area until it is institutionalized and socially accepted. An example would be horse trading between Pyu and Dali, in the course of which border-markets were established and local chiefs made use of the economic opportunities for themselves until they become socially accepted agents in the institutional networks of border-markets, recreating the border in their activities and so fixating territory. The interplay of top-down and bottom-up agency in the shaping of the borderland unleash transnational forces such as market exchanges or regulatory efforts which again are directly involved in constituting order and authority and so demarcate space and cement borders. While local elites and people try to benefit from them by accepting or circumventing these forces, it is a convenient power-strategy for the state to use these forces to marginalize the periphery to shape it in an image it needs for its survival (RAEYMAEKERS 2012, 319-320).

The state relies for its existence on the sovereignty-based territoriality segmenting it from other actors, while this territorial logic is either challenged or reinforced by the practices on the ground depending on the model of integration, the perceived legitimacy of the top-down activities and

the freedom bottom-up activities could enjoy. While in the top-down bordering territorial principles are paramount given the supreme role of the state, non-territorial principles of separation and bordering inform the actions in the bottom-up bordering – a dichotomy that often required defusing through means of coercion, political cooptation or material benefits. The state and the borderland therefore can only be stabilizers on a world stage under certain circumstances in which both of their interests align and reinforce themselves – and with it also the bordering and ordering principles and practices they chose. These principles and practices – and also their political signifiers – however are not set in stone but a product of the circumstances of the wider relations of state and region and change their meaning according to these circumstances which in turn may change border-effects and mutual attitudes of the state towards the borderland since the state doesn't exist without a borderland and vice-versa (LAPID 2001, 27; KAISER, 524-525). As DIENER (2011c, 374-375) points out, while the territorialization of political spaces is inherently driven by central states, pre-existing concepts of territoriality need to be accounted for in this process by integrating those in power-relations and modulating the state-power in its reach beyond the border for a successful equilibrium. It is therefore not enough to just see the geographical extent of power as the definite marker of territoriality but rather border construction as one outcome of many modalities of power-relations – both bottom up and top-down – that change over time. The form of power-projection and the resistance to or acceptance of it is as important as the consolidation of interests and mediation of conflicting attitudes to bring these two strands of power-flux from the top to the bottom and vice versa together in the geographic realm of the borderland between social relations and polities. In the case of the Southeast-Asian-Chinese borderland this means the inclusion of sub-national forms of sovereignty and their modalities of mediating interests and managing power-relations such as the case of Sip Song Chau Tai in the Vietnam-Laos-China triangle that used its leverage and territorial control together with its own selective historical geography to counter-map its territory against the French colonial administration and the Vietnamese and Lao central states who nevertheless wielded considerable influence over the material well-being of this region. In doing so, Sip Song Chau Tai confronted the representational quality of the border and the state, undermined inclusion processes but free-rode on the benefits this inclusion brought about while keeping a degree of autonomy for pushing its self-interest by underlying existing differences and creating some new ones by introducing markers like flags and rituals. This result was not the consequence of a mere bottom-up insurgency but rather of the circumstances that impacted the ability of the states in question to act while provid-

ing an opportunity for Sip Song Chau Tai to take matters in its own hands, which it could do by negotiating its interests as a prerequisite for fulfilling the top-down state interests which in turn impacted economic, political and cultural parameters in this area in a way that it eventually got marginalized as a border-area.

Thus, the bottom-up and top-down interactions between states, the borderland and the border itself are consolidated in the nexus of the multiple interests and visions projected upon the border as a space of connectivity, interaction and separation at the same time. Therefore their shaping and interactions need to be reconciled in a balanced equilibrium encompassing the various interests and projection of power – yet as it is not a one-sided affair but several regions and states involved with each of them having their own struggles to strike this equilibrium, the border manifests itself as a watershed of asymmetric equilibria of the power-relations that we have seen in the previous chapter.

1.8.4. Factors shaping the borderland

From what has been described so far, it is possible to discern the markers for the asymmetric equilibrium that manifests itself at a border. Differences are manifested in the modalities of territoriality on side of the state, functionality the borderland shall pursue, how to deal with the manifold interests as well as ensuring social stability and the internal organization of the polities. Across the relations between the actors, we have seen that for a stable and territorialized border to emerge with an area catering for this border's existence, it is necessary that the local and state-level measures, practices and interests somehow find a negotiated equilibrium within and across the state and the region. The different actors have their own capacity and means to act according to their interests, but are embedded in power-relations that curtail or reinforce these capabilities. For a stable equilibrium to arrive at the border on the side of one state, various factors as shown before need to be taken into account and weighed against each other such as interests, administrative practices and the concern for inner-state stability. Since an equilibrium on the side of one state regarding its territoriality and approach to marginalize areas dedicated to be at the fringes of its power is not enough for the border to emerge, it is necessary to take into account a sometimes differently achieved equilibrium on the other side of the border, such as in the case of Ming-China, the Confederation of Shan states and the Toungoo dynasty. Each of the polities was attached to their own carefully balanced territoriality, which drastically differed in terms of structure and organization (cf. LUSTICK 2004, 97). The following table gives an overview of the fac-

tors that determine equilibria within the state and the asymmetric equilibria at the border, which has to be understood in all levels of relations between states, local elites and population among and across each other.

Stable territoriality		Functionality of the border-area	Multilevel interests			Social stability and inner-regional tensions	Bureaucracy, administration and institutionalization
Differences in means of coercion and capital		Differences of border permeability	Differences in interests on level of the state, local elites and population			Differences in striving for/granting autonomy	Differences in dealing with land rights and resources
Differences in the modality to control territory	Differences in the modality to control people	Differences in the use of intersections and connections	Geopolitical interests	Economic interests	Strategic interests	Differences in allowing participation in the central state	Differences in tax regimes
Differences in attractiveness of political and economic models		Differences in modalities of integrating border areas into national power relations	Differences in mediation mechanisms to reconcile clashing interests			Differences in knowledge and innovative forces	Differences in adherence to legal norms, their codification and implementation
Differences in the military and coercion-based control and enforcement of the state		Dissemination of knowledge and technology	Differences in dealing with the pervasiveness of non-state ideologies			Differences in visions of modernity	Differences in the penetration of territory through administration
Differences in capabilities to bind territory						Differences in prosperity	Differences in the thickness of governance

Table 2: Factors determining border-equilibria (Cf. SOLOMON 1969, 38-40)

The interaction of these factors across and within the border regions and states dilute or reinforce the border depending on the circumstances and the differences of the equilibrium found at the border: they make social interactions, the identification with them and their organization and administration different within a territorialized space, delineating state territories. The border forms itself out of the equilibria brought about by different modalities of territorialization and marginalization in an on-going process of state formation in which these factors affect the final outcome in constant top-down and bottom-up transmissions of power, resistance, acceptance or defeat against the backdrop of perpetual cross-border relations between the two border-regions. Given that the very foundations of this process are different in the states bordering each other, differentiated and unequal social components meet each other, entering also unbalanced relationships on the local, regional and state-level, accounting for the asymmetric equilibrium at

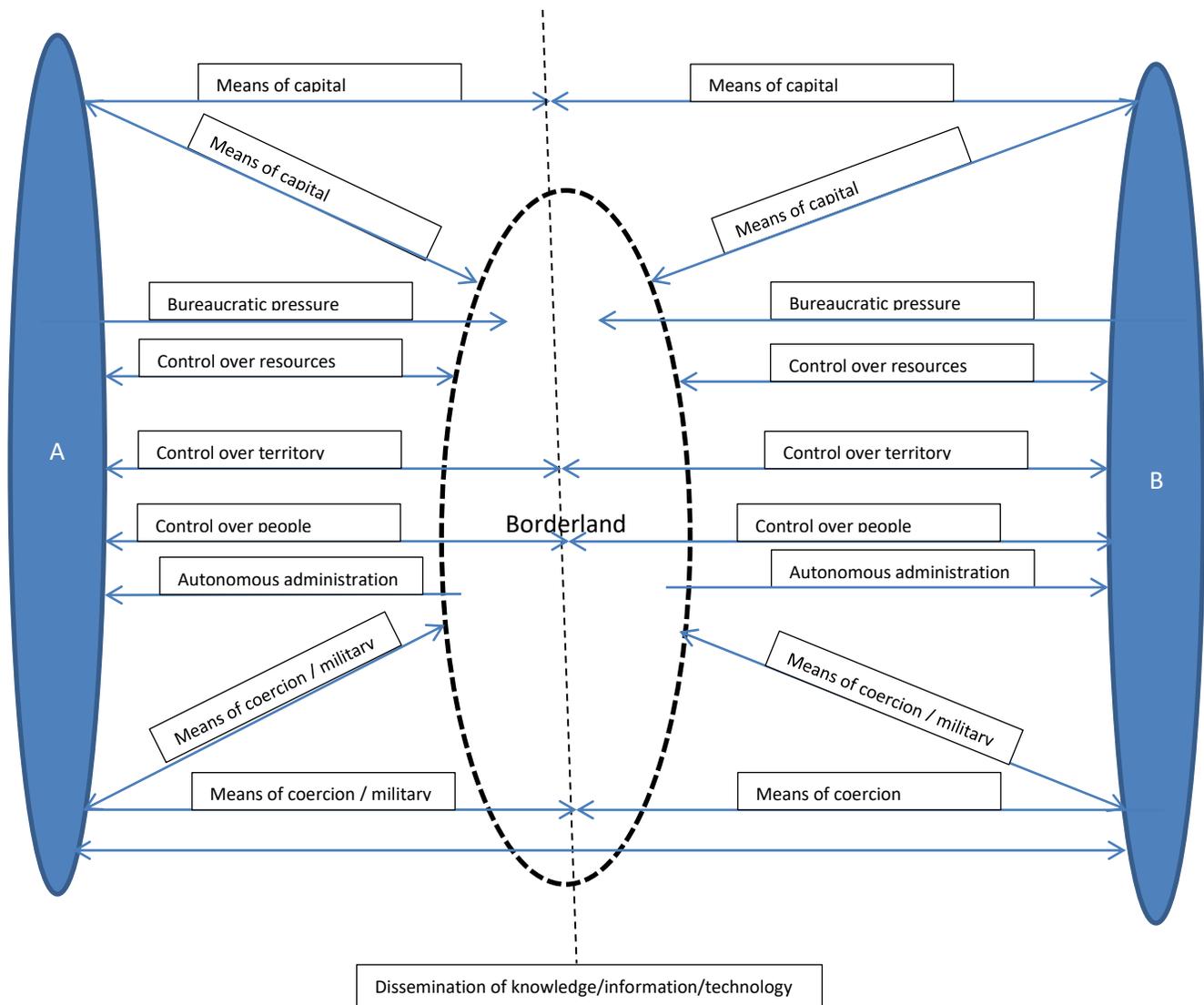
the border, which creates a differentiation and perpetuation of differences and inequalities that cement the border at the state-level (HEYMAN 2012, 50-51). On the regional level, inequalities may be less pronounced, but differences fostered as in the case of all three Southeast Asian states vis-à-vis China who try to differentiate themselves at the border from their more or less equally prosperous neighbors. The flows and connections described so far involve therefore also the exacerbation of divisions and distinctions not least by different ideologies, political and economic concepts and state-sanctioned narratives that have the power to bind people to the state as well as mark the distinctive features of the border-area as not essentially part of the state. Different ideas and vision compete, so that the state may either win, retreat or collapse in the border region so that borders are constantly created, undermined or defended in a cage of multidimensional economic, political, administrative, cultural or military infrastructural power to different degrees and intensities on either side of the border: the strength of the state and the significance of its borders are a result of the role of power and coercion the state can wield within its borders (HEYMAN 2012, 55; O'DOWD 2012, 161-162; SCOTT 2009, 100).

The core of the central state and the periphery are so in a complex equilibrium that can be interrupted if one of the factors in table 2 gets unbalanced. The state wields more material power than the border-region, it can deploy its military or use mercenaries while the border-area has the option to secede. All of this requires capital, manufacturing investments, raw materials, manpower and a transnational network on both sides, so that in case of unbalances, bargaining processes will take place between the center and the periphery, creating more interwoven and complex interdependencies leading to a new equilibrium in the hybrid model of power relations. The border in this process is at the same time a bargaining chip as well as a factor shaping the negotiation by the changing nature of itself and the opportunities it provides for elites in the periphery to build their own power-base as a fallback option if negotiations falter. The complex web of interdependencies funds political relationships across the border regions which in turn brings increased penetration of the state back into the border-area setting off a cycle of coercion, wealth and power generation, resource exploitation and administrative penetration of all sorts (O'DOWD 2012, 164; GOODHAND 2012, 333, 349).

The functions and the role of the border in transnational and regional relations is therefore closely related to the way internal power relations around the border are structured by the state: cross boundary flows become partly a result of local agency and interests as well as how the state determines the border-regime given the existing flows. The functional range of the border

includes military-strategic and defense and security dimensions, control over capital flows and resources, maintenance of territoriality and sovereignty, forging with the state and its legitimizing aspects also a national identity as well as a domestic dimension to structure internal affairs ranging from economy to education. How strongly each of these dimensions is stressed by the state depends on its capabilities and priorities so that opening or closing of borders, fortification or leniency, integration and marginalization are dependent how the state behaves towards and can act upon the border. This is a function of the state's size, its internal structure and goals in the international arena and its stage of development. On the international, state and regional levels, institutions and infrastructure according to the state's or the region's capabilities strengthen the relations between the border and the center to a certain degree, shaping the role of the border further as a pathway or a barrier, which in turn impacts the relations between the states and regions involved. As this process is duplicated on both sides of the border under sometimes different internal circumstances, it is important to keep in mind that the emphasis on the factors in table 2 for the development of a border may be different on either side of it: weak states have a different rationale focusing on a different set of factors to deal with their borders as they provide the state's right to exist while strong states may do so based on emphasizing other factors out of fear of spill-over-effects from weaker neighbors. As states can take different forms – state under construction, regular state, and empire – their borders and the way how they manage their borders is different over time depending on what stage of development they are and which internal issues are salient. A state under construction with a weak identity and lose control over its territory bordering an empire will have a different attitude towards its border than two regular states (KOLOSSOV 2011, 173-174; LUSTICK 2004, 83-85; ROBINSON 2007, 5; cf. TAN 2004, 31). The borderland itself, as the place where the factors of asymmetric equilibria meet, has some influence over the shaping of its territory by using the border as a resource for their own interests, making the state manifestations sometimes merely a symbolic marker with reduced influence over the daily life (DEAN 2011 231). Thus, what determines the equilibria is pulling and pushing at the border and the borderland, drawing the state closer or alienating it from the border. This mutual impact puts a strain on the shape of the borderland and the border itself from both states who use their means, interests and capabilities to shape border and region while the borderland itself tries the same within its own capacities. The shaping factors so have a mutual impact, drawing state and borderland closer to each other if their objectives and interests align or pushing each other away in cases when practices or objectives in the borderland are meant to undermine

state-penetration or when the state's attitude towards the borderland causes an alienation of the latter (YIFTACHEL 2004, 363, 367; DOORNBOS 2006, 21, 22). In this sense, the borderland is under constant pressure from outside factors pulling it closer to getting integrated within the state, while these same factors emanating from the borderland exert their influence in a reverse direction, either pulling the borderland closer to the state – such as the Dali-Song dynasty case or pushing it further away as in the case of Sip Song Chau Tai and Socialist Republic of Vietnam. Taking the factors that determine the equilibria within the state and the asymmetric equilibria at the border and mapping their influence on the state-borderland power relationships taking into account the fluidity and ebbs and flows of Southeast-Asian state-building, what has been described in the previous chapters can be best illustrated as follows:

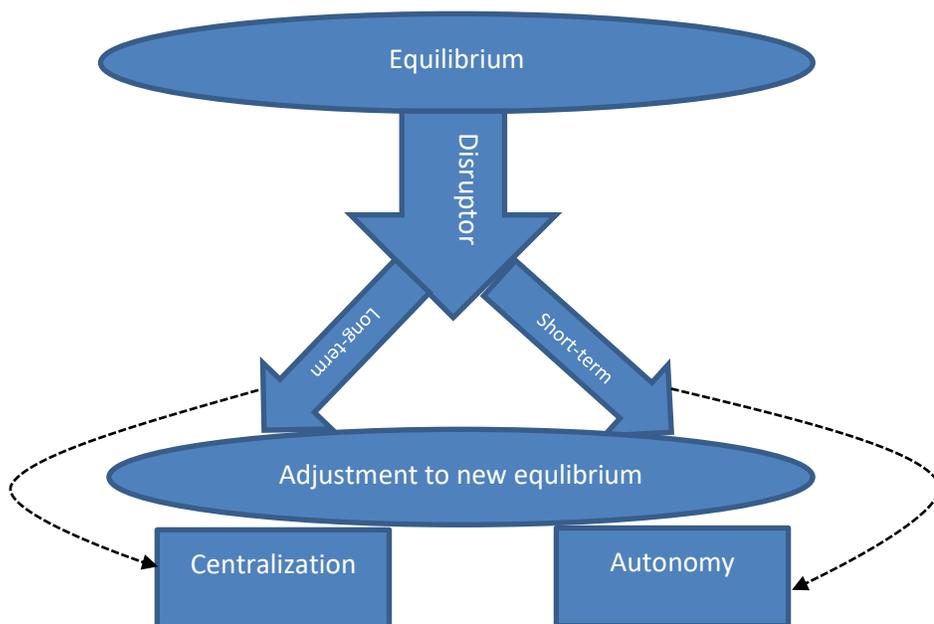


Graph 4: Factors penetrating the border area

1.8.5. Integration, marginalization, border-construction and state-building

Having established the nexus between state-formation and border creation and its non-linear nature in terms of territorialization as well as the factors that provide the ground for an integration-marginalization dichotomy during the territorialization of marginal areas – a process that itself is determined by political, economic and social circumstances on regional, state and international levels as well as the set of power relations on intraregional, interregional, intrastate and interstate levels – it becomes clear that what may seem as an eventual outcome is a sequence of circumstances and actions informed by these circumstances that were periodically disrupted and time and again forced to adjust to a new equilibrium of power-relations.

Since the formation of the borderland is a process of several interrelated factors that follow a non-linear path “pulling” at the borderland-entity, the core of the model can be described as an equilibrium, which is interrupted by the factors mentioned above, triggering a process to either alienation from or gravitation to the center until it finds a new resting position as shown in the graph below. The triggers can be formulated in terms of interests, if it remains unilateral, the more powerful actor will win, if it is a common interest, then a compromise will emerge. The triggers can have long-term or short-term effects on the new equilibrium, reinforcing territorial integration or bolstering a greater autonomy of the peripheral regions (WOMACK 2006, 90). In the end, though, both, the imperial models of China and Vietnam, as well as the galactic polity models of the states in Laos and Myanmar in cycles of expansion and retraction formalized their territorial reach and consolidated their statehood with a demarcated border to China.



The equilibrium, which essentially describes the resting position of power-relations between and among states and border-regions is therefore adaptable and shows a certain degree of resilience in the interrelationship between integration and fragmentation on local and interstate-levels. In the inner-state relations this is fairly easy to explain. Over time and with an ever more complex web of relationships, the border-region gets its own leverage and agency capacity, with opportunities to challenge the power of the state – a potential shift in the equilibrium of power-relations with impacts on territoriality on which in turn the state acts by either economic, military or policy means, along the factors pulling and pushing at the border-area shown in graph 4 tilting the equilibrium towards his preferred situation. The internal configurations of power relations to the peripheral region are the driving force to establish a new equilibrium (BORNEMAN 2012, 121-122; GOODHAND 2012, 334; WOMACK 2009, 2-3; BROWN 1996, 2). On the transnational level, activities outside the border-area and the state in question can inform activities that upset the existing balance – by way of internalizing external events –, for example, when Christianized Hmong were torn between siding with the French or exploiting the Taiping-rebellion across the border in Guangxi for their own interests. Another example would be the conquest of Dali under the Yuan-dynasty, shifting the border-equilibrium to a far more militarized and centralized dimension as defense against a possible Mongol invasion. Outside conflicts can be internalized at the edge of the state, rivalries, retreat, collapse or competition between states over territory and the different internal organization of the states in question show their impact on power-relations and actions between the protagonists in the center and the border-area. Thus, internal struggles and external changes have their share in the making of states and their borders, their non-linear occurrence allows though to show the sequence of changing circumstances that finally led to the statist incorporation of this area into the four states through an ebb and flow of territorialization processes (O'DOWD 2012, 159-160; ALBERT/BROCK 2001, 30; cf. SAFMAN 2007). This is to be understood as a long-lasting process, taking into account the dynamics of the state and regional actors as well as the circumstances they found themselves in when dealing with disruptors of the existing order. The border is therefore not seen as a static institution but as a process that it shaped in various continual non-linear event-driven and multidirectional cycles that led to the result of the border we know today (KAISER 2012, 522). The border over time is constantly contested and the outcome of actions that were taken during times of disruptions that helped restructuring and re-signifying the role of the borderland and the state. The contestation of the border internally and externally, actions taken on the level of the state as well as within the border area

define its meaning and its shape by their impact on economic, social and political relations. The joint effect of the disrupting contestations and the dynamics of power relations creates new equilibria with new meanings of the border and the state on an abstract level as well as new relationships between the regions and the states within and across the border on a functional level. This means, disruptions shape the border and the border can shape the new balances of relations – manifesting or dissolving differences, giving or reducing access and influence on power-decisions (GRIMSON 2012, 194-195, 202; GOODHAND 2012, 341; PSARRAS 1993, 29; PRESCOTT/TRIGGS 2008, 93). The impact on power relations between and within territories shows itself in the flow of power: from core to periphery or vice versa, from periphery to periphery or from core to core. Through the disruptions of these relations, the degree of dependence on and attitude towards the function and meaning of a border changes, so that a border that existed only on the map so manifests itself through the actions taken by the state and the local population in times of disruptions (RAEYMAEKERS 2012, 325). The unbalanced power-relations allow to determine how these disruptors impact the region: setting new political and cultural distinctions have long-lasting effects, tying the area closer to the state – after all it changes the daily life of people and impacts on worldview and practices in the region –, while short-lived rebellions – after all the state's power trumps the capabilities of regional actors – only lead to a greater autonomy through a reversal of power-relationships which is limited in time, given the mismatch in authority over the area, material capabilities and in political capital (GRIMSON 2012, 206; RAEYMAEKERS 2012, 327).

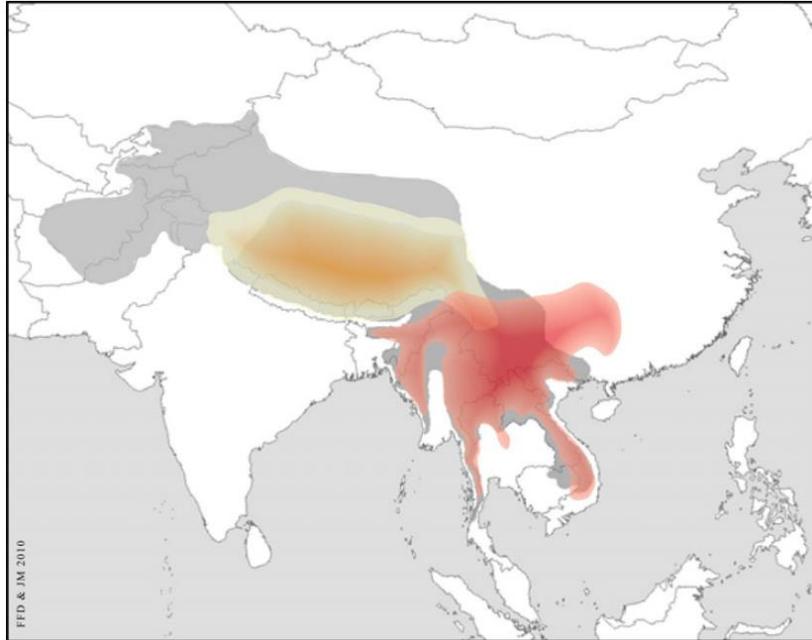
The institutional arrangement of territoriality, borderlands and the border so changes from one equilibrium to the next, until a fixated outcome can be distinguished (GOODHAND 2012, 345). This model already contains some punctuated examples but it will be in the next section examined and tested from the year 938 – the independence of Vietnam from China – until the post World War II order of nation states. The dynamics of power relations, the multitude of factors determining strategies and decision of territorialization and the inclusion of the wider historical events will allow to show how this area became a borderland even though singular states and polities existed. The analysis will show how the interplay of territorial integration also included a marginalization of the periphery which depended on the wider events of the area that disrupted the status-quo in a non-linear fashion, informed decision making and consequently actions towards the border-region, which accounted for a constant ebb and flow of territorialization, autonomy and marginalization. Each of the disruptors had a different impact on this process by shaping

the decisions and means for territorialization and border-construction at a certain point of time. Be it through civilian governance whose thickness increased with measures such as the integration of minorities in state examination or taxation or be it through military means, such as the fortification of border-areas or the forced incorporation of autonomous chieftains into the state. For a comprehensive grasp of the development of the border between Southeast Asia and China it is therefore not sufficient to look on actions of the central state but also the power-relations, economic disruptions and the use of agency on all levels of stakeholders to understand why this region eventually became marginalized and never developed its own long-lasting statehood even though there has never been a clear-cut economic/geographic distinction that could rationalize the situation of the current border.

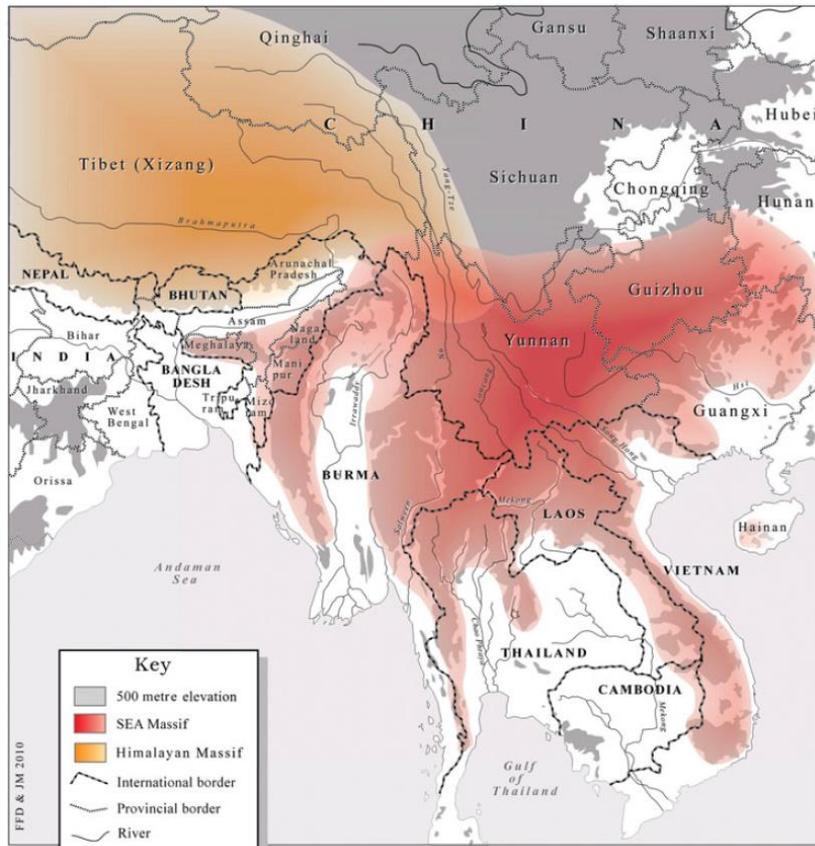
In chapter 2, the model described above will be put to a test by showing how interrelated actions and processes in state-formation and territorialization efforts in an across all individual polities in the border area based on internal and external disruptions accounted for a shift in power-relations among the polities and the border-region as a whole which in turn marginalized this area as a whole step by step and let numerous small-scale polities or chiefdoms disappear to demarcate a border.

1.8.6. Complementing Zomia and limits

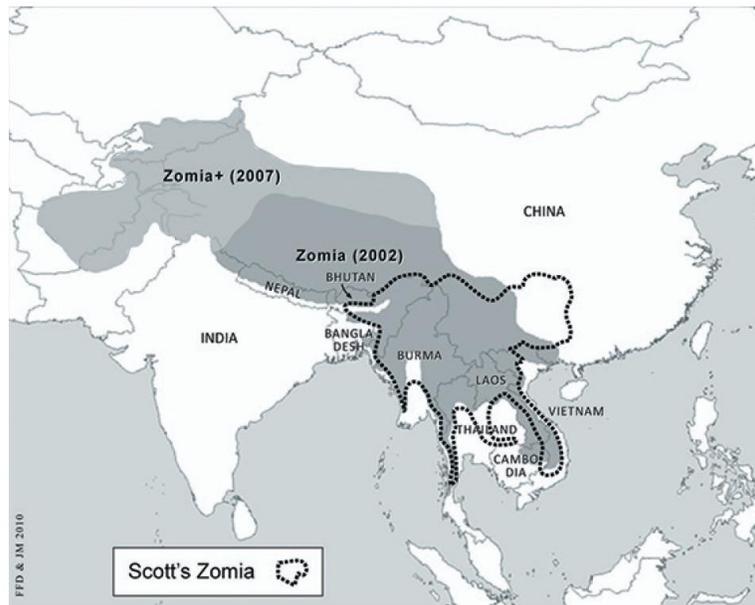
Zomia describes an area of the Asian Highlands that – according to its inventors – shall be considered as a political and historical area, which is marked by neglect, low population density, isolation, marginalization and domination from the lowland (MICHAUD 2010 187-188). Various attempts had been undertaken to define Zomia since the inception of the idea in 2002 by Willem van Schendel, each varying in size and attempting to find – sometimes on a very abstract level – features that tie the Asian uplands together into one area that underwent a similar experience of state-incorporation. While van Schendel relies more on political criteria to delineate Zomia that is rather vague in its geographical reach, Scott sees a stronger role for social markers to demarcate this space and so attributes an operational component to these highlands with their own logic and trajectories based on cultural, linguistic and local political traits. Both ideas of Zomia overlap to a some extent, yet Scott's definition of Zomia is the one that better fits to the geographic area of this thesis as can be seen in maps 2-4 (MICHAUD 2010 202-203).



Map 2: Different conceptualizations of Zomia (MICHAUD 2010, 203).



Map 3: Zomia in Southeast Asia (MICHAUD 2010, 205)



Map 4: territorial concepts of Zomia (MICHEAUD 2017, 6)

Zomia enables the model of this thesis but also sets automatic limits. The main limitation is access to local information. As MICHAUD (2010, 190, 192) points out, most of the written sources of the area are Chinese bureaucratic texts that ignored the literal or oral heritage of the local kingdoms and minorities. Thus, local history and conceptual understanding of statehood remains often unknown – also this thesis cannot draw from original sources given their accessibility and the linguistic barriers of the many languages used in this area.

A much greater limitation is the deductive approach taken by the proponents of Zomia. Given the difficulties to access local sources combined with the macro-longue-durée approach that informs that theory, many postulations come from the official histories of the central states to which Zomia is presented as an indigenous and overlooked antithesis or complement. Defining and classifying local events in their regional context requires much more detailed analysis on the ground to prove whether the extrapolations in the Zomia-theory – and also in this thesis – and the subsumption and aggregation of events into trends is a sensible and right approach with regard to local history (MAZARD 2011, 31).

Despite this limitation, the conceptualization of the area as Zomia enables the proposed model. From the existing sources and the current knowledge – despite often spotty or one-sided – , it is clear that minority states existed, boasted their own autonomy and sovereignty and had a major impact in the general development of their adjacent lowland states. Scientists like James Scott

and Charles Patterson Giersch systemized Zomia in Southeast Asia and China by analysing transnational features and experiences of the highland peoples and setting their history apart from the centralized lowland states' trajectories and so provided a framework in which fluidity and local action could interact, negotiate, cooperate or reject relations with lowland states. Zomia so enables the proposed model as it looks beyond political borders and institutional competition by allowing more agency on the ground and so defining a social space that is countercurrent in its social, political and historical logic to the national histories of centralized states (MICHAUD 2010, 193-194). The question is however, how this logic of local political and economic history and interests work, and what conclusions can be derived from it.

Scott's idea of Zomia in Southeast Asia stipulates that this area is a non-state space whose inclusion and integration into the lowland states gradually happened as lowland states encroached more and more into the areas at their fringes through tributary relations, trade, population pressure and administration (MICHAUD 2010, 194; MICHAUD 2017, 6-7). They could integrate this area as it was not a centralized, somehow homogenous area nor had a political core that could develop, project and defend the interests of a Zomian polity. Thus, polities behaved like free electrons that entered and left orbits of lowland states, who in turn attempted to tie them down within political borders given the danger an uncontrolled periphery posed to them (SCOTT 2009, 6; MICHAUD 2010, 205-206). The Zomia model so is based on a slowly developing political hierarchy depending on the power and location of the competing polities, putting the highland polities at a disadvantage while the expanding lowland state gradually takes control over resources and administration in the area through tributary relations, taxation or outright use of force, while the area was left to defend itself against imperial encroachment and to harbor those who fled from the lowland state (SCOTT 2009, 7; MICHAUD 2010 198, 211). Zomia so had a degree of agency, but this showed itself rather in a passive way that was influenced by the lowland states. As the states' interests for manpower and taxes pushed away people who wanted to avoid that, this set off a constant encroachment of the lowland states into the Zomia region that continued to defend its incorporation into the orbits of lowland centers (SCOTT 2009, 4-5; LITTLE, 2010). Zomia according to SCOTT (2009, 3-4) and MICHAUD (2010, 211-212) so became an area of resistance and refuge against states, while remaining stateless in its essence and therefore falling prey to the more advanced, consolidated and stronger lowland states, against whom they could only defend themselves but not take decisive action. The lowland centers were so pulling on the Zomia region to incorporate it, owing that to new cultivation techniques in these less fertile re-

gions to allow settlers to survive, taxation models imposed on local modes of production, and exploiting these lands for their own national interests and projects, like the Qing did in Yunnan to set up their own opium industry to compete with the Western merchants but also by providing infrastructure to project coercive means into this region and allow the state to show its sovereignty and power in all of its claimed territories and over the people inhabiting them (SCOTT 2009 10-11, 32-33, 43; MICHAUD 2010, 195-196). At the same time, the lowland centers were pushing into the Zomia-region with migratory patterns that displaced local populations and planned schemes to bring them closer to the center by settling the majority groups in the margins and so absorbing these margins in the administrative and cultural orbit of the lowland state (SCOTT 2009, 12)

This thesis, as in chapter 1.8.4 draws heavily on this approach of encroaching lowland states, however, it has to be expanded to take into account the agency of the pre-existing states that sprang up in this area.

While it is true that this area was highly fragmented in historical, economic and cultural terms, was marginalized from the mainstream technical and administrative developments and lacked central Zomian cores, harmonized political systems or unified polities, this thesis does not treat this particular stretch of territory in line with Scott's idea as a zone of non-governance, statelessness, buffer, resource-hub and rejection of statehood that became the passive victim of dominating lowland states (MICHAUD 2010, 206-207; EXNER 2013). States existed in this part of Zomia at all times, some of them even as powerful as their lowland counterparts and so resilient that they could survive over centuries. Lan Xang, Sipsong Chau Tai, Sipsong Panna, the Shan states, Dali, Nanzhao are just a few examples of the many loosely connected states that sprawled in this area. As they were never fully consolidated, neither fully integrated into the lowland polities, these lands were supposed to be grey zones and buffers within Zomia, yet still they formed states and played a crucial part in the consolidation of the pre-colonial empires and kingdoms (MICHAUD 2010, 207-208). FISKESJÖ (2010, 243-245; cf. WIMMER 2013, 82) in addition points out the process of secondary state formation, which shall describe the emulation of already existing state structures by other polities, which in turn sets off new state building exercises – a process that happened often among the Shan states and which would weaken the argumentation that administrative structures of lowland states penetrated the uplands, when these uplands actually emulated those.

Therefore, this thesis tries to avoid adopting the idea of Scott that Zomia is an area of refuge, defensiveness and marginalization from the lowland centers and that this form of domination and subordination constitutes a central trait of Southeast Asian Zomia (MICHAUD 2010, 199). Following such an approach would bulldoze over the many different forms of local agency and reduce the plethora of states to mere footnotes even though their existence had large consequences for the regional historical trajectories. It would also see these upland states only as a byproduct of lowland state-making formed by groups who rejected this process and would not see these border-states as polities that existed and were formed in their own right (cf. SCOTT 2009, 24). This thesis therefore integrates the criticism that unlike Scott's postulation of a stateless region and society, there were many states in the area – essentially also a main condition in the presented model – that provided local polities with the necessary agency to modulate their relations with the lowland states.

Contrary to both SCOTT (2009) and MICHAUD (2010) postulations, this thesis also sees less of a constant encroachment, but rather a competition between different systems of statehood and local interests, that were put forward with means of control and coercion, that were very different in scope and intensity in the lowlands and the highlands. SCOTT (2009, 27-28) recognizes that the development was a back-and-forth process but sees this again as result of lowland states' strengthening and weakening followed by a response from a population that was fugitive from these states. This thesis however, having this back and forth consolidation as a core part in its model, recognizes this oscillation as a result of or compromise of competing interests between lowland and upland polities, and so can better take into account the ability of local agents to use the wider circumstances for the benefit of their polities.

It is thus important to understand that this thesis does not refute the idea of Zomia but attempts to a certain degree for this stretch of the area to reconcile the fact that Zomia consisted of states with the dynamics and fluidity that the idea of Zomia as non-state space offers. It tries to achieve that by focusing on the agency of these states and local actors, that were enabled by their independent power bases, and so could pro-actively develop their own relations and modulate their own interests vis-à-vis lowland states. Like this, these peoples and statelets were not just passive victims of gradually encroaching lowland states, rather their trajectories were often disrupted through their own agency and their fate hinged upon circumstances outside of their control until they finally were integrated into these lowland states.

The approach taken here somehow fits with the fluid characteristics of Zomia as well as the fact the polities and states sprawled all over the frontier area insofar as it looks at the capacities of local polities to autonomously modulate relations with central states. From this point, it is possible to see that the dynamics in this area are far more driven by wider circumstances than a binary assumption of predatory encroaching states on the one side and their rejection on the other. Rather, it draws a picture of an eco-system, in which both of them rely and need each other across different fields of interaction.

As ANDERSONS (2006, 19) points out, kingships are organized around centers, with fading boundaries, uneven reach and sovereignty that spans over a not legally demarcated territory, so that their attraction and power fades and meshes with other kingdoms. However, each of these kingdoms had their own interests regarding commerce, defense, technology, administration and politics – yet in each of these fields, their ability to project power was necessarily not the same. With this in mind, the thesis looks at multiple frontiers, each one delimitating the territorial reach of a particular field of cooperation or antagonism, such as commerce, politics or defense. This idea draws from DESAI (2013) who describes an interplay of economic and territorial frontiers as a form of expansion during the Cold War period, in which he sees the economic, ideological or developmental inclusion into an orbit of larger powers as a substitute for territorial expansion.

In the Southeast Asian borderlands, as will be shown, the mining frontier (SHIN 2006), a farming frontier (TROCK, 2009), the binding effects of a common enemy or converging commercial interests between lowland and upland states accounted for different frontiers that determined the reach of the lowland state and the autonomy of the border polities.

In commerce, this issue was very pronounced, as smuggling activities allowed financing polities like enterprises, siphoning off tariff and tax income from state-coffers and allowing to position themselves as alternatives to local or lowland states. The result was waxing and waning spheres of commercial interests in line with the global and regional economic situation, which often led to conflicting territorial claims within a setting of states – not necessarily in opposition to the idea of statehood or control but a competition in design and structure of different forms of statehood (TAGLIACOZZO 2001, 255; cf SCOTT 2009, 49). Thus, the reach of state centers – be they lowland or upland polities – was different for economic interests, political interests and defense capabilities, each determined by different factors and commodities that each had the capacity to link or de-link upland and lowland polities and to prevent or allow expansion of upland or lowland states – a fact also SCOTT (2009, 51) recognizes for his idea of Zomia.

However, this in combination with giving local agency a greater role to play, makes this area not just a barbarian hinterland that was needed as a counterfactual to legitimize the civilizational superiority of the lowland state as SCOTT (2009, 111, 327) describes. Neither was it a derivative of lowland state formation that slowly “filled up” the empty space (cf. SCOTT 2009, 137, 326-327). It was not just a one-sided push into the area rather Zomia was a functional entity in its own right whose survival depended on managing its internal structure and navigating these external influences such as migratory pressure, warfare, revolts and global trade (cf. SCOTT 2009, 142).

As GIERSCHE (2010, 216-217) points out, Zomia should be better understood as a tool and taxonomy for the many different levels of interactions and shifting boundaries and zones of influence among and between lowland and upland polities. While Zomia and a fair amount of traits and characteristics Scott ascribed to it represent a particular configuration of power, one has to look at the networks that form this configuration, modulate exchanges and create dependencies and from their develop further the impact and results of these activities onto the region as a whole (GIERSCHE 2010, 218).

Zomia in this thesis therefore is not just a passive hinterland but an active world region, on which the proposed model is tested. It relies on certain aspects that Scott elaborated for Zomia, such as the back and forth character, the mobility and multiple loyalties, the membrane that existed separating upland from lowland polities, and the pulling and pushing of the lowland states to penetrate the border-region, but it refutes the notion of it being simply a zone of refuge, statelessness and state-rejection that slowly was drawn into the lowland orbit by states that pushed into this pristine statelessness. It provides a much greater role to play for local agency informed by an interaction of local interests in upland polities and lowland needs for bordering and defense. It also takes into account that there were various push and pull factors on both ends – the lowland centers and the border polities – that attracted or fended off encroachments and let polities flourish or get integrated into lowland states. This thesis does this not in the framework of an inevitable necessity of historic processes that prescribed the gradual expansion of the lowland states but rather sees it as a result of diverging capacities in agency, mobilization and resources to maintain order and capabilities of polities to act on their own behalf. Attributing a larger degree of agency to the border polities circumvents the idea of statelessness and allows introducing the organizational and administrative properties of border polities as an alternative concept to the lowland state, forged not only by its own needs but in constant interaction across its borders and limits with other – both upland and lowland – states, which eventually should end in a clear line of demarcation. As

an active region, the border-area here cannot be understood as a passive stateless area of refuge, shielded by impenetrable geographic features such as mountains and forests (cf. SCOTT 2009, 161), but needs to be seen as an actor in its own right, within its own set of constraints, enabling opportunities, institutions and interests that stem from a more complex interactive position and role of the border polities than just as remote buffers and raw material providers, that had to be integrated through warfare and distance-reducing infrastructure and were populated by refugees from lowland state building exercises and warfare. Dependencies between border polities and lowland states were constantly reformed and re-modulated, while the fact that most of the time the border polities remained outside direct political control should not be understood as statelessness (cf. SCOTT 2009, 166, 326-327; cf. GIERSCH 2010, 219-220). Therefore, despite being a part of Scotts Zomia, the border area as treated in this thesis was not just a mirror-image or derivative of state building, but a world-region whose actions were not just reactive and interests not only shaped by the relations and interdependencies with lowland centers. As the border-area and the polities in there fulfilled a function in addition to their existence, the states could institutionalize the bordering that they were supposed to do as buffer states and so could foster leverage regarding the lowland states to push forward their interests and encounter encroachments not on a defensive post but in a position that was framed by multiple interests and projection. The interests of the border polities so were proactively leveraged in relationships and exchanges which had wide ramifications for the formation of the region and the political borders between China and Southeast Asia. This characteristic of the border area is at the core of this thesis and goes beyond the capacities and agency ascribed to Zomia in the model of Scott.

II. Application of the model

2. Cycles and disruptors

As described in the case for a border-model for the Chinese-Southeast Asian borderlands, the process of territorialization was not linear but one of periodical decline and strengthening. The different entities around the border territorially collapsed into their respective states, a process that was far more messy than described in national historiographies and even by the onset of the colonial period, allegiances and territorial integrity of the states as claimed by the lowland-centers was more wishful thinking than reality (LIEBERMAN 2003, 2-3; TAYLOR 1998, 952).

The model in part I implicitly allows for the analysis of disruptive, non-linear processes across political, economic and cultural-technological factors that are behind the creation of the border as a distinction between states. The formation of states and borders based on territorialization get constantly interrupted through dynamical interactions of these factors over long periods of time. Not a single event can be taken as a sole cause but only as one disruptor in a wider network of interactions that mutually influence each other over a long term until a split between the different entities manifested itself in territorial control, reflecting power relations and societal rifts. GREEN (2012, 577-579) shows that there is no transhistorical essence of nationhood or statehood that could account for the formation of borders as an inevitable process, but rather a constant evolution that becomes constitutive once two of those processes meet in territorial terms. It is the way of interactions of political, economic and knowledge-based or religious factors in the territorialization concepts and processes that this thesis looks into to determine why this border was formed. To determine how this relationship between people and places later morphed into a clearly marked line defining the territory of the state, and to determine why it happened at the places where there is now a border – without a regional or local power ever gaining a stable foothold – the territorialization factors and parameters of administrative and financial dependence or autonomy, control over trade and barriers that go along with that determine the cycles of integration and dissolution. This is an interesting point insofar as technological progress reduces physical and distance-related barriers while at the same time policy barriers take over the function distances had before (NOLL 2000, 16, 45-46).

In a sense a distinction between insiders or outsiders at the edge of a territory only becomes salient when an actor feels the need to conquer or protect it – thus fabricating a territorial clash and instilling a sentiment or concept of belonging to that place. Territorial coherence and sense of

belonging through symbols, statecraft and economic activity didn't form a nation-state boundary in a linear way but only supported the formation as a confluence of concepts of territorialization through relations and shared zones of mutual interests (STURGEON 2005, 464).

This wavering shift between hardening territorial grip and dissolution of statehood in this area, as well as switching allegiances in these areas, define the cycles that this part looks into to apply the model described in the previous part.

While for most of the time – with the only notable exception of the northern Vietnamese dynasties – there was no agreed limitation of the geographic scope of power of a dynasty or of the territory belonging to a center, limits were determined through softer activities such as royal rituals, toll-levies on trade routes, taxes and the granting of royal decrees. The inevitable state-oriented viewpoint in confirming membership and demonstrating power through rituals, particularly strong in Chinese imperial historiography and spiritual practices, doesn't take into account the local counter-currents and alternative models but rather ignore or dismiss them (LIU/SIU 2015 78; ZARROW 2001, 155). Through this, even though the border-area was not very coherent, it fulfilled a purpose of separation at least on paper and from the view-point of the capitals.

Cycles were determined by the proliferation of particular ideas of statehood or national charters, internal organizations or the adoption of philosophies, economic activities and openness to trade. Over time connecting the hardening of a boundary-demarcation with the development of statehood in the lowlands, these factors interacted and tied the periphery stronger to their respective centers. Disruptors or catalysts such as wars, treaties, zones of exploitation, and conquests – for example the Chinese empires raiding the area, European colonial powers and trans-regional wars – necessitated the idea of fortified peripheries that are in control and mediate the activity of the territorialization-factors. These were disruptors in the sense that they drastically altered the previous conception of space and changed or eliminated previous activities of demarcation and bordering – eventually imposing a new form of control that changed the idea of territoriality and belonging. Little of this can be drawn directly from official records, which only reflect the view from the central states, court-approved histories or taxes. References to political or economic relations between the border area and the various states are rare as to the common people the state wasn't a salient feature of everyday life, and emissaries to the border were more concerned with introducing texts and rituals as legitimizing state-regalia and calming unrest or alliance-building (STUART-FOX 2003 35).

Thus, we achieve a spatial and a temporal cyclical component, drastically altered through

disruptions and interregna, and so re-defining statehood and the relationship between territories and land and people. The border is therefore a living object, not a static institution with a certain character. Its nature changes over time under the influence of the role it is supposed to play, and therefore systemically depends on the historical context in which one looks at it. Territory and border are in their characteristics mutually contingent and constituting, and as their characteristics change in historical contexts, so does their function and structure. They are a process yielding constantly results depending on how their functions and characteristics are perceived and performed as a result of the political state- building ideology, how state and borders construct their power relations and what space of agency is available at the border (CHANG 2009 543-544) Having this in mind and graphically analyzing the historical streams of territorialization in this region and how the different entities morphed into states, one can discern six distinct cycles of territorialization and subsequent disintegration.

Cycle 1 saw a consolidation phase from the 10th to 13th century marked by standardization systems, the adoption of bureaucratic practices from China and India, conquests of the lowland entities to the mountainous regions. Generally this era was relatively stable with internal dynasties consolidating their power and the implementation of standardized practices and taxes to consolidate the territorial grip. From the 13th to 15th century after the fall of Dali, that created a power vacuum in the frontier region, and repeated invasion trials of the Mongol empire from 1300 onwards into Southeast Asia, as well as internal upheavals and re-configuration of alliances of small fiefdoms that changed their tributary relations, the breaking away of entities requesting their independence, disrupted the process of state-building and shifted the boundary back and forth. From the 1450s onward, Cycle 2 was distinguished by greater stability and a dominance of the lowland entities again before a crisis erupted between roughly the 1540s until 1610 due to a greater Shan dominance, power struggles among the Burmese fiefdoms and China, and dynastic struggles in Vietnam. Once these were settled, the third cycle started around 1600 as a fairly stable period of internal consolidation, and the first major stable territorial states with little “lose ends” in the periphery. This ended in the late 18th century when the continental wars tore up mainland Southeast Asia, with the new Konbaung Dynasty in Burma, shifting tributary relations in Laos, the appearance and disappearance of small entities like Muang Sing. Until the arrival of colonial powers and the manifestation of territorial claims around 1880 a last era of consolidation took place. From roughly 1880 until 1945, European colonial powers set up their own structures, instilled their own idea of the relation between territoriality and statehood, that later catalyzed

through the Japanese conquest and occupation and formalized in the subsequent crisis of decolonization, independence movements and asymmetric wars. With this being formally over in 1976, the national state era started and has been lasting until now with all entities formalized into national states, fixed borders and a general adaption to the Westphalian state system.

This thesis, covering a broad space over nearly 1000 years of history, has to reduce itself to trend-lines instead of headlines. The examined polities are not all mutually and directly connected, yet over the long run, certain trends become clear, that are illustrated as snapshots and transformations of the border-spaces and their functions.

2.1 Cycle 1 Early state formation and consolidation (until the 15th century)

There is an extensive body of primary and secondary sources describing China's ascent and expansion towards the South and West from the Yellow River basin, integrating and absorbing swathes of lands where Chinese customs and the Chinese language proliferated. This century-long process of constant cultural and military shifting towards the South found its match in the rough geography of Yunnan, existing Shan-chieftains who's system of shifting loyalties allowed a degree of cooptation and the powerful kingdoms of Nanzhao and Dali. Landmark events were the integration of Guangxi in 214 BCE, the first colonization of what is now northern Vietnam from 111 BCE onwards, and the influx of Chinese subjects and cultural transformation interlocking the area closer with the Empire. The border thus was not a line but a fluid area, which only materialized during the colonial period with some places highly militarized, some rather relaxed and porous as outcome of agreements between Imperial China and colonial administrations and subsequent independence conflicts of states and ethnic regions challenging the federal states. Since the earliest contacts between Southeast Asia and the Chinese throne in the 5th to 3rd centuries BCE until the settlement of a boundary between Tonkin and the Qing dynasty in 1887, 1895, and subsequent years, this area was a fluid place with shifting alliances, emergences and disappearances of states, occupations and liberation movements, the very first watershed event of which was the independence of Dai Co Viet in 939 AD (FERGUSON 2012, 5-7).

From the southwest, India provided the external influences to structure Southeast Asian statehood for all places outside the Vietnamese realm. As of the 4th century, Indian state ideologies and Sanskrit shaped Southeast Asian charter kingdoms, Hinduism provided a compelling legitimation for kings and the faith in authority and hierarchy allowed for sufficient bureaucratization and

control over agrarian plains or trade route, helping these initially commercial settlements to merge into larger Indianized states (GUNN 2011, 28, 39-40, HALL 1984, 69). Later in the 14th century with the advent of Theravada Buddhism and its appeal to the masses in Laos, Cambodia, Myanmar and Siam, provided new functions for rulers to exert power and introduced a lively trade in products for religious activities between China and Southeast Asia. While goods traversed borders, the Song and Yuan dynasties, alerted by the outflow of silver and trade imbalances installed an institutional border in form of a superintendent of foreign trade in Guangzhou, reflecting in part the importance China attributed to Southeast Asia as well as the consolidation of the Chinese empire over its Southern fringes (GUNN 2011, 42-43). The economic development around certain export products, increasing division of labor, the hierarchical yet loose *mandala* organization of the state in Indianized Southeast Asia as opposed to central bureaucratic traditions in Vietnam and China created highly urbanized societies alongside large swathes of land with low population densities. These disparities limited mobilization capacities and power projection across territories, so that larger imperial constructs such as China proved unfeasible. In addition, bureaucratization was weak and it was the karma of the ruler that defined how strong dependent entities were bound to the center. With little means at hand, to exert control over territories and define collective actions towards a goal in the interest of the state, sacralization of the rule according to the Indianized model was the way to instill accountability and generate revenues (GUNN 2011, 48; BLANTON/FARGHER 2008, 258-261; REID 2009, 19-20). However, this didn't prevent infighting and the need to keep competing centers at bay through military skills, acquisition of military technology, patronage and the establishment of tributary networks as buffer zones and consolidation through administrative innovation (GUNN 2011 51-52).

China on the other hand had a stable state-ideology embodied through the Mandate of Heaven, which helped distinguishing and bordering. It was a powerful tool, as it symbolized a social contract between emperor and subjects for the former to guarantee prosperity for the latter. Once in the radius of beneficiaries under the Mandate of Heaven, it distinguishes a subject from those who are not covered by the benefits or required to fulfill the duties for emperor. It becomes a bordering mechanism that separates an order grounded in prosperity of local markets, public works and a large army to defend the territory and offering protection to ordinary households as opposed to the unorganized barbarians. The mechanism to draw people under the Mandate was taxation, which transformed rural production into means for public works and expenditures, which reproduced the state through their existence and the participation of citizens in them. Re-

producing the state by participating in taxation established a direct link between subject and state, creating a border effect guided by a sense of exceptionalism and moral responsibility. As there was no international order of competing states around China, it was easy to assume this role and determine the nature of interstate relations through a tributary network that binds barbarians with the civilizational center while upholding a cultural boundary (GUNN 2011 13-14; BRAY 2007, 208-209; SCOTT 2009, 119; CHOW 2001, 48-49). For China, the not cultural (不文) people in the sense of not being Chinese-civilized encompassed everything outside of China proper, but would essentially become so attractive that these areas would assimilate. The distinction though, created a frontier from the beginning with a vast area of intersecting influences, in which China could promote its culture and the advantages of adherence. This frontier-area where Chinese civilization and barbarian practices existed side-by-side, is where China showed its capacity of statecraft by spreading culture rather than imposing imperial authority – accompanied by a constant influx of Chinese population. This process took centuries to forge a boundary to other states, yet it was always obvious that China was operating there in an area of transition that defied its cultural superiority and set limits to its political ambitions (CLARK 2009 10, 12-14; SCOTT 2009, 109-110).

The date of Vietnam's independence in 939 AD shall therefore be the starting point of this analysis as it marked the first hard border between China and Southeast Asia and provided a codification of interactions that allowed determining state activities in this region as invasion, resistance, incorporation among others. Thus, the independence of Dai Co Viet provided the classification Dai Co Viet's subsequent border-projects as invasion in 1075 and later on China's violation of Vietnam's sovereignty in 1407 and 1428 as an actual violation.

This chapter explores how the early states of Southeast Asia, their constituency of borderlands based on the essence of their state-building efforts and interactions with China and its attempts on territorial consolidation shaped a region of border-states that despite its inner fluidity remained stable over 300 years.

2.1.1 Charter states and bordering

Around the 10th century, the Tang dynasty started its major thrust to gain control over its chiefdoms in the Yunnan region, to expand its limits and access to arable space and other resources. The peoples at the southern frontier either assimilated or retreated to the mountains,

which were out of the picture of the ensuing migration. They were however connected through trade and occasional raids (CLARK 2009, 19; WOMACK 2006, 51). At the same time, the nuclei of the first greater entities of Pagan in Upper Burma and an independent Dai Co Viet in Vietnam emerged and grew, flourishing between 1000 and 1250 and facing collapses after the Mongolian conquest and Ming-expedition to the south afterwards.

Ngô Quyền led the Chinese province of Jiaozhi to independence as Dai Co Viet, proclaiming the Ngô dynasty. The administration as well as the territorial reach remained unaltered, yet disputes within the royalty caused fragmentations among twelve warlords who governed their fiefdoms with great autonomy, also following the Chinese bureaucratic model. Đinh Tiên Hoàng re-unified these lords, proclaiming the Đinh dynasty (SCHIFFERLI 1986b, 134; LARY 1996, 11-12; GOSCHA 2016, 13). At the onset of Vietnam, Buddhism was the main intellectual paradigm for the state from the tenth to the fourteenth centuries. Confucianism existed at the imperial court – the foundation of the Temple of Literature in 1070 owes to that fact – but in this time, both ideas stood in competition that only with the rise of the Lý dynasty tipped in favor of Confucianism for the urban centers. On the countryside, a feudal nobility stayed in power because of the provision of military service and continued using Vietnamese Buddhism as a holistic political ideology (WOMACK 2006, 112, 122; GOSCHA 2016, 14). The territorial reach of the empire remained stable throughout this time, the northern border areas were connected through tributary relations and officials dispatched from Co Loa, the capital, ensured their obedience. In the 980s, this equilibrium was shaken up, as succession quarrels weakened control over the northern territories, and the Chinese Song Dynasty saw an opportunity for invasion. The weak border forced Dowager Empress Dương Vân Nga to give general Lê Hoàn wide-ranging powers to fend off Song troops at the border and maintaining the hitherto existing equilibrium. He achieved that through a show of military strength as well as negotiations and a commitment to annual tribute offerings to the Chinese emperor (VU/SHARROCK 2014, 60-61). This established a lasting balance at the border, that even internal succession conflicts could not shake up as all rulers maintained tribute relations and deference to the Chinese throne. That allowed until the Mongol invasion to maintain a boundary even though there were internal secession movements. With the Lý-Dynasty, the name changed to Đại Việt and with the advent of Confucianism, this equilibrium was even reinforced. It established a stricter centralized bureaucracy dividing the territory in divisions, which were in the borderlands subdivided into *châu*s headed by rotating border officials. That helped formalizing exchanges and settling disputes (HARRELL/LI 2003, 369-370).

This practice continued under the Trần dynasty, but also came at a price: every rebellion from competing centers of power, and especially in the borderlands, was brutally suppressed through a vast army and security apparatus. This however also set up the infrastructure to deal with the three Mongol invasions in the 13th century.

While Đại Việt could build on existing infrastructure, territory and practices left by the Tang Dynasty, Pagan became a hegemon under King Anawrahta's and his son Kyanzittha's leadership. As an Indianized polity, the state was a political mechanism to accumulate manpower and resources instead of territory, therefore had no borders to speak of but defined its territorial reach by the control over people through taxation and corvée labor, extorted by *myothugis*, which served as administrators on behalf of the king outside the wet-rice core area of the state. These *myothugis* tied different entities to the core and ensured that their vector of attention points towards the central ruler of the mandala. King Thaton in the 11th century undertook major conquests to increase its manpower, while donating land and labor to the sangha to project wealth. The weakening of the state – as such land stopped generating revenue for the crown – was halted by purifying the sangha through re-ordination and reversion of property to the state. Yet it was a mutually beneficial system as the Buddhist sangha and its need for corvée villages to maintain the monasteries, helped annexation of greater territories for the king as he was the defender of Buddhism. Thus, Buddhism not only provided a universal ideology to set a reference point for outlying chiefs of the mandala, but also an infrastructure of control and served as conveyor of power. Venturing in the northern parts, Pagan got access to raw materials and other resources, ensured through either the rule of *myothugis*, or tributary networks, that drew smaller entities into the radiance of Pagan. The tributaries had to periodically renew their oaths, but remained outside of direct control – also since Pagan was not really interested to venture outside its flatland territory. The vector of attention, resource-flow and religion towards Pagan so set de facto borders, which were still weak as these smaller entities always could opt for other states as suzerains. To keep this construction together the center needed military campaigns for captives and forced migration to increase the concentration of manpower. Alternatives if this became too arduous for the upland entities could have been Muang Xin in Laos or Nanzhao/Dali – both of whom exploited this flexibility to their own benefits. As there was never direct rule over the north, unlike Vietnam, one could find a stable frontier-area, in the intra-relations of which a lot of fluidity happened, yet the overall construct remained as a far-off bordering region difficult to access or subjugate. Despite being drawn into the orbit of the lowlands, often kinship, language

and religion of the upland polities remained different from the lowlands (SUTHERLAND 2003, 19; SCOTT 2009 53-54, 58, 82-83, 104-105; BAGSHAWE 1998, 88; EVANS/OSBORNE 2002 10-11; BENTLEY 1986, 284; TAYLOR 2009, 16-17).

To the identities of the so emanating long-distance and local networks political borders were not significant as the connections and the strength of the relationship vectors to other entities became a more decisive factor for behavior and identification. Divisions and bordering was thus a matter of relationships and an interplay of dominance, shrewdness and manipulation of neighbors, leading to dynamics of power in which a large state is not necessarily more powerful than a smaller one as fluidity, constant travel and changes in the exercise of power was an integral part of this world system. The role of the chieftains and their networks as intermediaries provided them with power and shielded those who were off the beaten track such as Tangyan, that could concentrate themselves on production of aromatics or opium (CHANG 2015, 248-249). Within this area of networked muangs and kingdoms, this flexibility provided options for times of turmoil as well as stability but at the same time rendered attempts of conquest very difficult, turning the whole area of the frontier into a stable-border area defined by inner flexibility and complicated webs of interdependence based on trade, kinship, Buddhist networks and other avenues that linked different villages and chieftains together (DAVIS 2003, 187-188; SUTHERLAND 2003 3-4; BROWN 1996, 13). The smaller border-states could so restrict the agency of lowland rulers, who had to engage in a bargain to get something in return. This was an elite-affair, modulated by the demands of the subjects who had to bear the brunt of taxes and corvée labor, so that in these negotiations each party could make demands to the degree the other one depends on it. If the goal didn't justify the costs in a tributary relationship, the whole collectivity or individual people could opt out and find a new entity to which to belong depending on the situation and context. Advantages like commerce, technology or knowledge had to outweigh the burdens of conscription and taxation if the state wanted to concentrate its power (BLANTON/FARGHER 2008, 14-15, 274; DAVIS 2003, 186; SCOTT 2009, 108).

The spaces in between, that didn't fall under the claims of a charter kingdom, got gradually filled by displacements from Southern China. Some managed to form states, some remained in less organized social structures for centuries to come. Under the Tang and Song dynasties, population pressure grew and Tais moved southward, bringing new hydraulic technologies, crops, commercial intensification and markets. The situation in this period of time was marked by waxing and waning larger Theravada Centers, smaller upland kingdoms, a Confucianist giant

China and a newly independent Vietnam, all connected through an area inhabited by clans, dynasties, warlords and chiefs. The focus shifted in the 9th century onto this area and had effects on borderland construction and military competition as well as the carrying capacity of previously more or less uninhabited lands. Through such tactics, Tai/Shan manage to incorporate and absorb whole polities and peoples, rewarding loyalty with access to rice-growing knowledge and land and so expand their network. Settlers formed powerful entities such as Nanzhao – though itself most likely not a Tai polity –, created new states like Lan Xang, Tais established smaller entities like Hsipaw, Mong Nai, Mong Pai, Yawng Hwe (Nyaung Shwe), and Kyaing Tong, or integrated in the complex networks of trading posts of the already existing Shan states. Confederations of these entities filled those spaces in between, forming in the words of Scott “wet-rice archipelagoes”, mediating between the lowlands and managing the border as buffers. (LIEBERMAN 2011, 948-949; MAW 2015, 1; PHOLSENA 2004, 237; SCOTT 2009, 81; EVANS/OSBORNE 2002, 2; TOWNSEND-GAULT 2013, 144-145).

Thus, the precarious status of the state at its borders relied on the goodwill of the smaller kingdoms in its remit, yet these began to more often use their opt-out possibilities in the 12th century, withholding corvée or taxes and undermining the state. The Shan, who belong to the Tais already started filling up the land-pockets between these two major blocs of Pagan and China and established states called Mong or Muaeng under the leadership of men of prowess with powerful “soul stuff” following the Hinduist/Theravada state model of the mandala. In the north, a shaky Shan alliance emerged already in 999 around the first larger kingdom Mong Mao and got recognized by the Song dynasty in 1106 which gave motivation to change vector of attention away from Myanmar to China as a tributary state during the fall of Pagan. The Mongols coming from the north in the 13th century had an easy game with Pagan, which then fell apart. (MAW 2015, 1; EVANS/ OSBORNE 2002, 3).

The two charter-blocs of Pagan and Dai Co Viet, their own historiography and internal conflicts only covered a part of the whole border-region and while their influence on its development was strong, it was not all-encompassing. Internal problems had their effect on borders, such as the re-orientation of the Shan towards China, but also the other way round, as the foundation of the Lý dynasty in Vietnam helped placating border issues.

2.1.2 Power accumulation and territorial control: territorial filling

Wedge between the Indian and Sinic spheres of statehood, two distinct polity models emerged

so in Southeast Asia – one based on the Hindu-Buddhist worldview, one based on Confucian China. Both were structurally different, but still compatible to a degree to establish international relations and to define a border management system. Buddhism was strong in China, yet it never displaced the worship of Heaven and the imperial Mandate of Heaven. China was except for Vietnam far away and posed only a minimal threat, with the rest lax tributary relations emerged (STUART-FOX 2003, 50).

The initial outset of the border area and emergence of lowland central states was marked by Pagan and Dai Co Viet, and as already hinted, several smaller ones inhabiting the border area which gradually increased their territorial reach until by the 14th century all areas were at least claimed by a state. From the onset, there was a difference in the understanding from what constitutes a state between the Chinese informed entities – annexing territory – and Theravada states – expanding control over people. Wars were therefore not only a way of conquering territory but also bringing new population into the remit of a new core and to expand an organized polity into areas with little consolidation, increase the tax base and ability to mobilize labor and troops. However, this had to be repeated each time a new ruler assumed power given the lack of mechanisms for orderly successions that would bind peasants to the center (SCOTT 2009 69, 71-72; KENNEDY/ROUDOMETOF 2002, 2; BENTLEY 1986, 290). From the north, the Tang Dynasty expanded greatly to the South, coopted chieftains – a process continued under the Song dynasty to implement control in Sichuan, Guangxi and Hunan. With every conquered or coopted area, the territorial expansion of the Chinese empire brought more land under Chinese administration. The options of the newly integrated subjects was either to integrate or go beyond the reach of the empire, populating areas that were claimed but not forcefully brought under direct administration – creating the Zomia-space of fluid identities, alliances and belongings with fierce competition of control over people. Concentration of manpower equaled political power in Southeast Asia as only a sufficient labor force allowed to conduct rice farming to sustain a core-state. Control over people also meant control over land as it was people who served as laborers to cultivate that land. This set off a self-reinforcing dynamics in which the needs of a growing population required to control and tax more people, which in turn confirmed the karma and prowess of the kings and local chiefs. This was the mirror-image of the Chinese development, where control over land meant control over people (SCOTT 2009, 64-65; EVANS/OSBORNE 2002, 4; HENLEY 2007, 25). Agricultural expansion as a spatial spreading determined by cultural, climatic and political conditions was the result of state capacities to expand and deal

with opposition to this expansion at the borders. This included land distribution, taxation on harvests and supply chains for expanding centers. Agricultural land and the expansion of control was always a response from increased demand of growing centers. Peasantization of peripheries was a result of geopolitical strategy: increasing control over local people, incentivizing settlements and protecting them helped consolidating the state-base, ordering the fringes and increasing the tax base which rested on the number of tax paying subjects. The ensuing competition between lowland centers was often fierce to bring people into their central mainstream, redistribute labor and resources and to nibble territories at the frontier away (DE KONINCK/DERY 1997, 1-2).

Because of this, the merchant class came to greater power as they set up systems to channel resources, and especially rice from dispersed loci of production to markets. Like that, they established vectors of transaction directed at centers, pulling areas into the orbit of these centers and away from others, establishing extractive control over resources and creating a border in trading flows by incorporating them into market networks of regional or national scope (BRAY 2007 206-207, 219-220; PERDUE 2009 245-246). To maintain such networks, people need to be bound to the land they were supposed to till, which worked well in China with a territory-based administration, yet in Theravada Southeast Asia it was the control of the people itself that determined the success and resilience of such crop system. So competed the Kingdom of Pagan with Shan entities and later on with the Sagaing and Pinya Kingdoms for manpower to irrigate their fields, expand their tax base and concentrate state power (SCOTT 2009, 89-9, 138-139). In Theravada Southeast Asia, a modest number of Tai and Burmese began to control the wet-rice zones in form of padi-states, ever expanding, and supporting their prosperity by slave-raiding to concentrate their manpower, finance their defense and sustain a pool of work forces. In a sense, it was a Darwinist world, in which weak polities were displaced by stronger, wealthier ones (SCOTT 2009, 85-86; STUART-FOX 2003 55; HENLEY 2007, 23; ABALAHIN 2015, 342).

2.1.2.1 Tai States

Displaced by the Tang expansion, the Tai-speaking people entering Southeast Asia before the 10th century and either settling in fertile deltas and displacing existing civilizations or seeking protection in mountain ranges such as the Yao and Hmong, adopted as Indianized states the galactic polity model with strict hierarchies, a ruler at the top and fizzling out borders and

complicated tribute relations among each other and larger empires. The main entities were for this first cycle in particular Pagan (c. 850–1287), Ava (1364–1527), and Toungoo (1531–1752), the Tai-Lao kingdoms of Sukhothai (1300s–1438), Ayutthaya (1351–1767), Luang Prabang (1353–1975), and Vientiane (1563–1778) (GUNN 2011, 22-23, 38). The spread of the Tai people across provincial and imperial borders and the establishment of their own polities led them to branch out and diversify in line with local geographic, economic and political circumstances. The Yao are comprised of 30 different subgroups and boast a great diversity in beliefs, festivals and practices to build their communities. The same goes for the Miao, whose Yunnan branch is known as Hmong and their Guizhou branch as Hmu, each showing large differences how they structured their polities (BLACK et al. 2006, 289-290).

With greater sophistication, the polities shifted away from pure tributary modes of productions and formed a multi-centered network of states or muangs connected to large empires, each with its own reach of power emanating from a king in the center and overlapping with other polity reaches at their fringes without fixed boundaries or geographic definition, creating a porous area. As the different entities formed muangs, they were headed by a chief, determining a hierarchical structure of the different parts of the mandala that form the muang. Different muangs could form networks that built a collective interest group around topics such as trade or war when activated. Otherwise, those networks stayed dormant and mainly served as transmission belts for communication, ideas, goods and raw materials. (EVANS/OSBORNE 2002, 5; REYNOLDS 1995, 426-427). So formed trade routes used by merchants were also conduits for missionaries and monks with monasteries sprouting along the roads. New ideas were as well introduced, modified and manipulated according to the local context of this frontier area, setting it apart from the more orthodox centers. Thus economic and political bordering was reinforced also by bordering through the adoption and adaptation of religious ideas to cultural, intellectual and material realities in the frontier. Through that, frontier communities could set themselves apart from central doctrines but still stay within the network of institutions and knowledge transfers. The frontier, especially Yunnan, showed a coexistence of Mahayana and Theravada doctrines, giving evidence to the melting pot and transmission function of the region. Nanzhao so took Buddhism as state religion, Dali's kings all spent time as monks according to the Theravada tradition, and the state was structured as a mandala embedded in a network of communication belts (NEELIS 2011 1-2, 4; YANG 2004, 317-318). This system of networks remained fairly stable as lowlands entities accumulated food surpluses, divided labor and could sustain larger centers and city states

with some hinterland, while upland entities to the border with China remained rather dispersed and fought for their own subsistence. Still both were connected through trade and tributary relations as the upland regions had control over resources such as aromatics, metals and timber, filling complementary commodity niches for mutual benefit. This started at least in the ninth century, tying the uplands into an international luxury trade and instilling a high degree of mobility and dependence of lowland entities on upland entities for products necessary for lowland life. So were the Shan not only a border-area but itself dependent on even more remote hill peoples for trade, products and prosperity, engaging in relations in which profit from this trade tied territorial entities into the Shan zone of influence and shifted boundaries further away from the core (SCOTT 2009 106-107, 333; REYNOLDS 1994, 424; HALLO 1984, 63).

Such economic partners also often turned into political allies, whereby the uplands provide territorial services, such as border-security or manpower to the lowland (GUNN 2011 24, 26-27, 35-37; SCOTT 2009 105; SCHEIDEL 2007, 3-4). Culturally, the adoption of a common understanding of statehood, religion and the use of Sanskrit bound lowland and upland courts together, making lowland rulers the charismatic center of the universe, in which participation became possible through mimicry. The lowland courts became external, universalizing reference points. In addition, also remote upland states had an interest to defend other states in which they were in tributary relations to extract taxes and to trade. This was even solidified through settlements, for example the Kachin villages that were founded with appointed Burmese or Shan headman. Like that, border states could provide protection, keep peace and foster production and trade, increasing their own agency and protecting their own markets in the valley. Nearly all of these states had their valley-areas they were protective of, reversing somehow the power-relationship between up- and lowland, border and core state (SCOTT 2009, 112, 151).

Through these relations, upland centers were drawn into the orbit of lowland rulers' radiance, expanding their mandala and so introducing bordering practices qua concepts of belonging that were enacted in the mandala as a set of spatial codes that reflected a hierarchical status between the different centers. With the integration of upland entities into the mandalas of the lowland, these polities become partially integrated galactic polities, encompassing a certain territory through bordering practices and tributary relations that formed signals of attachment between different centers. This was based on the fact that tributary relations amounted to a transfer of power to the center to recognize the superior karma of the ruler of the mandala. Tribute in form of food, grains, labor and troops was the main tool to extract and concentrate resources to retain

or trade. In return, the king provided protection, making this tribute system very different from the Chinese one, where tribute payments signified only a symbolic submission. The precariousness though was that the personal relationship this extraction was based on also meant that tribute waxed and waned depending on the perceived karma of the king which informed changes of the vector of attention. The Southeast Asian tributary relations were therefore not set in stone but shifting depending on context and allegiance, and so allowed for some flexibility how to structure spatial relationships and denying total control of lowland polities over upland ones. The presence of the ruler, and thus of the state was ensured through symbols of the office, rituals, marriages and less so through bureaucracy. The hard power of the state was only visible a few hundred kilometers but the soft powers in terms of ritualistic and economic reach much wider (TOOKER 1996, 324-325; SCOTT 2009 26, 35; STUART-FOX 2003, 33-34).

This also had the effect that territoriality was defined as relations of locality based on direct contacts and purpose-based relationships. This worked, when territory and social relations coincided, and so also set borders, but in case this overlap is strained, they lead to different territorial orientation with a re-directed relationship vector towards new entities (KENNEDY/ROUDOMETOF 2002, 6-7).

For China, the Tai states at the frontier were merely a threat to overland trading routes but couldn't imagine them to be a major force. Rather China believed that its own cultural superiority would diffuse through the region and assimilate the native chieftains. Relations and alliances with them were meant to uphold order and security in the form of *tusi* (土司) – native chieftains under the rule of powerful leaders in the service of China at its frontiers – that remained fairly consistent over the time. The tool was recognition of legitimacy of the chieftains by participating in the Chinese world order as tributary, which once established helped the chieftains to attract trade and China to keep the impression of control over the frontier, the terms of which had to be constantly negotiated with the frontier elite. They were often part of grand strategies to create buffer zones – for example against Nanzhao – or a sign of pragmatism as it was a cost-effective solutions given that until the Yuan dynasty, no emperor was capable to annex the frontier region (HALL 1984, 61-62; HERMAN 2006, 136).

Given the two different approaches from Southeast Asia and China, this border area formed therefore an interstate-area out of the reach of the states themselves given the opt-out possibilities. Thus, fluidity was an inherent destabilizing factor as any actor within the mandala could challenge ritual hegemony and change affiliation. The mandala-system so reinforced the scattered

structure of polities, but also stabilized the macro-region of the border as it infused the region with relationships and poles of attraction whose power diminished towards the frontiers, fluctuated or were taken up by another pole, so that as a whole, the region was still administered by a center (SCOTT 2009 31-32, STUART-FOX 2003, 29).

Even though like that there was a gradual territorialization so that in the 14th century the whole of the border area was inhabited and could be attributed to a lowland central state, sovereignty of that state in borderlands of a galactic polity Southeast Asia was rather ambiguous and never really incorporated into a real territorialized entity as even when some degree of incorporation happened, local rulers remained vassals. Every succession ended in factional competition, leading to migration and border-insecurity for the lowland states for whom the upland entities served as a buffer. Also, as land-control fluctuated, control over labor and people became more important and institutionalized through patronage, slavery and bondage – most of which was reason to go to war (NYIRI 2012, 534; BLANTON/FARGHER 2008, 4-5, 53-54). This had the effect too that lowland centers in Theravada Southeast Asia – unlike China or Vietnam who both drew boundaries based on civilizational markers – never considered upland fiefdoms as being outside of civilization – and thus did not systematically try to civilize them – but simply further away from the center and classified them according to kinship, locality or by their allegiance to a capital (KEYES 2002, 1172; SCOTT 2009, 103).

The hills and climate were inherent limits to the Chinese expansion, the subsistence routines of the Tai speaking peoples in the frontier regions allowed for an opt-out of lowland-state integration whatever it may have looked like. While China introduced tax systems, Theravada-Buddhist lowland centers put pressure on the fringes through tax-farming, corvée labor and fees for all kind of productive activities, so that bordering happened where the crown service ended. Opt-out options consisted of either running off and setting up independent subsistence-structures or engaging in the competition for manpower and submitting to a new overlord or religious authority. Warfare also often accounted for opting out. It so happened for example to the Ganan people, who were part of the Pyu state whose relations with the larger lowland states fluctuated between amity and enmity. It was sacked by Nanzhao, Burman and Mon forces between the ninth and 14th centuries, and so forced the Ganan-people to leave the war-torn area to settle as subsistence farmers in the mountains. Ironically, this stabilized the frontier and network-polities further as these actions didn't constitute an open rebellion but just a disappearance from the state's reach that resulted in a population and integration of organized collective structures in

inaccessible and sparsely inhabited areas. The Pyu given the sacks had to adjust their model of governance so that Brahmanical elements disappeared or were absorbed in an increasingly Buddhist symbolism, that was more conducive to defense and resilience of the Pyu cities (SCOTT 2009 145, 149; HUDSON 2005, 72-73).

A similar trend of withdrawing from the state's reach can be observed among the Shan of Burma, the Zhuang of Guangdong and Guangxi, and the Lao, who have proven their state-making capabilities and territorial consolidation with wet-rice cultivation, hierarchic structures, autocratic rule and military sophistication time and again when they set up camp outside the reach of lowland kingdoms. Being set in a region, in which power of kings was waxing and waning, they could easily claim pockets over which they could rule and exploit resources, primarily wet rice. Rice was the state-making grain par excellence, as it was durable, easy to measure and required collective efforts to grow and control. So a state – upland or lowland – could come into existence, disappear or merge while the basis of the state-building efforts remained (SCOTT 2009, 41, 42, 141; LARY 1996, 10). This first cycle showed a lot of these opting-out procedures, larger and smaller. So was Mongkawng state founded in 1215 by the Shan sawbwa Sam Long Hpa, Mongmit state saw its inception in 1238 and Kengtung state emerged in 1243, which oriented its tributary relations to Myanmar, Ayuttaha and China. Lanna itself had two predecessors: Ngoenyang in the north was founded under the Lavachakkaraj dynasty in the 9th century with territorial claims ranging from Dien Bien Phu to Luang Prabang and Sipsongpanna, overlapping with various other mandalas. The second, Hariphunchai further south was under constant attacks by the Khmer until its golden era in the 13th century. In the 12th century, Sipsong Panna was founded as a kingdom of the Tai Lü, with tributaries in Laos, Vietnam and Myanmar, the Shan states and Lan Na. The rulers established a classical Theravada mandala, achieved recognition as tributary to China and sent tribute to the emperor as well as the kings of Burma to consolidate the autonomy of the *caophan/sawbwa* rulers. Establishing their autonomous pocket helped balancing the regional power equilibrium, serving several countries as chieftain to secure the border and sphere of interest. In addition, the rough natural conditions and illnesses helped maintaining the balance so that no lowland-state or China could establish a strong coercive presence, despite the decentralized nature of the mandala, in which the *caophan* rather acted as a *primus inter pares* with an elaborate ritualistic court to maintain the position vis-à-vis its neighbours. Ideological control through a strong sangha as in other *muangs* was not strong developed, so that outside of the mere attribution of political authority to them the local caophas could not territorialize their

power through dissemination of religious or linguistic standards. This also meant that its function as border-chieftain was only an agreement between the caophas and other rulers and could have been overturned if the equilibrium maintained through geographic and natural conditions changed (BORCHERT 2008 115-117; WOOD 2001, 63-65; GOH 2010, 128).

The way how Sipsong Panna emerged and behaved during this period was not unique. Depending on the needs of the polities, the allies and external conditions, their shape, outreach, internal organization were adapted to fit into the spaces between the three major states that emerged and exerted territorial control. The development was not driven internally, but major state-formation activities of lowland entities transformed the small states and chiefdoms at the border. They in turn showed great abilities to deal with the interests of major lowland states through tributes, extraction of *corvée* labor and resources and fallback networks of patronage and alliances. These networks helped these small chieftains like Sipsongpanna to serve as buffer-state while shaping the border in their own ways through managing connections, extracting useful concessions and keeping the major states and their authorities at bay by exploiting multiple sovereignties in the frontier zone with multiple loyalties while presenting themselves to their own tributaries as independent. King Inmueng in the 13th century expanded the tributary reach to Kengtung, Ngoenyang, and Muang Thaeng (Dien Bien Phu), increasing the size and establishing himself as leader of the Tai kingdoms in the north. The borders so became constituted by buffer states as lowland-approval of these entities essentially meant that control over resources, territorial disputes and trade routes across multiple affiliations were out of reach of the claiming empires and kingdoms. The patchwork of sovereignties not only formed channels for ideas and goods but also mediated the socio-political impact from China and the lowland states on the borderland. Elements of social organization and codes found themselves along the channels of transmission through the frontier area with decreasing intensity the further away the originating state was. These ordering principles were necessary for the flow management to grow rice and sustain the population and maintain trading networks which gradually morphed into confederated states. The border-chiefs of these states themselves mediated their territorial sovereignty and so defined the border through their own concentration of power (STURGEON 2004 465-466; SCOTT 2009 60-61; ANTONS 2013 1406; VON HAGEN 2004 446-447; BLANTON/FARGHER 2008 49-52).

Nearly all of these confederated states that emerged during that time faced similar trajectories of power-concentration while being decentralized and only weakly integrated like Sipsong Panna. Similar patterns can be seen in Sipsong Chau Tai in Vietnam or Ko Myo in the Shan states or

other Tai muang on whom lowland entities encroached for grain and manpower (SCOTT 2009, 36). They were inherently unstable and depending on external circumstances dissolving, splitting, merging or defecting. On the one hand it blurred the line between states, on the other hand this fluidity helped to reject a strong state presence as no state could act without the consent of the local chiefs, who in this sense solidified the region as a frontier (SCOTT 2009, 37). The waxing and waning character of these early chiefdoms stabilized only through the sheer number of state centers, forming a fluid region structured by a hierarchy and mutual recognition of authority in overlapping mandalas, that themselves were constantly changing (SCOTT 2009 58-59).

What is today's Laos illustrates the case how weak territorial integration and instable alliances created a fluid zone that in itself remained stable as an areal polity: Lao-speakers north of Ayutthaya where all subsumed under Lao, but not as a minor civilization. The Lao-space was partitioned first into Muang Sua, which remained under Khmer suzerainty stretching up to Sipsong Panna, and the area of Luang Prabang that was administered by Nanzhao officials. 1070 Nanzhao relinquished the land to Chantaphanit, but quarrels arose in the 12th century when Khun Chuang set on to conquer Luang Prabang, establishing his state Sri Sattanak under a strong Thai-style administrative system. In 1108, also Muang Sua became part of the Sri, and soon put under Khmer suzerainty again which remained as a vassal until the Mongols invaded. The state was founded as a mandala, state authority was transported through reiterations of rituals around Buddhist symbols connected with the dynastic rulers and illustrating the symbiosis of the sangha and worldly rulers. Where these rituals happened, there was the state and the state was a reflection of the divine structure with the palace in the middle of the cosmic axis and thus the center of power. The state embodied by the king submitted to the Dhamma, Sangha and Buddha who in turn transported his authority and ensure loyalty of the realm, thus bringing the space into a hierarchical order within a religious context. The mutual reliance of Sangha and king granted a degree of unity within the state, especially given the Sangha's monopoly on education that solidified the social order. This metaphysical connotation of power and the temporal precariousness of rule did not allow for a spatial border as the reach of power was not guaranteed and waxed and waned with the recognised moral prowess of the king, who was responsible for the well-being of his subjects by controlling natural forces through ritual. So, even though territorial units were bound to the central state by ritually enforced ties, these were not fixated and especially lower-hierarchy entities could easily defect. Waxing and waning of territorial control coincided with the waxing and waning of the king's karma, giving political power a temporary nature. Thus a king had to

maximize his social power through personal relations granting military, economic, political and ideological resources, which all changed with the floating karma of the ruler. There was of course a degree of elitism and paternalism in this approach that made the belief in power as a function of moral capacity possible (STUART-FOX 1983, 431-433; STUART-FOX 2003, 31-32; SCOTT 2009, 58-59; GAINSBOROUGH 2012, 38; BAGSHAW 1998 83-84, 88-89).

Despite this fluid environment, two hard but very different borders emerged in the same region: Vietnam – a state modeled after the Chinese example – and Dali/Nanzhao – the arguably largest and most powerful early Tai polity.

Before Vietnam liberated itself in a bloody civil war from China in 939, a major polity emerged in 737 in Yunnan, the Theravada Buddhist kingdom of Nanzhao which later morphed into the kingdom of Dali (937-1353) (GUNN 2011, 38-39). Founded by the Bai-people who dominated the region since the seventh century, Dali/Nanzhao in Yunnan showed the constant interplay of equilibria, external influences and elite cooptation in a fluid Buddhist-Confucian border-area that limited Chinese imperial power and provided agency to local rulers and so created and shifted borders. Native chieftains provided China with exotic goods, loyalty, accepted Chinese suzerainty, and in return got bestowed titles and gifts. In the complicated area of Southern China, this system of protected provinces and counties nominally belonging to China but under control of native chieftains emerged during the Tang dynasty. In the maze of different *chaos*, prince P'i-lo-ko of the then small chieftain Nanzhao conquered and coupé with Chinese blessing the surrounding principalities by 729. A tributary of the Tang dynasty – the first tributary mission of Nanzhao is recorded for the mid-seventh century – Nanzhao's growing influence and own tributary relations with the Shan states and native chieftains in Southwest China, its strong post in the overland trading routes linking Yunnan, Vietnam, Myanmar and the Tai-realm made it a useful ally for the Chinese dynasty vis-à-vis the Tibetan influence from the West and to protect access to the salt mines of Yunnan (STUART-FOX 2003, 55; BLACKMORE 1960, 49-50, 53; WELLENS 2010, 5; MACKERRAS 1988, 51). P'i-lo-ko's aggressive expansion policy paid off. Using the lose rule, overlapping spheres of influence and the interest in salt mines, his ascent to power provided the Tang with stability in the Southern border region, kept the Tibetans at bay, swayed local administrators for the benefit of Nanzhao at the Imperial Court and cemented his rule as long as loyalty to the court was ensured. The Tang followed their self-interest and tried to court Nanzhao that it would not team up with Tibet. P'i-lo-ko became Prince of Yunnan in 738 and though it seemed as a typical case of a coopted elite in the borderland, failing to obtain

redress against Chinese border officials who infringed upon Nanzhao's territory, P'i-lo-ko's son Ko-Lo-feng soon set on his own state-building project, gravitating away from his allies and shifting the border to the northern fringes of his empire. As the emperor did not trust the plea of Nanzhao against his own official, the decision was taken to destroy Chinese garrisons at the border and to team up with the Tibetan armies. This happened in 752, the Chinese answer was to send troops south to conduct a punishment expedition against the unruly tributary which only solidified the new status quo as these two Tang-attacks on Nanzhao in 751 and 754 failed, essentially setting a limit to the Mandate of the Heaven from Guizhou to northern Sichuan, southward to Laos and northeastern Myanmar (STUART-FOX 2003, 55; BLACKMORE 1960, 54, 57-58; STOTT 1963, 198-199; DAI 2009, 37). Until mid of the 9th century, the constant warfare between Dali, Song-China and Tibet led to the destabilization and demise of all three kingdoms. While it may seem that for the next 600 years, Nanzhao and its successor Dali controlled the Chinese Southwest, expanding its own control through military expeditions into Burma (757-763), Sichuan (829 and 873) and the then Chinese province of Jiao-zhi (861-866), which should become Dai Co Viet some 70 years later, the area was in chaos until the Duan-family forged an alliance with local chieftains and established the Dali-kingdom. Still, the shift of the Chinese-Southeast Asian border after the foundation of Nanzhao remained fairly stable as none of the expeditions either by Nanzhao nor by the Chinese succeeded – rather they accelerated the decay of Chinese rule over Vietnam and catalyzed the expansion of the kingdom of Pagan into the area of the defeated Pyu kingdom (YANG 2008a, 1; YANG 2008b, 19; STUART-FOX 2003, 55; SCOTT 2009, 141). Absorbing the Pyu kingdom provided Pagan with new techniques of bordering by erecting statues and ritual structures to define territory and to relate urban centers to the fringes of the state (MOORE 2003, 31). Dali fared well and assumed the role of a communication hub, linking Lao lands, the Red River Delta and Guizhou through trade routes together over which silver, gold aromatics and other precious materials passed. Despite its independence, it remained under great influence from China which it used for its own survival, for example it submitted to tribute payments and asked for recognition as a local kingdom and adopted Chinese administrative practices to the extent they were compatible with the mandala approach to territorialization. (HALL 2013 82; MACKERRAS 1988 53, 58; YIAN 2010 140-141, 142). The religious syncretism of Nanzhao/Dali of Theravada Buddhism as in Bagan as well as certain Mahayana practices set it further apart and established it as a melting pot between the Sinitic and Southeast Asian world. It used this position also to cement its territorial reach by

being on the one hand a tributary state to the Song dynasty as well as to Tangut Xixia, playing both more powerful states against each other. Dali so sent a joint tribute mission to China together with Pagan in 1136 and it served as a conduit for such missions from Southeast Asia to Song-China (YIAN 2010, 142-143)

The case of Nanzhao/Dali illustrates how China and its quest for border security ironically fostered local autonomy and agency by resting on the assumption of loyalty and civilizational exchange, which could easily change if the contract of border security in exchange for local autonomy was broken. Alliances – in this case the Tibetan kingdom – were always available. Nanzhao however still was an extraordinary case in due to the weakness of the Tang dynasty (STOTT 1963, 206; HOLCOMBE 1995, 5), the strength of its powerful Tibetan ally and the independence of the Jiaozhou-province which shall become Vietnam. With Jiaozhou lost, the late Tang dynasty had little reason to project its strength in that area or try to expand its dominion there, military pressure from the Northwest bound resources of the Song dynasty for its own protection and the famous axe of jade of emperor Taizu set a hard border between the Chinese empire and Yunnan (STOTT 1963, 219-220).

While Đại Việt and Dali/Nanzhao were large players, also other kingdoms sprouted in the frontier region. The kingdom of Mu'ge (380-1238) for example was wedged in between China and Nanzhao/Dali and used this position to mediate between these two states to secure its own survival. Tang and Song dynasties played along, until the Yuan conquered the area and set the institutional foundations for a Ming conquest of the Southwest (CAFFREY 2009, 191).

With the formation of the entities Nanzhao/Dali and Dai Co Viet and their borders, China's expansion southward halted so that instead of relying on a constant stream of settlers preparing and Sinicizing border areas, the court bestowed titles and honors to local chiefs. In the end, this border solidified until the Mongols invaded as all sides let each other in peace. After the invasion only Vietnam remained a state while Dali got incorporated fairly quickly. While Vietnam emulated the Chinese state, Dali followed the Theravada *mandala* model combining a diverse population with unclear loyalties under a tribal elite without a clear vision or concept of statehood. Inward looking, Dali was easy prey when the Mongols seized Yunnan and established Chinese domination through divide and rule and re-introduced migration policies to level the ethnic differences and propagate sinicization (STUART-FOX 2003, 55-57; FERGUSON 2012, 8; MCMAHON 2009 89-90).

It was up to the troops of Kubilai Khan to conquer these lands, but only a surprise attack of the

Ming dynasty really bound Yunnan and the lands of Nanzhao/Dali firmly into the Chinese orbit, shifting the border south to approximately where it is now. For the inhabitants of Dali/Nanzhao this meant dispersion throughout Highland Southeast Asia to continue wet-rice cultivation and to create smaller border-states that continued exploiting the administrative territorial weakness in the border area (SCOTT 2009 141). Contrary, Vietnam's organizational strength and mobilization capabilities of the state allowed for power projection at the border and a sufficient identification with the state, so that apart from a few short-lived Chinese interregna, it managed to exist as a separate entity.

Thus, instead of borders, where China encountered Southeast Asia with the notable exception of Vietnam and Dali/Nanzhao one found therefore frontiers, where a gradual civilizational change occurred. China considered inhabitants of these areas to be barbarians waiting to be civilized by being brought into the Chinese orbit through expansion of Chinese language, literature and recognition of the emperor. The fluid autonomy and allegiance of those regions complicated the situation and required the definition of "raw" and "cooked" barbarians to determine where territorialization efforts through registration, integration into the tax system of land-taxes and mobilization of corvée labor were successful. Taxes in particular were an important tool of bordering as they directly related activities of subjects with interests of the Chinese state to maintain armies, administer the land and construct public works. As the Buddhist kingdoms of Southeast Asia waxed and waned with the strength of the personalized leadership of individual kings and their ability to keep the network intact and stable, the emerging *tusi*-system accommodated for the fluidity in the region as local chiefs, empowered through local traditions, ruled over the territory on indirect behalf of the Chinese emperor. The recognition of the rule of local chieftains was an absolute necessity to foster an appearance of order on the Chinese border but also to allow the Chinese state to claim control without employing many resources. It so happened that a strong border in Chinese terms was one where it enforced local distinctions and divisions to bind those chieftains closer to its needs. It is therefore not surprising that Tai chieftains in China and Vietnam were heavily influenced and partly Sinicized, especially through the incorporation of aristocrats into the administration as key contact points between imperial centers and chieftains (EVANS/OSBORNE 2002, 5-7; SHIN 2006, 7; BRAY 2007 207-208).

In that sense, China didn't need to recognize any border at all and every polity, however far, could have been considered a frontier area and any tributary a *tusi* with a gradually Sinicizing aristocracy – except Vietnam and Nanzhao/Dali, whose independence set a limit to the Chinese

Mandate of Heaven. This directly impinged on the notion of centrality as not only size but also centrality were sources of power for China: expansion and retraction of control was acceptable but a hard border meant that China was one state among many which challenged universal principles according to which China was at the center of the universe. In addition, the principle of virtuous rule shall guarantee a certain level of prosperity to Chinese subjects to distinguish them in their allegiance from other people, cementing a self-understanding externally and internally that was ready to placate popular unrest at any cost. In China's view, Đại Việt remained an obstacle to its centrality on the fringes, which in turn feared to dissolve into the Chinese frontier-system (KEYES 2002, 1171; SCOTT 2009 68; WOMACK 2006, 52-53, 96, 114).

When China – and for the same reason Vietnam – encountered a difference to their own model, they created a frontier along the degree of perceived civilization in terms of similarity to the capital standard and based on connotations of cultural superiority. The non-conformity of people in that area allowed the people in the tuis to opt out from incorporation into the rigid Chinese or Vietnamese bureaucracy and claim a degree of sovereignty in the middle ground of an overlapping and unmarked border-area whenever displacement efforts through migration or wars took place – factors that upended a balance between competing ideas of civilization. Those who opted in retained their indigenous cultural traits and rituals only thinly veiled by some references to their Chinese overlords, who accepted this arrangement as long as they served their purpose. It became clear that civilization through assimilation could not be imposed on the southern frontier as it – a zone in its own right – was far more susceptible to patchworks and networks of individual communities. Only over a long time settlers could close the frontier and bring the civilization the throne deemed appropriate (KEYES 2002 1171-1173, CLARK 2009 2, 4-6, 16-18, 20; ZHANG 2007, 409; REID 2009, 16).

The galactic polities that emerged until the 12th century in this border area so fluctuated in number and strength, depending on their degree of organization and external influences. The region remained stable when the inner equilibrium between power projection, recognition and acceptance of leadership was maintained, yet when external influences changed, exploitation mounted or conflicts of succession, arose, the possibility to switch roles, opt out or change allegiance provided either new legitimacy to an established ruler or the possibility for a new ruler to emerge and set up a new pocket of autonomy. As upland and lowland constituencies in Theravada Southeast Asia were already not homogeneous, those alliance-switches were possible while retaining a local identity, so that each kingdom was able to incorporate large and strategically

important minority groups through patron-client relations fostering political loyalty. This was made possible through the economic base of agricultural villages and the need for reliable markets and protection of subsistence from relations with a more powerful patron for support and protection. The networks are powerful by themselves as they may manipulate rivals, force them into cooptation or participation. Especially in Myanmar in the Ava and Pegu periods, as the sovereignty resided with the ruler and ties were highly personalized, the patronization of muangs was wide-spread (LIEBERMANN 1976, 458-459; DAYLEY/NEHER 2013, 10-11). Given the lack of stable institutions both on side of the entities in the border-region as well as the lowland kingdoms, the border-region by itself remained fairly stable in its geographic reach and positioning after the independence of Vietnam. The various loyalty-shifts and the pace with which tributary status could be admitted simply changed the directions of the allegiance-vectors coming from the border-area towards the lowland kingdoms. The factors determining those were often geopolitical considerations of securing trade routes, protecting borders or warding off threats. While the area remained stable, borders of individual lowland-kingdoms shifted with the connection and relations between lowland and upland. The stronger the relation in one direction, the harder the border on the opposite site. These vectors connecting the different parts of mandalas were often so strong, that rulers of upland-muangs became kings of lowland kingdoms, as the case of Shan-kings of Ava illustrates – totally integrating the upland border-region with the lowland kingdom while avoiding a demarcation of territory (LIEBERMAN 1978, 460-461).

Thus, the accumulation of power and the two different territorial onsets of control over land versus control over people provided incentives for a constant competition that led to the formation of stronger central states and less organized peripheries that still – as a whole - formed quite a stable bloc. The fluidity and the seclusion from lowland-states made it too a transnational area, in which people, goods and political alliances ebbed and flowed (KENNEDY/ROUDOMETOF 2002, 2-3). This collective fluidity allowed the border-area to hold a degree of stability and border-management between the warring parties over two centuries until the Mongol invasion of 1253.

2.1.2.2 The Chinese-Vietnamese border

With the foundation of the Dinh dynasty and consolidation struggles of the Song Dynasty in China, the court accepted the de facto independence, especially as Dinh Bo Linh asked for Chinese noble titles as a sign of a shared worldview and of Dai Co Viet as part of the Chinese world order.

The title of “King of Jiaozhi” meant independence on par with other kingdoms, yet the territory remained part of the Chinese empire from the Song point of view, leaving open whether it will be annexed again. From China’s point of view, Vietnam became a border kingdom in line with its own model of center-local relations. Đại Việt should keep the frontier in order, not challenge the suzerain who promises to not interfere too much but lead by example. All were supposed to preserve the societal order, so that any challenge must be punished, in line with the Mandate of Heaven. Yet as for Vietnam itself, the king claimed the same Mandate of Heaven (天命/ thiên mệnh) as the Chinese emperor – and thus the same space “all under the heavens” (天下/ thiên hạ) – to conduct its own international and border-dealings in the same manner with its own set of periphery minorities in its service as China did. By doing so it not only became a settled territory with an extended frontier-periphery that proclaimed its independence but also accepted shared universe with China, in which it needed to maintain political unity and avoid centrifugal forces to emerge. The consolidation of a distinct Vietnamese identity started in this period and led to a perceived need to consolidate the borders to the north and south. In its international outlook, China always loomed large on the horizon of Đại Việt as a point of reference that defined Đại Việt’s very existence, self-understanding and its internal organization. The larger neighbor in the north so more or less provoked a strong national consciousness and a self-definition derived from external pressures (WOMACK 2006, 44-45, 56-57, 62-63, 112-113, 115; BARLOW 1987, 255).

In the eyes of China, everything at the frontier could be regarded as unified while on the ground a large leeway for local freedoms persisted, whereby for Vietnam the weaker powers of the centers always had to tiptoe around a compromise that served the needs of national integration as well as encouraging local initiative without allowing secession or upsetting China. In the South and Southwest, effects and developments from the capital only arrived with considerable delay and leeway remained large, so that cross boundary exchanges could flourish. Once policies took hold, changes were implemented often quickly with repercussions for the adjacent countries to change their behavior vis-à-vis China. The border-area for Vietnam so becomes a prism in which its national, local and international interests and actions maximize consequences (WOMACK 2006, 69-70; BLANTON/FARGHER 2008 78). Strategically that meant in all dealings that the Vietnamese kept a close eye on its northern frontier, combining military strength with acceptance of Chinese suzerainty. China usually treated this acceptance with generosity as long as they didn’t make troubles for the throne, yet a modicum of insecurity remains as Đại Việt remained so much smaller and less advanced than its northern neighbor. The tributary relationship stabilized this

fear and ironically hardened the border despite its objective of furthering China's reach (STUART-FOX 2003 45-47, WOMACK 2006 83-86).

For the formation of Vietnam, it was therefore not of a great importance where it saw its borders but where an equilibrium emerged between distance, geography and limits of political and military power projections supported by a strong Vietnamese identity to consolidate the area as a state. The Chinese domination up to 939 introduced classical Chinese as literati language and instilled norms for governance, kingship and statehood creating a Sino-Vietnamese elite based on Chinese ideals and Vietnamese Buddhism – but also a sense of resistance against the neighbor in the north. While with Theravada-Southeast Asia China maintained ordinary tributary relations, separated through a border region of a myriad of small muangs, China and Vietnam formed a hard border, managed by tuis who had to find an equilibrium in an unequal and asymmetric relationship determined by huge differences in size, military power, costs of a violent conflict and lack of reciprocal means. Thus, the border-area and relations to the tuis/thổ ty became a vital point for Vietnamese survival and a playground in which each side tried to maximize its own interests. This also meant that bordering is a very different experience for each side, binds a different amount of resources and requires a degree of reliance on border-actors and on the country's own unifying identity (WOMACK 2006, 35, 37, 39, 78-80).

Such a system meant for the Vietnamese state that it could exercise real control only in the heartland, while the frontier required active management techniques and constant cooptation to not allow opposition of a united front of minorities or remnants of defeated dynasties to build up (WHITMORE 1997, 670). Vietnam, especially at the beginning had to actively manage its border relations, internalize threats and institutionalize the appearance of its international actions – it was a lucky situation that the Song dynasty faced its own consolidation efforts and so a common interest to avoid conflict merged into a stable equilibrium despite some squirmishes. The most serious one was the Nùng Trí Cao uprisings that challenged the Song consolidation efforts and expansion of military means. Nùng Trí Cao was a local chieftain, whose dissatisfaction with the Song dynasty led him to seize several prefectures and destabilizing the Song administration at the border with Đại Việt. The Song in turn tried to fight this rebellion with stricter administrative procedures and recruiting more local chieftains for their cause – a provocation in the eyes of Đại Việt, leading to a war from 1075-1077. The war spurred the conclusion of a border-treaty to establish a fixed border in 1084, which still left a lot of ambiguities (VU 2016, 47; WILLIS, 2012 454-456).

In the aftermath, the Song re-invested into the Zhuang chieftain to control Guizhou and Guangxi and increased its military presence on this part of the frontier, while Đại Việt increased its control over the former Tang lands of Southern Lingnan. Integrating frontier lands closer with the center was a core policy in both empires, especially through migration and the founding of Confucian academies. The effects were dramatic as the Song through these actions recognized an autonomous state to its south and set a border through the Lingnan-area – which the court still considered Chinese – by introducing cultural and social transformations that set both Đại Việt and China on diverging paths. Both used loose reins over these territories, even though the danger persisted that centrifugal forces could hold on to border localities. This stalemate-routine was fairly stable, conflicts appeared from time to time like the defeated Chinese expedition of 981, but found mostly temporary diplomatic solutions in the form of ritual claims to suzerainty and tributary payments. This paradigm changed under the Yuan Dynasty. In the meantime, mainly economic interests pushed and pulled on border policies and required governmental attention and coordination (WOMACK 2006, 80-81, 88-91, 114, 118, 249-250, BARLOW 1987, 255; MARSH 2015, 81-82).

Such coordination in Vietnam was set to serve a strong local identity while the assumption of Viet rulers to be equal to the Chinese emperor helped to mobilize and project territorial power and to draw political and cultural boundaries as non-Chinese vis-à-vis other non-Chinese countries, instilled through a thorough bureaucracy and assimilation efforts that helped mobilize the population against potential threats. The bureaucratic reach also helped solidifying the border and territorial claims of the state as a fixed entity. This equilibrium between state-power, military projection and popular mobilization to territorially mark the state and set borders proved stable when Lý Công Uẩn (Lý Thái Tổ) founded the Lý dynasty, which managed to defeat two invasions of the Song dynasty. (GUNN 2011 68-69; GAT/YAKOBSON 2013 107-108). The Lý dynasty continued efforts of lending and using Chinese cultural and administrative techniques and elements while consciously de-Sinicize and nationalize them in the context of Vietnamese autonomy. So were for example strict rules of succession taken from the Song-court but embedded with exceptions that guarantee a degree of fluidity on how to handle the passing-on depending on the actual circumstances of the moment. This adaptation and vernacularization was a form how Vietnam could bolster a cultural border (REYNOLDS 1994, 434). The degree of flexibility also accounts for the fact that despite the strong administrative basis, territorial power and control gradually diminished towards the border and often lay in hands of Vietnamese *thổ ty*, who managed the

“hardness” of the boundary by determining the limits of Vietnamese-ness in terms of geographic reach but also in terms of civilizational compatibility in the Confucian tradition (STUART-FOX 2003 43-44; SUTHERLAND 2003, 8-9).

This same precarious situation of political control was mirrored on the Chinese side, where the tuis set limits to China’s claim of universal power projection. Essentially, as order in the Southern frontier was a sign of central strength, and usually not a cause of weakness, the chieftains had to be won over time and again if a dynasty changed. Their existence however, was only accepted as long as no chieftain became too powerful. Divide and rule was the most employed approach to keep checks on local magnates, as was the stationing of soldiers and elite cooptation. Ever more important, in China already practiced since the Qin dynasty, in Vietnam since the Lê dynasty, became resettlement policies to the frontier areas to reproduce the lowland state-scape in the frontier area by appropriation, mobilization and the definition of where the non-Chinese – or non-Vietnamese – worlds starts – and so supporting a hardening the border (SCHEIDEL 2007, 4-5; SCOTT 2009, 77; PERDUE 1998 264-265; WOMACK 2006, 108; HSU 1979, 461).

Since the late fifth and sixth centuries, China managed to set up powerful tax institutions, which helped to curb elite autonomy and mobilize military resources, and so keep local chiefs under control by partly disempowering them through bureaucratic expansion and reporting duties. These chiefs, with their own means of control over border and resources managed in turn to keep checks on the radiance of the Chinese throne. Through migration policies China and Vietnam also tried to introduce wet-rice cultivation and a sedentary economy as shifting cultivation enabled secession and provided opt-out options for chieftains from the empire. Once this happened, a chief entered the map and eventually became assimilated, with the state expanding its tools for external security and resource control. The map was a valuable tool for showing the power of separation as it helped fixing places and subjects in space and binding imperial space to stabilize control (PERDUE 1998, 272; SCOTT 2009, 77-78; SCHEIDEL 2009, 10; SCHEIDEL 2007, 7).

Lingnan illustrates this development as well as the counter-currents to it. Despite it entering the map and subjected to ever tighter control from China, the tuis of the area showed a great sense of autonomy which came up when pressure was too high and they started referencing mythical kingdoms such as that of Nanyue. So resisted the Lingnan tuis Mongol conquest and slowed down Ming advances during its time of consolidation, yet these outbursts of autonomy became rarer and rarer as of the 10th century and the time in which Lingnan was under control outlasts greatly the time it strived for autonomy from its anyway lose reigns. Also, this kind of autonomy

based mainly on cultural and economic qualities, is not equal to secession, so that the frontier still stayed intact despite some disorder (LARY 1996 12-13, 16-18).

Therefore, the interesting situation that appeared in the Chinese-Vietnamese border area after Vietnam's independence, was marked by centers that employed the *tusi*-system, so that Tho, Nung, Man, Meo and Hmongs often found themselves in a situation of two overlords that tried to bring them into their cultural orbit (KEYES 2002, 1172; GOSCHA 2016, 453). The same was true for the Black Tai and White Tai who in addition to their own centres of power were subjected to influence from the Vietnamese court and showed the same dynamics of multiple sovereignties as other network systems of multi-centered *muangs* in the rest of the frontier area (BADENOCH/SHINSUKE 2013, 34; cf. KELLEY 2015, 172-174). Fluidity at the border was therefore also a very well-known feature of Vietnam's northern frontier, yet the means to draw these chieftains into its orbit differed from Theravada Southeast Asia and China. There were alternating phases of cooperation and tension between the *Đại Việt* dynasties and minorities, however never going so far that the minority statelets would secede or go into open rebellion. These entities both countries strived to control for their border security often employed the galactic polity model, illustrating a clash of state-understanding. Feuds between different chieftains were mostly ignored by both the Chinese and Vietnamese as long as they kept loyalty to the throne. However, when the Nong and the Huang clan began expanding into the border region in the beginning of the 11th century, they undermined the stability of the existing chieftain system and the danger of a border crisis loomed large as both clans were important producers of gold and controlled the border trade (BARLOW 1987 255, 262; WOMACK 2006 61). The wealth and resource-richness motivated both *Đại Việt* and China to gain a foothold, both sent off immigrants there, and tried to tie it closer to their own orbit. This was to no avail as the Nong proved already strong and as the *Lý* dynasty was preoccupied with its Southern expansion, it didn't have the resources available. The Song exploited that situation for its own benefits and created new *tusi*s with enemies and defectors of the Nong. This was facilitated by the lack of definition of the border since both Song and *Lý* were tied up in consolidation efforts of their local power. Despite mechanisms in place, Vietnamese and Song troops regularly invaded each other territories and only in the 1078 with the recognition of Vietnamese independence the border was set at the mountain ridges. This was more an administrative act, as Vietnam stayed within the Chinese cultural orbit for the centuries to come since the courts of the following dynasties all adopted institutions, bureaucracy, examination systems and the teaching of the Confucian classics as means to

administer their country and maintained the tributary system to solidify their autonomy. An agreed border also didn't mean that this border was under real control, as the patchwork of chieftains and minorities required constant negotiations and cooptation efforts to keep them within the orbit of the courts by bestowing imperial titles and forging tributary relations. The agreed border meant only that in terms of cultural influence the chieftains north of the line were more exposed to sinicization and the entities south of the line were more exposed to the Vietnamese court, who used them to keep Han Chinese traders at a distance (GUNN 2011, 126-130). This episode is exemplary for the border, though hard, can only be maintained if the states could rely on the chieftains. They formed a buffer, that could develop its own dynamics, could only be mobilized if there was a mutual agreement and if it couldn't be used anymore against uprising minorities, they could jeopardize the territorial integrity. So, also in a hard border environment, there were vectorial forces pushing and pulling on a very ill-defined area separating larger countries (BARLOW 1987 263-264).

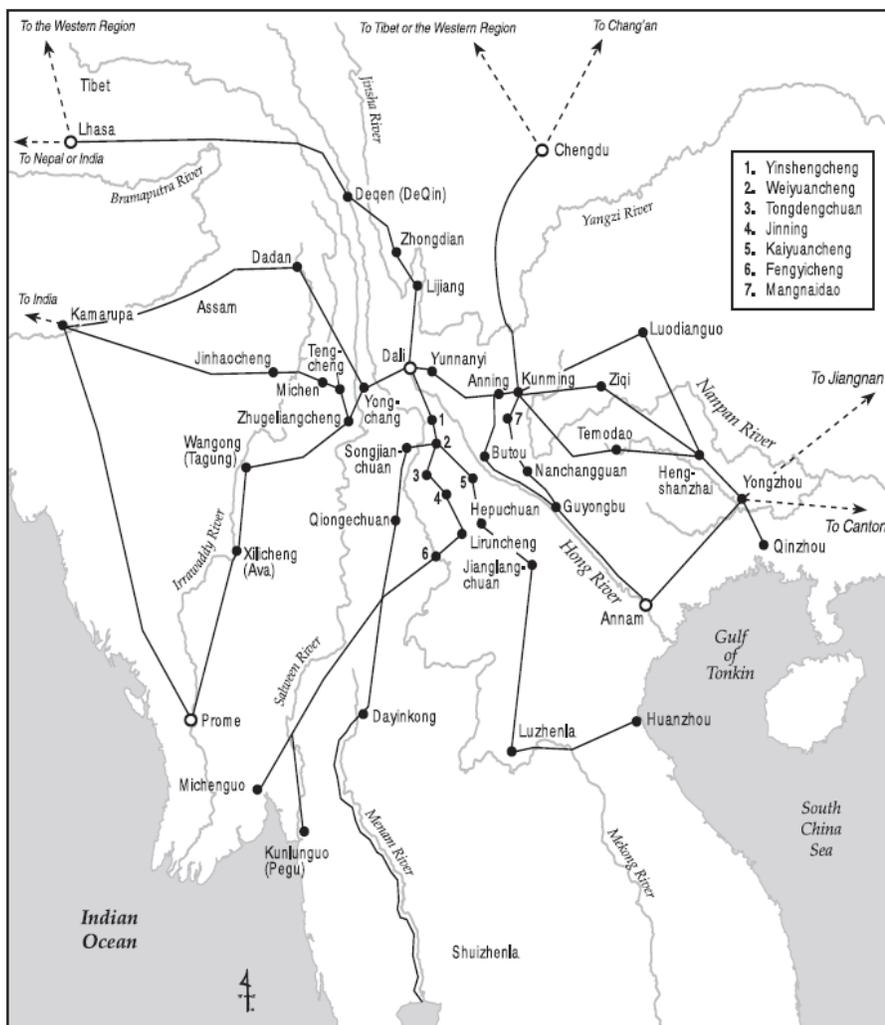
Despite occurrences like that, the era was one of stability at the border and a solidification of the Vietnamese state apparatus. Fortunately, the Song wanted to avoid unnecessary conflict, the Vietnamese came to terms with its asymmetric relationship with China. Neither state managed to permanently grow into the other one, the border remained more or less a stable idea so that cyclicity in this area is less defined by waxing and waning but rather of different forms of dealing with the asymmetry in power and restoring equilibria (WOMACK 2006 246-248). The next watershed to shake up this situation was the Mongol invasion in the 13th century and the collapse of the Dai Co Viet state in the 14th century.

2.1.3 Trade and tribute

Having established the political parameters under which border-center trade took place and the fundamental differences in the Chinese-Vietnamese and Theravada-Southeast Asian tributary policies, cross-border trade shall now be the focus of the analysis. Trade and tribute were fundamental components that shaped the interaction and existence of the border area. For China, tributary relations were the main tool to cement the world order of the Mandate of Heaven, which set Southeast Asian states outside its cultural frontier as barbarians who eventually should assimilate. But more so than a diplomatic tool, tributary relations with Southeast Asia buttressed trade and regional ties whereby only the Yuan dynasty tried to use the tribute system as an instrument of

submission in tandem with a policy of invasions. The notable exception was Vietnam, where the basic premise was to get political loyalty in return for a secure frontier. The flexibility of the tributary system allowed accommodating shifting political situations on the frontiers and enforce China's commitment to its partners. Missions were dispatched regularly to cement diplomatic relations, facilitate trade and secure borders. Trade was not just a stabilizing factor: the stricter trade was regulated through tributary relations only, the more flourished the smuggling economy in the frontier area among locals and Chinese settlers alike (GUNN 2011 108-109).

Since goods, people and ideas pass through the border-area, it becomes a civilizational interaction zone, being impacted and impacting on other cultures. The multitude of border states and their function as resource-providers and cross-border-mediators turned them into links between and focus points of centers due to strategic location, deposits of precious resources like aromatics and minerals like gold, silver, lead, tin and copper (YANG 2004a, 181-182). The ensuing



Map 5: Major trading routes through the border area in the 10th century (YANG 2004 292)

route network linking Southwest China with Tibet, Southeast Asia and India formalized power-relations in the border-area and the potential to broker with more powerful lowland states. The inner fluidity of the border-area however also had its spatial and temporal mark on these trading networks with trade on branches intensifying or diminishing according to the political climate between the centers they connected. The most prominent bottleneck was Dali, through which all major routes linking Southeast Asia with China had to pass through. These trade routes helped to manage communications, tributary relations and also buffering diverging understandings of statehood, bordering and the status of tributary states between the Confucianist and Theravada world (YANG 2004, 286-288). Strategic products that were particularly in demand were metals, horses and salt. Nanzhao and especially Dali served as a provider of horses to the Tang and Song dynasties. As trade was vital for the economic survival of Dali, it petitioned the Song court to be granted tributary status. Yet the many negative experiences with the predecessor Nanzhao let the court to shy away from imposing suzerainty over the Dali-region: the management of the border-region was a two-way street, also large empires could opt out from international trade. Until the Yuan-dynasty brought Dali under the Heavenly Mandate, there was an uneasy link through horse-trade, perforating the political border through commercial outlets exchanging silk and tea for horses. While political links through the refusal to establish tributary relations were weak, the demand for horses eventually led to the opening of trading relations the more the Song were confronted by powerful kingdoms on its northern frontiers (YANG 2004, 296-297; GIERSCH 2010, 220).

Trading became more codified and set under rules after the Mongols conquered the northern territories of the Song dynasty, shifting markets to avoid that trading becomes linked to political power in favor of Dali, which hardened the border (YANG 2004, 298). Metals like gold, silver, copper, tin and lead were also resources that opened the area to international trade, perforating political frontiers. Metal production linked Yunnan, Upper Burma, China and India, and proved as a gate for territorialization under the Yuan dynasty as it allowed establishing silver-tax offices. Silver was necessary for minting currency and the monetization of transactions, but also a political tool to introduce Chinese bureaucracies and taxation into the area. The thirst for silver and the monetary transition became a vital part of the Ming dynasty's interest for integrating the Chinese Southwest by using resources, which bound local people to their production to serve the national interest. The border region became a backbone for national prosperity, and so a vital national interest, that more and more was drawn into the imperial Chinese orbit through overland trade routes. Where possible, this happened through direct rule as in Dali after the Yuan invasion

(YANG 2004, 301-304; REID 2011, 21). Further south where transport, distribution and market institution were developed in a very local setting under the auspices of local political elites, China had to rely on tributary relationships and networks of commercial power and political influence as the need to maintain commerce and resource exploitation for prosperity which accounted for the survival of Theravada-kings was tantamount to creating political and social hierarchies. Trade flows themselves were just vectors of power from centers over short or longer distances to maximize the economic wealth and manpower accessible to the state. This had two effects: maintaining autonomy vis-à-vis powerful lowland centers, as well as binding people in the same place where their economic activity happens and thus where they can provide their manpower (GIERSCH 2010, 219-220; SCOTT 2009, 73-75). Each traded commodity carried therefore economic, political and cultural properties that define the region where they came from as well as the actors that transport them. These products, like special herbs, aromatics or metals helped therefore defining the border region, merchants navigated the interface between the producing border-area and the consuming lowland-states, perpetuating the idea of a rift along several not necessarily overlapping frontiers: political, economic, mining and extraction frontiers, each of which with a different reach into the border area with impacts on migration, economic development and urbanization as well as dependencies on markets for prosperity as it linked together and opened up remote or isolated areas, kingdoms or chieftains. Some of these product-specific frontiers even spanned the entire border region, as for example cotton that from Eastern India went through Burma to the Chinese Southwest (CHANG/TAGLIACOZZO 2011, 2-3; DALE 2009, 80-82, 86; HALL 1984, 82). This process endowed local elites with power, cemented hierarchies and informed governance insofar as it helped establishing a ruling class with a concrete interest in extracting and distributing surplus production as well as deciding to which overlord this tribute shall go. Tributary and market incentives so overlapped a great deal in the integration of the border area, the only difference lies in the level of analysis. Tributary relations are an elite-affair but-tressing the whole economy, while ordinary peddlers sustain markets and thereby foster relations to neighboring communities on their level. It was only when the elites didn't serve the mutual obligations anymore that their subjects chose to opt out (BLANTON/FARGHER 2008 8-10). A case in point would be the trade and tributary relations of the Shan states, who followed the Theravada statehood and the economic interests that come with it in the same manner as their lowland counterparts. They in turn were emulated in their trading and their political system by the Karen-

ni and set up a tributary network among each other, which helped perpetuating the frontier status and a civilization distinction between up and lowlanders (SCOTT 2009, 115-116).

Trade and tributary relations so could expand the soft power of a state, be it in its Theravada or Confucian form, as it tied people and resources over multiple frontiers into its orbit of influence. So were Chinese trade missions mostly ideological tributary missions establishing – at least on paper – suzerainty, while Theravada states used tributary relations for legitimization reasons and the expansion of access to resources. China saw an eternal permanence in its action, whereas Southeast Asian rulers worked within the remit of their fluctuating karma. That way, two very different worldviews and ideas about statehood could find a common ground for bilateral relations in the form of trade, mediated through the adaptability of the shared border area, which knew how to make pragmatic adjustments to serve multiple spheres of interest and bridged different degrees of alienation with the lowland centers to which they established tributary relations. (STUART-FOX 2003 30-31, 34, 48). The economic expansion under the Song dynasty and its extensive network of canals to transport goods and people increased the rate of urbanization and the need for ritualistic goods. The growth in population also increased pressure on the southern frontiers, so that China's increased penetration and extraction of trade relationships could perpetuate its cultural borders in the practice of brokers and traders, bureaucracy and the reception of tributary missions as well as in literature and arts, while upland chieftains could manipulate this to their own advantage. This was even more the case as taxes on trade became a primary source of income for the court, who was strapped of resources for defending its southern interests to keep an army to protect itself from the states in north (PERDUE 2015 196-197, 211; FINDLEY/O'ROURKE 2007, 61-63; WOOD 2011, 28-29). Therefore, a socio-political continuum could emerge at the trading frontier without belonging to neither a major lowland state nor an empire but selectively choosing elements to accept or to adopt. The major lowland kingdoms achieved a degree of security and open markets through the mediation of borderlands, China had a ring-fence of deferential states, and the rulers of the borderlands themselves and their bestowed titles of nobility guaranteed the premise that their rule was legitimate, while the necessity of income through trade and access to resources kept actions in check on all sides, stabilizing the quasi-autonomy of the border states. Hegemony of China, the reach of Theravada kingdoms and autonomous reign were so sustained at minimal costs with maximal gains for all parties (PSARRAS 2000, 24, 26; WOMACK 2006 139-141).

2.1.4 Standardization of rule

Standardization of government and ruling practices as well as economic activities helped with the stabilization of the border region as a bloc. Metals for currencies were one of the major export products of the area, defining the means of economic transactions in the adjacent countries while keeping itself apart through the use of cowry shells as currency (GUNN 2011, 134). Diverging standards in the use and shape of money so set a border and increased the costs of transactions as they had to be exchanged when crossing the area: Song-China bought copper from the frontier chiefs with cowry shells and the greater the circulation of those copper-coins became, the more they set a border to those who used shells or differently minted coins. Apart from that, issuing a standardized, circulating and accepted form of currency was a sovereign privilege, and so helped defining territorial reach. The need for resources to make metal currency increased even ties to the center, so were the kingdom of Shu in 965 and the Southern Tang in 975 closely drawn into the Song-reign to provide wood, copper and silver, which increased the strength of the border south of Sichuan. The prohibition to use any other coins than those depicting the current reign of the emperor tied the transactions to the center, and increased the distinction to those who didn't use the same coins. Needless to say, as these coins were the means to pay taxes to the Chinese administration, flourishing smuggling markets and networks emerged in which all kinds of currencies were used that better reflected local needs and prices. This grey area did not disappear until the late Qing era, despite many attempts to introduce alloys that are more flexible or paper money. Also the Dinh dynasty in Vietnam made use of minted coins to settle and define the reach of transactions. (GUNN 2011, 135-136; SCHIFFERLI 1986a, 271, 273, 275, 278; VOGEL/HIERONYMUS 1993, 312). Both states had difficulties with making people accept their centralized currency. At the Sichuan frontier, violent revolts even erupted in 995 against any centralization attempts, which imperial armies stroke down. The contempt for central rule, repression and forced standardization was so large in the areas adjacent to the frontier region, that in the year 1000 a mutiny broke out in Sichuan, at the end of which Zhao Yanshun proclaimed the foundation of the Dashu kingdom (SCHIFFERLI 1986a, 286). These revolts drew the attention of the fairly new Song imperial center away from the farther borders, as it had to consolidate its rule first within its own realm. This supported the autonomy of the border region and even increased its attraction for adjacent units to become part of it. In Theravada Southeast Asia, king Alaungsithu pushed standardization forward. In the core of his mandala as well as in the frontier

colonies he ordered standardized weights and measures as well as currency for tax administration and trade. At its zenith, Alaungsithu commanded a large military force, made his rule present through monumental architecture and wielded a complex court organization that was the model for future dynasties (AUNG-THWIN 2013, 87; TARLING 1999, 166).

Standardization of rule also meant that the state became the ultimate arbiter within its boundaries, overpowering and defending itself against internal competitors, and matching institutions with physical power and informal rules. Despite this trend towards a standardized form of authority, localism was strong. Having standardized and codified rule meant that it is possible to hide from or challenge it. In both, Theravada Southeast Asia and China, the standard attitude to the own rule of the state was based in the centrality of the state in the universal order in which capacity and control of the center fades in the distance. This reduces direct and effective power but in the sense of the Mandate of Heaven or the karmic rule of Theravada kings, it allows efficient governance through local emulation of the appropriate attitude of the king and emperor and the acceptance of the self-reference of the state-centers' role in international politics. This doesn't preclude the use of force but sees it only as an ultima ratio if negotiations regarding issues on the frontiers fail and the region spins out of control. Force becomes a codified border-marker within the state boundaries to meet challenges, while differences beyond the border can find a consensus-based solution (WOMACK 2006, 41-42, 117). This standard in the use of force reinforced bordering practices as the external posture as extension of internal attitudes which may contradict and oppose similar practices on the other side of the frontier area. It also reinforced the culturalist border markers, especially on the Chinese side, which informed the attitude of authority and centrality as opposed to the physical projection of power – unless there is a real need such as direct challenges to its centrality. The resulting pattern of relations of the centers to their respective peripheries so saw a codification in terms of ritual, submission and in case of Theravada Southeast Asia also service to the metropolitan center to uphold the universal order from which central power derived (WOMACK 2006, 40, 45). The resulting international order was one of asymmetric relations with China in the center, also for mandala-peripheries by proxy of their metropolitan centers. The codification of contacts so helped the different border-states acquiring a certain control of their own autonomy and sovereignty as well as being neither politically annexed nor forced to provide services to China. The tributary relations were an expression of bordering given their focus on territorial integrity of the states they were ring-fencing. Order, control and bordering became a single standard of how to conduct relations and exercise power and influence inter-

nally and externally and how to employ agency without jeopardizing rule or local identity (WOMACK 2006, 5, 29; HALL 1984, 66-67; REYNOLDS 1994, 432-433).

The manifestation of order, control and statehood through written texts also furthered standardized ideas of rule and limits of statehood. In Vietnam, chronicles like the *An Nam chí lược* and *Đại Việt sử lược* appeared to determine the Vietnamese-ness of the state. Burmese scripts wrote down limitations of the lowland center as a function of relations to the satellite states determined by religion, transfer of relics, taxes, genealogy and ethnicity, indexing the fluidity of political entities and categorization of friends and foes and how to deal with them. The north played an important part, in which all geopolitical dangers outside the reach of the Pagan and its connected sawbwas were subsumed, be them mountainous minorities, Nanzhao or China (YIAN 2010 126, 128-129).

2.1.5 The shake-up of the equilibrium

To sum up, the area in this first consolidation cycle was marked by a general expansionist drive pressing southwards from China, displacing people, creating new, remote states and with them stable frontier-areas, which in itself was marked by a great fluidity of local, regional and central relations, that mediated political interactions and by its own structuring of relations determined territorial size and administrative reach of lowland kingdoms as their wellbeing often depended on them. In total, despite all waxing and waning, this region had a stable trajectory based on personal relationships, charisma and recognition of rule of men of prowess, that defined what was most important in polities where political powers of coercion were weak but ritual power immense: control over people to sustain the state with resource accumulation and defense services (REYNOLDS 1994, 428-430). Tributary relations determined the interactions, yet were very different in their functionality between Theravada states and Confucian China and Vietnam. But the inherent flexibility allowed also these two states to exploit these relations for the same purpose of border protection, access to goods and communication, while the transmitters were able to manipulate them for their own autonomy. The balance along the frontier between the imperial Chinese order and the Theravada kingdoms was so a mix of economic exploitation, shrewdness in external policies and a certain degree of hierarchical statism on the Chinese side that matched up with the mobility in Theravada Southeast Asia (CLARK 2009 7-8). This equilibrium, painstaking to maintain but beneficial to all parties involved from a *longue-durée* macro-perspective, was about to be

shaken up in the mid-12th century with the Mongol invasion of the Song dynasty, the subsequent conquest of the Dali kingdom and attempts to conquer the Pagan kingdom and Đại Việt. The subsequent advent of the Tai principalities supported the deformation of the frontier area, and the Ming dynasty's far more belligerent outlook on its borders put additional strain on the established relations. Only in the 15th century, a new stable equilibrium emerged at the border.

2.1.5.1 The Mongol attacks on Southeast Asia

The Mongols successfully attacked the Song in 1127, forcing the court to move southward, and to increase its tributary alliances with the frontier region to obtain horses, metals and other commodities for defence and war purposes. The Song tried to maintain a balance of power between the larger kingdoms, to not face an additional threat in the South. It did so by controlling the horse trade from Dali, which was a major factor in military strength (YANG 2004 298-299). 1236 the southward expansion started, and in 1253 the kingdom of Dali fell to be incorporated into the Yuan-empire as part of a grand strategy to outflank the Southern Song, eliminating their horse supply and with it a mediator at the frontier so the border shifted further south. The sparsely populated borderland and the rough terrain provided marching routes against the Song, turning Dali and Yunnan into an important conquest base. While Guizhou, Sichuan and Guangxi were still Song territories, the Mongols could stabilize their rule over Yunnan through a mix of using and coopting original ruling families, neutralizing their adversaries as well as promoting the influx of Muslims from Central Asia as soldiers and administrators on behalf of the court, who were also supposed to civilize the area by integrating the local population into the administrative, economic and educational infrastructure so that they become imperial subjects. Dali aristocracy was more than willing to help offering maps on tribes and chieftains that have not yet surrendered as well as Dali techniques to draw them into their political and economic orbit. The Yuan rewarded this help with imperial titles as well as authority over fiefs of less than ten thousand households, but charged them with keeping Yunnan and environs under control, supporting the Mongols as guides and vanguards for their expansion in Southeast Asia and crushing uprisings against the Mongols in 1264. The Song dynasty finally fell in 1276, and the overtaking of the administration and destruction of the Song military capacities gave the Mongols the means to tightly grip control over the Chinese empire. In the same year, the Yunnan Branch Secretariat to administer this province was opened. Dali, administered as a Chinese province, provided the

Mongols with a springboard to launch attacks against Đại Việt and Pagan. With greater consolidation of power over the frontier area, the local power stronghold in Dali became a risk for the Yuan and the local nobility was stripped more and more of its powers, titles and privileges, eventually leading to clashes with the Dali aristocracy and Yuan administrators that remained unresolved until the end of the dynasty. (STUART-FOX 2003, 52-53, 59; ATWILL 2003 1082; YANG 2009, 743; DU/CHEN 1989 34-35). The Mongols could so, however, integrated the smaller tuis into their political-military hierarchies, changing the relationship from a negotiated transaction of border protection against Chinese recognition to an institutionalized, bureaucratic relationship with ranks, classifications, and delineated boundaries (HERMAN 2006, 136).

Economically, the conquest meant that Dali and the Yunnan area partly lost its position as inter-linkage between China, Tibet, Southeast Asia and India. Long-distance traders maintained Dali standards of transaction such as the use of cowry shells for money, however the relationship between Yunnan and the Yuan center trumped over the relations between Yunnan and entities beyond the frontier. Cowries got gradually replaced by copper and silver coins, the vector of markets changed their direction towards Beijing and the massive Han immigration created large intra-Chinese markets, rendering certain connections abroad obsolete (YANG 2004 308-309). Also, the Yuan dynasty set up military garrisons all over Yunnan to establish domination and using its projection of force to divide and rule the chieftains. Their practices significantly changed the relation to the border area as the territorial penetration of the Mongols put them into direct contact with kingdoms that were linked to China through tributary relations but did not have much direct interaction with the Chinese empire. Burma, Sukothai, Lanna and Muang Sua (Luang Phrabang) saw themselves forced under military threat after Khubilai Khan's notification in 1260 to submit to Chinese suzerainty in person and redefine their tributary relations as a matter of their own security. Lax tributary relations transformed into stable diplomatic ties, unofficial border trade became codified in new trade routes from Yunnan to Burma and the Tai kingdoms, expanding the sources of income for Theravada lowland kingdoms (STUART-FOX 2003, 55-57).

The Mongols made clear already in the name Yuan, "the first beginning", that they do not feel bound by the previous order on its Southern border or any historical precedence. Their behavior was a new form of rule, in which everyone shall submit who was perceived weaker than them. Vietnam wanted to maintain a stable situation and refused the Mongols to pass through its territory to attack the Song from the south in 1257, only provoking an invasion, siege and sacking of their capital Thăng Long. The Vietnamese troops and the rough climate had the Mongolian troops

recede. In 1267, the Mongols demanded the personal submission of the Vietnamese rulers, to keep his sons in Beijing as hostages, and to appoint a Mongol governor – de facto reversing Vietnamese independence, nullifying their autonomy and plunging the state into an identity crisis. The court therefore commissioned Lê Văn Hưu to compile a history of Vietnam to determine the Vietnamese identity as long-standing and congruent with the Vietnamese state in its current borders. The purpose was to establish a record of autonomy that was not up for renegotiation with the Yuan with the effect that the Vietnamese cultural identity became stronger in its bordering effect as being separate from that of China (WOMACK 2006, 119, 123-124, 248-249; STUART-FOX 2003, 59). Lê Văn Hưu's work reconciled the two poles of reliance on the Chinese model of governance with a distinctively separate identity by demonstrating that Vietnam's intellectual horizon is within and matches the one of China while the essence of identity remains different. It was also the starting point for the national myth of a longstanding Vietnamese identity coinciding with a Vietnamese territorial state striving for independence, unification and consolidation within its borders. In a sense, Lê Văn Hưu inscribed a geographic circumference to an identity onto which he projected a state and the boundaries of the political community it holds (GAT/YAKOBSON 2013, 109). In the end, it didn't help. On the one hand, the Tran dynasty was falling apart with powerful landed oligarchs challenging court and administration. In addition in 1285 and again from 1287 to 1289 the Yuan launched invasions of Vietnam again – not force it into submission but to punish Champa. The border was violated and the capital was seized because of a third-party conflict, so mobilization efforts were undertaken easily and a counter-attack in combination with a hostile, disease-ridden climate had the Yuan troops pushed back behind the frontier. While these expeditions helped to fortify the autonomy of Đại Việt within its borders, it also sent expensive tribute missions to Beijing, to re-establish tributary relations and accepting suzerainty within the Yuan world order (STUART-FOX 2003 60-61; WOMACK 2006 125). In 1279, the Yuan dynasty wanted to install a more subservient king in Thăng Long, yet the mission and the Mongol-sanctioned pretender to the throne were captured. Other missions to submit Đại Việt failed as well, for example in 1287. In total there were three invasions and numerous tribute offerings from the Tran dynasty, so that finally Đại Việt's resistance as well as diplomatic deference to Beijing helped stabilizing the border (WOMACK 2006 123). Đại Việt's challenges with the direct threat from the Yuan abated for a while as it had to manage its relations with the Cham kingdom to the South. Several attacks from there in the 14th century provided Ho Quy Ly the opportunity to topple the Tran dynasty and establish the Ho dynasty, but the state it-

self remained stable. Confucianist statecraft allowed a continued administration regardless of military circumstances, and the rivalry between the military and the Confucian literati kept both of these groups in check, so that especially at the border strong local units existed headed by civilian and military chiefs. Ho also curtailed the privileges of the landed gentry, reigned into Buddhism and distributed land. While being popular and setting up stable structures for the Vietnamese state, he also provided a pretext for the Ming to invade Vietnam in 1407 (LIEBERMAN 1993, 511-513; WOMACK 2006, 125).

Regarding Theravada Southeast Asia, the Yuan first dispatched an envoy to king Narathihapate of Pagan, which was quite unprecedented as there were only two previous tributary missions in 1004 and 1106 at the time of which Pagan's gifts were seen as tribute and the kingdom ranked as an outer barbarian state in the Chinese universe. Consequently, the Yuan required a renewal of the tributary relation after it took over, which the Burmese interpreted in the Theravada-sense of the concept, meaning it would be drawn closely into the Chinese rule as a provider of necessary goods and manpower. These missions were not aimed at territorial extension, but to increase stability at the Sino-Burmese border by bringing Pagan into the Yuan tributary network and to force Pagan to increase its efforts against refugees from Yuan rule in the frontier region. The refusal of tribute, the ignored request to contain anti-Yuan forces in the mountains, the assassination of the Chinese delegation and the invasion of vassals who already symbolically submitted to Chinese suzerainty – all means to protect the autonomy and sovereignty of the court by upholding the symbolic frontier – led to an invasion in 1277. The mixed result – no official tribute mission, no punishment of Narathihapate, no destruction of the capital – led to another invasion in 1287, during which Narathihapate's sons poisoned him, took over the throne and offered to pay tribute. This gave Pagan some breathing space in a more or less maintained status quo at the border and in relation to its own tributaries for 80 more years (STUART-FOX 2003 60-61; HALL 1984, 66; YIAN 2010, 144). However, it was the start of the decline of Pagan. The particular structure of finances with government donations to the sangha who was essentially in control of productive lands, left a Pagan at the time with incredible riches but an empty royal treasury. The contradiction between this-worldly needs of state protection and otherworldly merit-making left the state in a precarious situation regarding border protection and administrative depth. This in turn caused a competition among the elites for labor, which strengthened lesser centers in the mandala at the cost of central power and control that could easily be attributed to waning karmic powers and justifying internal rebellions, which weakened the state further (BENTLEY 1986, 284).

The policy of invasions did not lead to any real benefits for the Mongols, and ended with the death of Kubilai Khan also as lack of pastures for horse-breeding didn't allow for massive campaigns – the competitive advantage the Mongols had (FINDLAY/O'ROURKE 2007 104-105). The tribute based Pax Mongolica in East and Southeast Asia changed the nature of relations. The governor of Yunnan was responsible for interactions with frontier chieftains, Tai principalities, borderstates and Pagan. The conquests and the new structure of interactions facilitated cross-border communications and interactions (YANG 2004 313).

This was particularly the case for regions and states that remained beyond the reach of central powers for a long time, such as the Tarup, who during the approach of the first Mongol invasion first started enlisting military support from the Shan just to defer to the Yuan's suzerainty, voluntarily opting to forge closer ties to Yunnan than Myanmar. The resulting muang enclosed Burmese, Mongol, Yunnanese, Chinese, Turks, re-defining the ethnicity of Tarup to the relationship with the geographic area as it being located beyond the boundary and suzerainty of Burma. Therefore, the Mongol invasion catalyzed a new, rather imagined, boundary in northern Burma that was not marked by military posts or border contracts (YIAN 2010, 142, 151-152).

At the same time as the Khmer power declined and left a power vacuum after Jayavarman VII, more and more of smaller Tai principalities, new or already existing muangs, began to form larger kingdoms, gradually filling what the retreating Khmer-power left open. They seemed to accept Mongol suzerainty, and charismatic rulers formed larger kingdoms within the reach of their mandalas. The Yuan invasion simply catalyzed this process. The predecessor of Lan Na, Ngoenyang so fell under the dominion of Chiang Hung in the 1250s and King Mangrai, conquering Haripunchai, the second predecessor, so formed the kingdom of Lan Na. The kingdom with a capital in Chiang Mai, adopted Theravada Buddhist ideals of kingship, understood its territorial reach as normative rather than prescriptive within fixed boundaries, and so added another mandala-layer over the borderland. The second Yuan invasion of Pagan in 1287 accelerated this formation even more as three powerful Tai princes of the frontier region formed a united front against the Mongols. When the muang Chiang Hung fell to the Mongols, king Mangrai retook the city. Another Mongol invasion in 1301 failed, border squirmishes continued between that polity and the Mongols so that only acknowledgement of the Yuan court and tributary missions could placate the situation. In the longer term, also the decline of Pagan increased the frontier-area as more Shan migrated southwards setting up their own power centers under the rule of king Magadu/Wareru, yet the internal quarrels divided this territory time and again – increasing its

structural essence of a frontier region (STUART-FOX 2003 63-65; MAW 2015, 2; BENTLEY 1986, 283; TARLING 2004, 44).

In the Chinese side of the frontier region the strong degree of autonomy the borderland-states enjoyed became so reversed from the 13th century onward and the black box of the border region became a much more structured affair with greater oversight from the Yuan through a civil administration with native chieftains who as intermediaries had to modulate resistance towards Yuan rule through tax farming and military labor. The established system should later help the Ming dynasty to expand settlement policies and military garrisons to develop an extraction apparatus for the political ambitions of the empire (CAFFREY 2009 192-193).

Given the new administration, chieftains followed different strategies. Cheli engaged at first in tributary relations, but later on fought Mongol troops only to be crushed in battle. Sipsongpanna on the other hand – used to navigate the treacherous power patterns in the frontier – split rule, paid tribute, and ceded multiple sovereignty to get protection (GUNN 2011, 42-43; DAVIS 2003, 184). However, except political control, direct war and occupation proved difficult for the Mongols in Southeast Asia as the bedrock of their army was the cavalry and pastures for horses became rare in Southwestern China. Control worked best with the fortification of the Chinese administrative practices through *simuren*, outside experts from Central Asia, Tibet or Persia, to administer military, civil and financial affairs. These new Muslim settlers strengthened the already existing Muslim community that descended from Muslim soldiers who helped crushing a Tibetan rebellion in 801 and never returned. As the sedentary population was their tax base, Mongol rulers tried to enhance productivity, increasing the territorial reach of control through transport and irrigation infrastructure as well as strict currency control through paper money (FINDLEY/O’ROURKE 2007, 105-106; YEGAR 1966, 73-74).

These events had a great impact on the border area. China expanded its direct control south further into Yunnan, opening the area for a new influx of Chinese migrants and provoking an exodus of locals for whom the pressure became too big – either into the mountains, the frontier area or even further into Southeast Asia. Continued Chinese power projection, albeit by an ethnically Mongol emperor on the throne, into Đại Việt and Pagan was made possible, as the Yuan dynasty did not need to fear a threat from its northern border. The standstill Đại Việt and Pagan achieved was deceptive as a new attack could happen anytime – the only factor guaranteeing some degree of stability was the recognition of suzerainty and sending tribute missions to become invested as a vassal king (STUART-FOX 2003 66-67).

The Mongol idea of power was centered not on territory but over people, so that sovereignty was jurisdictional rather than territorial. It was necessary to win the loyalty of the people for tax payments, corvée labor and military service, so that the new dynasty fostered patron-client relations with native chieftains of the conquered areas. Indigenous rule continued, yet the relationships intensified with the center laying the groundwork for the Ming to switch to a more territory-based concept of statehood with geopolitical boundaries and territorially organized government offices. By tying the people closer to the center, the Yuan provided the Ming a pretext to also pursue a territorial consolidation of the area through conquest and colonization (CAFFREY 2009, 191).

The effects of the Mongol conquest on the border was primarily a hardening and consolidation of the Chinese grip over the frontier, which in turn pushed the fluidity and flexibility further south, where it concentrated and spilled over to Southeast Asia. There, the power-vacuum left by declining Pagan and Khmer, soaked up chiefs and Tai settlers like sponges, increasing the fluidity on that side of the frontier area.

2.1.5.2 The advent of Tai principalities

With the growing power vacuum in the mainland, Tai principalities began to expand from the frontier southwards, and expanded the structural properties of the frontier area into the lowlands. Intensifying attacks and greater inner consolidation of authority towards the end of the 13th century became a danger for weakened lowland entities that relied on chieftains for their security and access to resources. The lowland states made it easy for these new statelets to attain their autonomy, as the greater the mandalas grew, the more diverse they became, the more resonance anti-centralizing forces achieved. Apart from that, the increased cost of warfare and the pressure from the Yuan dynasty emptied resources to find a military answer to the threat from the chieftains. The polycentrism of many overlapping mandalas of the frontier-region became replicated in the lowlands until the 16th century, expanding the properties of the frontier areas on that side of the border. Amidst the Tai incursion and the territorial fragmentation of the Khmer and Mon kingdoms, the Shan – as part of the Tais – set up their own principalities in Upper Burma, which they invaded regularly from the mid-14th century to the 16th century, diverting military and political resources to the north and increasing fragmentation in the Burmese core-area. A greater hybridization took place, as Tais adopted notions such as the Cakkravati from the Khmer and Mon rulers. This was not at all a peaceful time. Muangs themselves were situated in a steep hierarchy repre-

senting a political space that was slowly fading out at the fringes and overlapping with other spaces that could be drawn into the mandala by acquiring its sacral objects or symbols of royal power. As before, power over people was more important than control of territory, so often raids took place to acquire slaves for political legitimacy and expansion. Constant warfare, limitation of resources and environmental degradation intensified the conflicts as they disrupted the agricultural cycles around which political stability rested. Only in the 15th century, the first Toungoo Dynasty managed to get a grip on the territory again and centralize it under one king, while central mainland Southeast Asia until the territory of Đại Việt remained a mosaic of overlapping muangs (GUNN 2011 58-59, 64-65; LIEBERMAN 2011, 954-955; ZHANG et al. 2007, 403, 405; BLANTON/FARGHER 2008, 56; TAYLOR 2009, 19). In Đại Việt, which actually had to fend off territorial integration attempts by the Yuan, the effects of the Tais was less pronounced, also as it was more compact and had a tighter grip on its frontier provinces. One pronounced change in Đại Việt at that time was the weakening of Mahayana as a state ideology, making way for a strong Confucian ideology (LIEBERMAN, 2011 937).

The new face of the mainland was – except for Đại Việt – a rag rug of a myriad of Tai principalities and muangs founded wherever the Tai newcomers encountered a power vacuum to settle in. Pagan tried to alleviate the pressure from these muangs through administrative reforms, as did Sukothai, but being strongly set in the ideas of the classical Theravada-kingdom, any challenge from smaller, subordinate entities was seen as insubordination, to which they had to respond. This set off a vicious cycle of centralization of authority, disintegration, warfare and centralization again. In such a climate, states like Sipsongpanna, Chiang Sen, Phayao, Nan, Lan Na or Lan Xang could flourish and expand their grip on people and territory. These states still followed the Hindu rituals of statehood, yet their kings styled themselves more and more as Buddhas or bodhisattvas instead of devarajas (EVANS/OSBORNE 2002 7-8; LIEBERMAN 1993 511-513).

Lan Xang illustrates the case of such cycle in a new-found vacuum shaped by power-transmitting social structures. Lao-speakers north of Ayutthaya were all subsumed under Lao, but not as a minor civilization. Fa Ngum, credited with the foundation of Lan Xang was a product of the frontier-mandalas, growing up and being raised in several major centers as well as married to a Khmer princess of his muang as a sign of the strong ties he had with that polity. When in 1351 Fa Ngum was dispatched to the Khorat plateau to re-capture it for the Khmers, he enlarged his army and marched on to Muang Sua and established his mandala there. The adoption of Buddhism in the area when it was still a vassal muang of the Lan Na and Sukothai mandalas surely helped to

venture into the space when the first Lao kingdom was founded as the mandala of Lan Xang. State authority was transported through reiterations of rituals around Buddhist but also other symbols connected with the dynastic rulers and illustrating the symbiosis of the sangha and worldly rulers (EVANS/OSBORNE 2002, 9-10). Where these rituals happened, there was the state and the state was a reflection of the divine structure with the palace in the middle of the cosmic axis and thus the centre of power. The state embodied by the king at the apex of the social hierarchy submitted to the Dhamma, Sangha and Buddha who in turn transported his authority and ensured loyalty of the realm, thus bringing the space into a hierarchical order within a religious context. The mutual reliance of Sangha and king granted a degree of unity within the state, especially given the Sangha's monopoly on education that solidified the social order. This metaphysical connotation of power and the temporal precariousness of authority did not allow for a spatial border as the reach of power was not guaranteed and waxed and waned with the recognised moral prowess of the king, who was responsible for the well-being of his subjects by controlling natural forces through ritual. So, even though territorial units were bound to the central state by ritually enforced ties, these were not fixated and especially lower-hierarchy entities could easily defect. This was particularly true for the hill-tribes, that were only indirectly administered through the king's power and whose districts formed quasi-autonomous fiefdoms. The king formed more a ritual authority, whose essence instilled the world, and less an administrative power, that is enclosed in borders. Myths buttressed the exercise of power in this structure and helped establishing territorial claims (STUART-FOX 1983 428-429, 431-433; HAYAMI 2001, 177). Rituals, Buddhist as well as elements of indianized elements of kingship and non-Lao indigenous beliefs in the rituals, bound these claims at the margin by way of reiteration to the center as they solidified the social order and consolidated the power of the king. As the kingdom faced material constraints and never could manage the other Tai kingdoms, rituals and especially Buddhism were a necessity to create a unified kingdom and to give local communities the means to extract labor for public works such as dams. Economics and prosperity were so supporting the ritual connection of the Court with its vassals. In addition, war and plundering helped gaining slaves, increasing population under control and therefore the tax base. Given the geographic situation, wealth accumulated more in the South around Vientiane so that also over time the political focus shifted away from Luang Phrabang (EVANS/OSBORNE 2002 12-13). To attract overland trade, Fa Ngum also incorporated Chinese elements in his court. This had a unifying effect over the depending muangs, aristocracies and chieftains, placing them into a strict hierarchy strengthened by

the Sangha whose power on the ground were very secular images of the royal powers projecting the king as the guarantor of welfare of the state. Through the dichotomy of inclusion into the world order of Lan Xang while setting up a strict hierarchical differentiation between center and peripheries, Lan Xang managed to claim wide territories but its actual control remained weak. Being able to border meant for Lan Xang to be able to generate support for the Theravada Buddhist ideas of kingship (STUART-FOX 1983 429-431; GUNN 2011, 60-61; LEE 2011, 63). The so forged boundaries fluctuated with the power of the center as well as the individual powers of the local chiefs. The resulting instability provided many opt-out options as there was no centralized bureaucracy and territorial holdings were more a function of claims that actually exercised powers. So, local chiefs could easily opt out from the mandala or expand their rule as every local ruler could design himself as a universal king. Whether an area on the margins constituted a border or not was as much due to the goodwill of the chiefs to transfer their allegiance to Luang Prabang as it was due to attraction and fluctuating administrative and military power of the center (STUART-FOX 1983, 434).

Fa Ngum, despite establishing a powerful kingdom, lost the loyalty of his vassals due to his abuse of power and excessive tributary demands until he was deposed in 1374 and replaced by his son Unhoen. He in turn was more adapt to manage a mandala and better aware of the importance of personal connections and prowess as foundation of political structures in this area (EVANS/OSBORNE 2002 13-14). Several crises of succession followed until King Xaiyna Chakhat in 1442 appointed his sons to senior administrative positions and introduced a line of succession. The personalized structure of rule stayed in place, bolstering the role of the sangha, but weakened control over the fringes to the same extent as other states grew, among which the Lê dynasty in Vietnam who invaded Luang Prabang. The inherent instability and the pressure from the margins created conflicts, in which China stepped up as an arbitrator for its tributary state at the southern frontier. So helped China Lan Xang with diplomatic petitions after a Vietnamese invasion in 1479, partly because of feelings of duty for the vassal, partly to show strength to motivate a controlled frontier environment to its south. China tried to interfere as a moral example and instructor for good relations between warring parties, and never sent troops to support Lan Xang. It was up to the king's son to retake Lan Xang whose successors shifted away from China's influence and increased ties with Ayudhya and raising a cultural, political and commercial border vis-à-vis China and Vietnam (STUART-FOX 2003 92-93; EVANS/OSBORNE 2002, 14-15).

Due to a carefully calibrated show of internal strength, the use of tributary relations as arbitration mechanism and fulfilling their role as guardian of the frontier zone, Lan Xang and the other new states that managed to consolidate their reign existed well into the 16th century or even further. The rise of Theravada-Buddhism reinforced the adoption of the mandala-principle as state form and the need for flexibility. Fluid power and shifting relationships, which should stabilize again in the next cycle (STUART-FOX 2003 69-71; HALPERN/TINSMAN 1966, 500).

2.1.5.3 The Ming dynasty's relation to its borders

With the transfer of power from the Yuan to the Ming dynasty in 1368, emperor Yongle continued what the Yuan started by projecting power to the southern border. Switching from control over people as jurisdictional sovereignty to control over land as territorial sovereignty, the Ming dynasty needed to find a way to increase political influence in the southwestern frontier without resorting to direct rule for financial and logistics reasons. While the Yongle emperor still relied on the *tusi*-system, he also sent three hundred thousand troops to Yunnan and set up military colonies to eradicate Yuan sympathizers and to re-incorporate Yunnan. This mission found its end in 1380 when 250.000 soldiers took Kunming and Dali, rooting out Yuan sympathizers and overthrowing non-Chinese principalities who refused to accept Chinese suzerainty. Such was the case for the Tai principality of Luchuan and other adjacent principalities, who previously were not claimed by the throne, but now were used to extend the southern frontier of the empire. In terms of rationalizing these actions, the court deemed them as appropriate punishments for not recognizing the suzerainty of China (STUART-FOX 2003 78-79; CAFFREY 2009, 191-192). The Ming so also prepared the ground to integrate the southwestern areas into the imperial economic system, as with settlers also means of taxation and extraction entered the frontier region. On the one hand, this fostered the bordering exercise between China and the rest, on the other hand, the *tusis* had the possibility to adopt new Chinese techniques while avoiding assimilation as political pressure of direct rule was still fairly weak and autonomy was granted, despite in a fluctuating state depending on wealth and military strength of the respective *tusis*. Titles bestowed upon the *tusis* reflected size and strength; civilian *tusis* were self-supporting bureaucratic institutions in areas with adequate economic infrastructure, whereby military *tusis* were set up beyond provincial boundaries, where economic production was low (CAFFREY 2009, 193-194; HERMAN 2006 136; DAVIS 2003, 185; BRAY 2007, 216). The Chinese could rely on their mastery of

gunpowder for their expansion, but the further they expanded the more this knowledge proliferated among the Shans, Lan Na and Đại Việt (YANG 2004, 320). The most efficient way to solidify a grip on territory was still settling it. Many immigrating soldiers settled down, reinforcing Chinese control but also creating clashes with the Miao/Hmong and Yao in the region, leading to new military responses. County by county, more subjects got under Han administration, furthering direct rule over the southern frontier. The Ming continued with a divide-and-rule strategy vis-à-vis the Tai polities to push its influence further into the frontier region. The increased troop presence in Yunnan strengthened the distinction between China and the barbarian lands too, chieftains were closer drawn into the Chinese administration by becoming “pacification superintendencies”, and their heads had the status of Chinese ministers, tasked with keeping peace in the frontier region. This applied to Lan Xang, Lan Na, Sipsong Panna and even Ava in Myanmar. (STUART-FOX 2003, 80-81; SCOTT 2009 138-139; FERGUSON 2012, 8).

Under the Ming dynasty, the Chinese patterns of state formation were refined and strengthened, to protect China from invasions or internal conflicts. On the surface, these patterns of strengthened control and projection of power of an inward-looking state helped with the state-building and expansion efforts, but also increased the tensions between central control and the danger of secession or striving for autonomy on its fringes, especially when requirements for military service and taxation got too high. In such a case, tax avoidance by finding new patrons and new alliances were an option, only leading to greater projection of power from the center through the establishment of monopolies on key commodities, stationing of troops, bureaucratic expansion through household registration and the introduction of more military farms (BLANTON/FARGHER 2008, 81-82; cf. FRENCH 2017, 106-107).

As trade was only allowed as part of tribute missions, officially recorded interaction through the frontier-land diminished during the Ming era, especially as only three ports were allowed to accept foreign traders. Kunming was the port to clear tribute missions from mainland Southeast Asia, Guangzhou from maritime lands. The stronger emphasis on ritual and formalism during such missions and determination of products and frequency of these missions meant a virtual ban on trade so that the smuggling economy flourished, providing chieftains a profitable source of income – much to the chagrin of the Ming dynasty who tried with force to work against this perceived threat of its autonomy and control over frontiers (STUART-FOX 2003, 75; GUNN 2011, 106). Yunnan formed a power-hub that managed the relations, all which led to a gradual codification of the border as a field of spatial – in addition to civilizational – separation. Methods includ-

ed the appointment of Chinese officials as advisors to local rulers as well as the creation of state and military farms. Especially regarding Đại Việt, this behavior helped strengthening an identity space and a reformulation of its relationship with the Ming court (WOMACK 2006, 249). The shift from Tran to the Ho dynasty and the establishment of tributary relations led to recognition at first, yet as the Tran-remnants managed to convince the Ming court that the Ho dynasty was not the legitimate ruler and that Ho Quy Ly murdered the legitimate successor to the throne, the Ming attacked Vietnam in 1406. Other reasons stated were an encroachment and annexation of Chinese territory by Da Viet and an attack on Chinese vassals and that the new dynasty disturbed the order it was supposed to maintain on China's southern frontier. The capture of the capital and the killing of the Ho Quan Ly allowed China to simply invade Vietnam. The remnants of the Tran court petitioned the incorporation of Đại Việt into China, so the Ming dynasty had a pretext to erase the border and incorporate Đại Việt as the province Jiaozhi. As in the first major thrust southward with the annexation of Yunnan, Chinese administrators took over in Đại Việt and managed the province as any other Chinese province, while the Vietnamese intelligentsia was quickly incorporated into the imperial service. However, the politico-military eradication of the border did not win over hearts, minds or the already established and codified Vietnamese identity among the general populace, which faced with high taxes and corvée demands just waited to expel the Chinese invaders. This eventually happened under the leadership of Lê Lợi , pushing the Chinese into the frontier regions until they were forced to conclude a face-saving peace agreement in 1428. With the border restored, Lê Lợi founded the Le dynasty based on the principles of autonomy as they were established already during the defense against the Mongols. Lê Lợi not only gave Đại Việt a new dynasty but also a new national hero and the confidence that refusing to surrender and dragging occupants into protracted wars will safeguard its autonomy. The status as tributary found recognition by the Ming court, Lê Lợi could rule the country as a vassal, and by submitting to Chinese suzerainty ensuring Đại Việt's independence and the integrity of its borders in a stable co-existence. This had the advantage that the Ming could save its face by accepting Vietnam as a tributary state and not the shame of seeing it as a lost province leaving the Chinese orbit (STUART-FOX 2003, 81-82; 89-90; WOMACK 2006, 6, 25, 127-128; ANDERSON 2005 4-5).

These episodes show how the Ming tried to exploit disparities in capacities and to play differences in interest and perception to its advantage. However, even though the Ming managed to occupy Vietnam for twenty years, it couldn't simply swallow it but had to grudgingly

acknowledge Vietnam's statehood, border interests and autonomy. It was a turning point for China's self-perception as well since the failed occupation brought the boundaries of China back to where they have been since 939 and reviving the concept of frontier areas outside real territorial control (WOMACK 2006, 17-18; 119).

Lê Lợi's plea for Chinese recognition and Lê Thánh Tông's adoption of Chinese governance practices helped smoothing the transition, fostering political legitimacy and the acceptance of Vietnam's autonomy as well as it stabilized border relations and fostered trust. The established order also provided a guidance framework for future rulers to keep relations stable by recognizing Vietnam's and China's respective places in the world order, embodied by reintroduced (Neo-) Confucianist institutions, traditions and rituals that allowed for a more or less peaceful coexistence, as long as they were respected and correctly executed. The similarity and the strong focus on ritual execution so supported the establishment of a strict border rooted in culture and the emphasizing of difference between China and its tributaries, in particular Vietnam. (WOMACK 2006, 250-251; STUART-FOX 2003 73-74; HALL 1984. 65; GUNN 2011 68-69; GOSCHA 2016, 22). China honored the deal until 1788 while on both sides of the border questions popped up regarding the need of expansion and whether a state should be rather conscious of its limits and respect borders and competing claims to civilization. These considerations led to a rethinking from expansion to retraction and far more inward-looking policies, essentially setting a border between China and the rest of the southern states – be them vassals or not. The inward turn was necessary to align national agendas and self-perception with power-capabilities and limits and the cultural reach of the empire (PERDUE 2015 214; WOMACK 2006, 129)

Through the cultural aspects in the inward-turn and its territorial limitations and bordering practices, the Ming emperor managed to re-impose the Chinese world order again with China at the apex as supreme civilization and the emperor as man of greatest virtue. Limitations on trade, the fight against smuggling and bans on travelling were meant to reduce contacts and pronounce imperial control in the borderlands. The re-invigoration and bureaucratization of tributary relations formalized the distinction between the Chinese and non-Chinese states, whereby the latter are responsible for a harmonious existence of the former, if they want to avoid punishment to restore the order envisaged by China (STUART-FOX 2003, 78). This became particularly visible in the Ming's policies towards Yunnan, on which the dynasty tightened its grip through massive resettlement and migration policies and replacing chieftains with Han-Chinese merchants in managing transboundary trade and relations to chieftains beyond the frontier. The special position of Yun-

nan and its previous states Dali and Nanzhao at the overlap of the Theravada state-system and the Chinese imperial system so gradually phased out by displacing the Southeast Asian mandala system for the benefit of a harder border defined by the Chinese imperial world order (YANG 2004 314-315; CHANG 2011, 458). Together with the case of Vietnam, Yunnan was the exception to the traditional tributary system as in both cases symbolic submission was not enough to satisfy the throne and neither could find acceptable bilateral relations with China. In addition to the 21-year colonization of Vietnam (1406-1427), all major Yunnan polities came under direct rule of the Ming before 1444, which broke territories into administrative units, appointed reliable local rulers and gradually through these inward-looking policies hardened the border in a cultural-administrative way also by measures how to “other” the people at the frontiers (GUNN 2011 103-104, 110-111). Tools included religion, language, writing and rituals, but also the discrediting of Tibetan influenced religious life, which was a strong feature in the Chinese Southwest, for it was a main conduit for trade, exchange and communication with Tibet, even after the conquest of the Mongols (WELLENS 2010; 6).

The Ming in their early rule so made remarkable progress in determining and defining a cultural border through a mix of military exploration, trade policy, appropriation of space through migration and curbing the freedom of chieftains and citizens alike (SIU/LIU 2015, 67-68; GIERSCH 2011 41). Like that, the Ming made large incursions on the northern side of the frontier area, reducing the permeability and the heretofore-existing fluidity by setting it into the service of the Ming’s imperial interests. Attempts to go even further south by attacking Ava for the release of the Shan-chief of Hsenwi – a strategically important chieftain right between Ava and China – found their end in a battle that the Ming lost, preserving the status quo of relations on the southern side of the frontier region (YIAN 2010 147-148).

On the Vietnamese border, despite Đại Việt having achieved a relatively stable recognition of autonomy and territorial integrity with a border pacified from the point of view of the centers, the issues didn’t stop: the border remained an area of opposition, and the usurpers of the Mac-clan exploited it to set up their alternative state to Vietnam up to the point when they were able to overthrow the throne in 1527. They managed to retain the frontier area as their own territory and refuge even after 1592 pro-Le forces of the Nguyễn and Trinh clans managed to drive the out of the Hanoi/Thăng Long. The Mac continued using the frontier area as refuge and power base under protection of the Ming dynasty. Vietnam entered a phase of fragmentation with a Mac-stronghold in the North, Trinh in the heartland of the Red River delta and the Nguyễn in the south.

All of them operated under the assumption of an independent Vietnam with its own Neo-Confucianist institutions of statehood while for China it was important to maintain a balancing factor along the frontier-region to keep them from becoming too strong (WHITMORE 1997, 670-671).

What this first cycle of borderland-formation shows, is how asymmetrical patterns of international relations among charter states and between the Chinese empire, bound on levels of economics, religion and political transfers forged first a stable area, in which central lowland powers and empires laid claims, but autonomy and legitimacy of chieftains trumped all demands for total deference. Already from the beginning, the frontier was the critical prism in which state-building and integration processes manifested themselves. The result was an equilibrium determined by institutional and political limits to state expansion and mediated by merchants and local elites who perfected the art of manipulating expectations of the functioning of the frontier area. Concepts like multiple sovereignties as well as the Chinese and Vietnamese tributary system kept larger, more organized states like China and Vietnam at bay while guaranteeing autonomy of border-chieftains. It is important to understand that both states and the frontier area itself maintained this equilibrium in a complex web of interdependencies with the development and issues of charter states and empires. When these determinants began to change, also the frontier area adapted its shape and structure. Mongol and Ming incursions pushed the Chinese frontier further south, better integration and stronger networks to imperial centers hardened the borders. Territorial consolidation, expanded bureaucratic control dissolved existing networks of chiefs and placed them firmly into the Chinese power orbit. The fluid borderlands became more hybridized, as China pushed its boundaries deeper into the periphery. At the same time in Southeast Asia, the frontier character disseminated further inland with the power-vacuums the interregna of the first charter states left to fill. New polities with new networks emerged, new mandalas competed for control over productive forces, wars, immigration and conquest destabilized the hitherto stable equilibrium. This interregnum, in which the frontier area drastically changed in shape, scope and functioning lasted until the 15th century, when the situation stabilized around the frontier again and new powerful states like the Restored Toungoo in Myanmar, the Chakri dynasty in Thailand, and the concentration of Confucianism in Vietnam's state structure mirrored the fixation of the frontier of the Ming dynasty. The next cycle shows how chieftains at the boundaries and people inhabiting these areas were marginalized as result of the state-building process and used as con-

scripts and slaves to tie them physically to a central state in addition to the nominal belonging through multiple tributary relationships.

2.2 Cycle 2: 1450s-1600: Second consolidation of restored empires and Tai states

After the turmoil of roughly the 14th and beginning of the 15th century, the border region found itself in a new era of stabilization and consolidation. This was mainly thanks to administrative, cultural and economic techniques of the restored charter states that helped filling up the power vacuum that the Mongols left and further territorialize their rule.

With the challenges of the growing Tai states, confrontations between China and Vietnam and the proliferation of small states required as of the end of the 14th century a new pattern of state-building and centralization effects. In this second phase of stability, the states were stronger integrated in terms of administration and culture as well as regarding the world-system. The stability and prosperity coming with it allowed the larger lowland centers to grow and substantiate their claims on the upland and border regions (LIEBERMAN 1993, 481). The interplay of Chinese administrative practices as well as measures taken in the lowland-states of Southeast Asia to restore or maintain their charter empires marked the processes of this era of consolidation and stabilization in the border region. Apart from the notable exception of Vietnam, the stabilization of the border region was a matter of lowland or imperial policies such as further centralization under the Ming dynasty and with it demarcation and categorization efforts of the lands in the south and a more structured use of the borderlands as buffer zones (SHIN 2006 150-151, 156-157). This does not mean that the border area was under full control, but rather that relations stabilized with entities at the frontier as lowland states came to terms that they pose obstacles to further expansion (SCOTT 2009, 129). The spread of the Tai-states, Mongol invasions, intra-state wars and reformed Ming policies regarding the border left the area in a messy state, where famines, bandits and refugees were not uncommon. The idea of control over people in Burma led to ever expanding raids, especially against Ayutthaya, binding resources that could have been used to exert control on the sparsely populated northern frontier. Internal mis-structuring was also responsible for imbalances, especially in the distribution between royal and monastic resources in terms of people and capital, inherently putting limits on expansion efforts or border-control. Upper Burma, as we shall see did not find peace and stability from the Mongol invasions to the 15th century, scattering people in unclear patterns of dynastic reaches with power-vacuums in the lowland that took until the 16th century to morph into the First Toungoo dynasty (CHARNEY 2007, 227; LIEBERMAN/BUCKLEY 2012, 1078-1079). Vietnam, despite recognized by the Ming dynasty as a distinct state in 1373 and the prohibition of the Hongwu emperor to invade the country, saw

this seemingly hard physical boundary violated from 1407 to 1427, from which it arose not only with a restored hard boundary but also with its own problems of dynastic struggles, civil war and secessions (SHIN 2007, 101-102). Vietnam plunged into a constant chaos during this cycle, driving population to the core-state for safety from natural catastrophes and war as well as to the fringes of power to seek refuge from the civil war and avoid incorporation by the newly minted Mac dynasty in the 16th century. Rebellions and resistance was the result with the secession of a major entity in the north called Chua Bau and a complicated fight between the noble Trinh and Nguyễn families on behalf of the Le dynasty against the Mac dynasty in the lowlands, strapping the state of abilities to govern its borders, which in turn managed their unexpected autonomy quite well (SCOTT 2009, 163-164).

On the other side of the frontier, rampant banditry, marauding soldiers and independent chieftains led to a revision of the border-policies of the Ming emperors in the 15th century to reinforce ties to local chieftains and demarcate the traits of the cultural border in stricter terms, especially regarding Vietnam (SCOTT 2009, 146; SHIN 2006, 94-95, 112).

The 15th and 16th centuries are characterized by a certain degree of retreat of the Southeast Asian states from the borderlands, which however still emerged stronger and more centralized than their predecessors were thanks to the introduction of firearms, the development of modern military technologies and strategies as well as bureaucratic means of control. Ming China on the northern end of the border tightened its grip over the local chieftains and introduced military and administrative measures to increase the territorial presence of the empire. The picture and development that emerge around the 15th century was thus a highly centralized Vietnam relying on Confucian statecraft after the Ming occupation, which later ended in a fissure between rivaling noble families fighting over power, wealth, trade and technology, leaving the border space wide open for autonomy quests. In Burma, after bitter infighting and protracted stand-offs the Ava empire emerged just to be taken over by the First Toungoo dynasty – all somehow stable but riddled with problems of resource distribution between crown and sangha, eventually leading to crop failures starting in the 17th century as the court was no longer able to command enough manpower for maintaining irrigation channels (REID 1990, 642-643; 645-646).

In terms of rule and control, this cycle is much more concerned with geostrategic and geopolitical considerations than the era of state-inception. The determinants of this cycle were therefore first the path to stability in the borderlands after the decline and restauration of lowland states, the but-tressing of absolutist power with new means of control and ordering both in the center and at the

margins, as well as the inherent stability in a fragmented borderscape in which the different entities mutually kept each other in check. The emergence of the powerful Toungoo dynasty consolidated the Mainland Southeast Asian statescape by swallowing Lan Na, parts of Lan Xang, the Shan states and Ayutthaya. Vietnam was fighting with its own problems, providing many opportunities for independence of its northern territories. The wars as well as the stable state-framework that emerged after the conquests of Toungoo and the consolidation of Vietnamese fragmentation in the northern border area, led Ming-China to become the decisive agent shaping the borderland to its liking. The stable new formation of the border area remained until the commotions of the dynasty change from Ming to Qing.

2.2.1 Parameters of consolidation: Burmese warfare and administrative centering

Consolidation was in itself a messy and complicated process. At first, all states contracted. The assassination of the Mongol vassal Narathihapate 1287 led to the secession of nearly all regions of the country, further moving down south only led to a power vacuum in Upper Burma, where three brothers from Myinsaing became the de-facto leaders. Kyawswa, a son of the late Narathihapate, became king of Pagan, yet still lacked control of the brothers ruling in the north. The division of the country came to an end in 1297 when further consolidation efforts provided the Myinsaing-brothers with a power base that the Yuan dynasty couldn't ignore anymore. In a proven divide-and-rule strategy, Temür Khan recognized Kyawswa as the sole king of Burma with the brothers in Upper Burma as vice kings, who in turn killed Kyawswa in 1299 and founded the short-lived state of Myinsaing under the main influence of the youngest brother Thihatu. They could fend off a Mongol invasion in 1301 and despite Kumara Kassapa, a son of Kyawswa was considered the rightful king of Burma, managed to unify the country, though authority over frontier regions was nominal. When the Mongols withdrew from northern Burma in 1303, Mying-saing was the undisputed state in the lowlands, yet further north several Shan states used the power-vacuum to dominate nearly the entire area (YIAN 2010, 126, 134-135; WIN 2007, 284-285).

Structurally, Myinsaing faced the same issues as Pagan: excessive donations to religion lead to a smaller tax base, the loss in resources reduces the agency of the state, and control over people instead of land made the rule vulnerable to migration-inducing factors, such as droughts in 13th and 14th century, reducing the manpower and so the power of the state even further. From 1313 to

1315, Thihathu's eldest son Saw Yun carved out his own state Sagaing in the north, the rest continued as the state of Pinya. Revolts in Toungoo and Taungdwin forced Thihatu of Pinya to agree to the demands of rebel leader Thawun Nge of nominal submission but far ranging autonomy. The same model was applied to Sagaing. The precarious situation on the border with the Shan over which there was hardly any central control intensified in 1325 when the Pinya kingdom faced a feud between Tihatus sons over the throne. Pinya in the south was in a comfortable position to start raids against the weaker kingdom to the north and only a marriage of state between the two states brought eventually a degree of stability in the relations between the two kingdoms. Kyawswa I. of Pinya established administrative unity in the fragmented kingdom but especially the northern border was only under nominal rule, and the Buddhist sangha out of reach (MAW 2015, 1).

Developments at the border forced a rapprochement between Sagaing and Pinya. While the actions of Sagaing and Pinya remained focused on themselves, they left a power-vacuum in the Shan states and the border regions, which Mong Maw/Mongmau used for its own benefit. After repelling the Mongols in 1342, Mong Maw brokered an independence agreement with the Yuan dynasty in 1355, which allowed it to start raids on Sagaing and Pinya. Already when the Shan state Mong Maw won a war against the Mongols in 1342-1348, Sagaing sent a successful peace-mission to Pinya in 1351. When raids intensified, Sagaing and Pinya concluded another marriage of state, but with hardly any discernible benefit, as both states were strapped of manpower to assist each other and keep control over their vassals. Maw Shan raids continued in 1358-1359. The next Maw Shan raid in 1362-1363 led to revolts in Toungoo – a vassal of Pinya – and intensified instability. Pinya forced an alliance with the Maw state, jointly attacking Sagaing. Not satisfied with the contribution of Pinya to the siege of Sagaing, Maw state attacked its ally Pinya, wrecking chaos until Thado Minbya, a grandson of Thitathu, seized the thrown in 1364, consolidated the rule over Sagaing and its vassals and took Pinya. The third military invasion happened in 1409 under the Yongle emperor to cleanse Yunnan from Burmese influences and bring it into the Chinese tributary system (WADE 2006, 75; FRENCH 2017, 100-101). Instilled by his military success, Thado Minbya proclaimed Ava, and chartered it to be the restored version of the former Pagan kingdom. The Mong Maw state remained independent until 1448 when a combination of Ming troops, their vassals Sipsongpanna and other allies finally conquered it. Over time, also the Mon-Burmese wars diminished over the 15th century, allowing redirecting resources to foster political developments and strengthening the state (LIEBERMAN 1978, 461). The resulting

prosperity led Anthony Reid to proclaim this era the “age of commerce”, spanning from 1450 to 1680, that went hand in hand with administrative consolidation and integration of border areas – not least to gain access to tradeable goods.

2.2.1.1 Shan states and the Toungoo dynasty

The Shan states during that time managed to increase their power base and compete with other lowland centers such as Ayutthaya. Despite being scattered in inhospitable terrain and structured in small states, their prowess in trade as well as the ability to form strong alliances made them a power broker in the border region that could easily pose resistance to expanding lowland entities or attacks from China. The border area proved to be a site of technology transfer, as the Shan copied weapon technology from Yunnan with which they could defend themselves against Ava and other threats. So managed for example an alliance under the prince of Monkawng to repulse a Chinese invasion in 1449. While at the beginning only for their own use, this role over time transformed into one of technology mediators to the court. (FINDLAY/O’ROURKE 2007, 138; JAI-YEN 1993, 2; GUNN 2011 305-306; SUN 2003, 496). In this setting, the Ava kingdom and its mission to become Pagan again waged wars constantly against the Shan States in the north and east. For the Shan states, this period was determined by new formations and the freedom provided by the internal power struggles in the lowlands. New formations included the Mongmit state that came into existence in 1420 when thirteen villages were allowed to form a state as a reward for sending troops to help Yunnan raid Lan Na. Only in 1484 was it ceded to the kingdom of Ava. Kengtung state remained in the triangle between Burma, Lan Na and Ayutthaya, frequently changed its tribute-orientation and regularly had to face renegade tributaries among the trans-Salween states itself. Despite nominal allegiance to the court of Pagan, Kengtung only became part of the Burmese orbit in the mid-16th century with the Bayinnaung expeditions. Before that, the court of Chiang Mai invested the kings of Kengtung, who in turn paid gold, silver, copper and iron to Lan Na forging a strong political alliance between the eastern Shan states and the Lan Na kingdom. Marital alliances supported the relations, which saw an interruption in 1456 due to dynastic struggles. Until the rise of the Toungoo dynasty a century later, Kengtung was more or less independent with its own circle of power, stabilizing the Burmese border areas through vassals Mong Lam and Chiang Yai (AUNG 2015 1-2).

Wanma-state became established in 1470, Mongkawng state, founded already in 1215, remained independent until Ming China occupied it from 1479 to 1483 and again in 1495. Mongkawng was a particularly wealthy state, trading in jade and amber, forging alliances not only among Shan but also with Kachins and remained an independent principality until 1765 (LEACH 1960, 60-61; JAIYEN 1993, 2). Mining and trade in gems in the area also spurred the creation of Shan states. The Ming inherited the taste for gems from the Mongols and intensified mining and trading operations in the borderlands, which eventually led to the formation of the Mongmit and Mohnyin states that were in control over gem sources until the Burmese court monopolized the mines in the 16th century (SUN 2011, 204-205).

In general, increased trade, ties to other centers, new agricultural techniques that sustained larger populations and military technology from China allowed the Shan states to prosper and grow. The growth of certain Shan states deeply influenced the dynamics at the border.

The Maw state (Mongmaw) adopted Chinese firearms already at the end of the 14th century during the re-capture of Yuan-controlled areas by the Ming. Maw-state was in between the warring factions and attacked the Ming in 1388 who retaliated with firearms, so that the Maw submitted as tributaries. This new status and Chinese defectors to the Maw provided the polity with new gunpowder technology (SUN 2003, 499, 500-501, 503). It allowed the Maw to expand into Chinese territory after it accumulated the necessary resources and became powerful enough to draw attention of the Ming once again in the 1430s and 1440s. It took places in Yunnan and Guangxi, frequently looted trading posts and incorporated various regions and peoples such as the Lahu, La and Men. They could do so because of the firearms they accumulated through trade with the Ming dynasty, which – seeing how their tributary raided its land – sent two expeditions that failed and launched the “Three Expeditions against Luchuan” from 1441 to 1449. The heavy fighting not only led to casualties in the range of several tens of thousands, but also the capture of the capital of the Maw state. The capitals changed several times, each time the state saw a revival and continued attacks from the Ming dynasty. In the end, the ruling family crossed the border where it garnered enough strength to sack the Ava kingdom in 1527. The Mongmit and Mohnyin states expanded in the 1480s until they were incorporated by the Maw-state’s expansion. What China and for that case also Ava witnessed in this episode is the interplay of wealth through trade and the possibility to acquisition military technology in nominally subjugated areas that remained however out of reach for direct administration. It ended in a pyrrhic victory for China as the focus

of expansion simply shifted southward, the chiefs were never caught and their states never defeated (SUN 2003, 503-504, 510-512).

Also in Lan Na, the largest Tai polity in the border-area, firearm technology played an important role to set its borders. It was attacked twice, in 1402 and 1405 by combined Ming and Sipsong Panna forces until it had submitted. There also a technology transfer took place, and Lan Na modernized its weaponry so that it could subdue Phrae in 1443 and repelled Siamese troops several times. The retreating Ming-army to Sipsong Panna hardened the perceived boundary between Lan Na and Sipsong Panna, while Lan Na itself began to provide firearms to its tributary Shan states like Muang Nai, Muang Tuk Tu and Kengtung in the 1460s to protect its core. In 1476, Lan Na had enough capacity and handled the technology so well that it captured the kingdom of Nan (SUN 2003, 506-507). All in all, firearms spread throughout the border area: Đại Việt received them during the Ming occupation, both Ming and Đại Việt transmitted the technology to Lan Xang and Lan Na and border principalities like the Maw state, Sipsong Panna and Xieng Khouang who all could drastically increase their defense capabilities and defining the radius of their power (SUN 2003 508-509).

During the roughly same period, the 1480s, Ava expanded into the nearer Shan states of Laihka, Hsipaw, Mong Nai and Yawnghe. However, its dreams evaporated when these states broke off again and after the 40-years war with Hanthawaddy to the south in 1424 and its internal set-up made it regularly face rebellions whenever a new king came to power. The Shan states were generally not convinced of Ava's plans and broke away soon after they were brought into Ava's orbit in the 1480s. Forming the Confederation of Shan, the states raided Ava repeatedly between 1500 and 1525, weakening Ava ever more, until in 1501 the first Toungoo Dynasty appeared, broke away from Ava at the order of King Mingyi Nyo and established its own power base, increasing rebellions under the reign of king Narapati of Ava. A messy network of alliances encroached on Ava, bolstered Toungoo's claim to power until it declared independence in 1510. Ava, entangled in a war with the Shan states could not do anything, got sacked by the Confederation of Shan states in 1524 and eventually fell in 1527. Ava weakened in the face of the Shan under the leadership of the Maw because the access to resources of the crown diminished as the sangha as legitimizing factor required more capital and labor to maintain its elaborate network of monasteries and temples, so that in the end there were no means to maintain irrigation systems and to sustain a large army. As people fled in droves to Toungoo but also north to the Shan states for better op-

portunities, security and to avoid corvée labor, this amounted to a strengthening of the neighboring states (CHARNEY 2007, 227).

The Shan states during this time made a major transformation politically with the foundation of the Confederation but also socially with the adoption of Buddhism in the 16th century. There are speculations that the conversion was the result of sects being chased out of Ava. With incoming refugees and power struggles in the south, the Shan states took advantage of the situation, set up fortified positions along trading routes and established a mirror image of the declining Ava state. State-making in the lowland not only brought casualties to the border area, it could benefit from it as well (SCOTT 2009, 156-157).

The Shan were not alone. King Nyo of Toungoo relied on continued chaos in Ava and influx of manpower and had so the time to restore the economy and establish a stable rule, turning into a small but stable power, which essentially was the only place at peace in this period, allowing to build up forces for future wars. At the same time, King Sawlon of Mohnyin state put his son on the throne of Ava, making it one more Shan state within the Confederation ruling Upper Burma. The refugee-streams focused on Toungoo, the only stable state in the area, making it a new center of Burmese culture and laying a foundation for the future conquest. The Confederation, despite in power in Upper Burma from 1527 to 1555, soon faced issues when Saw Lon was killed and first signs of fragmentation appeared. Toungoo meanwhile strengthened its ability in the Toungoo-Hanthawaddy War 1535-1541, in which it also could repel relief-troops of the Shans. Toungoo consolidated its position, expanded its control over manpower across entire Lower Burma in 1541 and gained an advantage in warfare through access to Portuguese firearms. King Tabinshweti proved skillful to exploit rising power struggles among the Shan in the mid-16th century to extend his rule by playing with cultural symbols and signifiers ((FINDLEY/ O'ROURKE 2007, 197; MAW 2015 13-14; LIEBERMAN 1978, 457-458). He also used force as he later led Toungoo to war against Ava 1538-1544, which was under normal control of the Mohnyin Shan state. Internal struggle with the sawbwa of Thibaw, who brought that house on the throne of Ava, weakened the resistance against the Toungoo onslaught and Tabishwehti became king of all Burma in 1544, while the confederation was busy settling its internal disputes. With the foundation of the Toungoo dynasty, this complicated consolidation phase ended in a new era of stability, furthered by king Bayinnaung's conquest of all nearer Shan States from 1555 to 1557 and the submission of the Mongmit, Mohnyin, Mogaung, Mongpai, Saga, Lawksawk, Yawnghwe, Hsipaw, Bhamo and Kalay states from 1556-1559. The submission of the Trans-Salween States

also brought about the subordination of the Keng Tung state. When Lan Xang invaded Chiang Mai and Ayutthaya, Bayinnaung dispatched an expedition in 1574 and with the support of subordinate Shan states, such as Keng Tung, he quickly took Chiang Mai, Lan Na, Lan Xang, where his son Nawrahta Min Saw became viceroy. This huge conquest allowed establishing Toungoo-rule in Laos, Kengtung, and the eastern Shan States, fortified by outposts and garrisons (AUNG 2015, 2-3).

Bayinnaung's hegemony over the Shan states drew the border area closer to the center of Burmese power, be it by force or by voluntary allegiance of the sawbwas to the king. So showed the Kengtung sawbwa his acceptance of Burmese overlordship by providing elephants and troops to the Chiang Mai expedition. The Shan states remained an important actor for controlling the border-region so provided Kengtung for example troops for Bayinnaung's expedition against Lan Na in 1582. The result of Bayinnaung's conquests were systematic and consolidated power relations, mediated by sawbwas and myozas, who regularly had to show up at court with tributary payments or provide corvée labor, troops and grains as in the times of Pagan in exchange for *sanad* – appointment letters, titles and regalia. The structure between center and the Shan states was a relational-transactional, so that important factors of their autonomy remained untouched: they could administer their taxes and legal codes without interference and the center did not impinge on the sawbwas' privileges. Bayinnaung did however retain officials called wungyis, bohmu-mintha-princes or sitke regimental officers to implement royal policies in the Shan capitals and Toungoo military headquarters in the Mong Nai, Hsenwi, Mo-byé, Kengtung and Bhamo states. To better control the states, these garrisons collected taxes and ensured loyalty from the sawbwas while Bayinnaung introduced territorial divisions to reduce the power of individual Shan states (FINDLAY/O'ROURKE 2007 195; MAW 2015, 2-3; TAYLOR 2009, 26-27; AUNG 2015, 3). In addition, strategic marriages with Shan princesses and the requirement for sawbwa sons to study at the Toungoo court increased the ties between the states, eventually leading to imitation of practices at the Shan courts themselves (MAW 2015, 3). However, 30 years of war under king Bayinnaung exhausted capital and labor of Burma despite new people, mines and resources under his control. Ayutthaya seized its chance, attacked Burma and the Shan states in 1600, yet as diseases made them withdraw, a new era of independence and autonomy started (AUNG 2015, 3).

The general trend of the Shan states during this time was thus the transition from a very autonomous, loose reign of their territories during the inception of Ava into a more structured relationship with the center of the Toungoo dynasty, enabling it to large expansionist missions. In general,

this remained a stable situation, as the border to China did not move much despite the internal shifting alliances and allegiances. This was not the result of lowland-statecraft, rather it was local administrative ingenuity and control.

2.2.1.2 Burmese state reformation Toungoo and restored Toungoo

The Toungoo dynasty after the conquests of king Tabinshweti propelled central bureaucratic control forward at an unprecedented level, making it the most powerful state at the time in Southeast Asia. The expansionist missions, an orderly army with mercenaries and the control over the border-region were largely financed through income from the trading port in Pegu and matched with an absolutist kingdom founded in Theravada Buddhism and wielding direct territorial control that was hitherto unmatched (REID 1990, 642-643; BLANTON/FARGHER 2008, 56; SHORTO 1963, 572-573). Bayinnaung's expansion of Toungoo went hand in hand with administrative tightening, such as the establishment of myos – districts led by headmen appointed by the king (SHORTO 1963, 575-576). In addition, the promulgation of standard weights and measures and the codification of the law allowed gaining more control over provincial matters as well as the distribution of income from commerce, while expanding control over labor tied the border-regions closer to the center (BLANTON/FARGHER 2008, 55).

Centralization allowed for economic intensification and diversification, the focus on the court of Bayinnaung spread Burmese ruling practices in the border areas and the strong administrative hierarchy allowed for political coherence. There were enough parameters in place that supported this trend: in many of the states, Theravada-Buddhism already had a foothold and served as a kind of state-religion with rituals that cemented hierarchies whose personalized character allowed to connect central with local rule. Stabilizing this relationship-based system – as opposed to the legalist system of Chinese rule – was key to win over hearts and minds of the border-states, as there was no literati-class that held office as administrator. There was no “clash” of the two systems, yet there was more of a fit in integrating personalized rule within a web of personal ties to local rulers or myozas appointed by the king than imposing a layer of literati-officials (LEACH, 1960 57). The suzerainty system and tribute extraction proved a powerful tool for state building. In times of insurrections, it justified military force and still provided enough leeway for locals to retain a degree of autonomy. Local rule was a function of control, so that the term ruler ranges from kings to bandits. Control and authority so could spread through embedding these rulers into

a wider network or allowing them usurping the throne through state marriages or conquest – all of which Bayinnaung used. The newly integrated areas and chieftains were called *taik* indicating their frontier-status relative to the Burmese state. Valley rulers and princes installed by the throne were nominally responsible for taming the hills and extract tribute and corvée – by punitive expeditions or paying protection-money to the hill kings in return of their favor (LEACH 1960 58-59; GIERSCH 2006, 36-37). The Shan states in the remote north of Myanmar developed a similar pattern of administrative organization as in the environs of the metropolitan center, which facilitated the take-over and integration into Toungoo. The coalescing of chieftains into states that in turn morphed with the Toungoo kingdom was supported and maintained by these personal ties even though institutions were far from being fully developed and rather rested on a shared ideological vision of the kingdom. The Mogaung kingdom, for example became so part of Toungoo as a fiefdom and existed until 1765 (SHORTO 1963, 585, 587-588).

Toungoo so easily could get access to local capitals, won them over by expanding canal networks to maintain irrigation and sustain the population. State marriages to bring fiefdoms into the Burmese cosmos of eligibilities and obligations happened on a large scale, as local chiefs and princes stand for the entirety of their subject and so could convey central control over them, expanding the ability to control corvée workforce and enlarging the tax base (SHORTO 1963, 586-587). The issue for the state coffers however was monastic claims to tax revenue that drained state resources. Overall, Toungoo proved skillful in statecraft and generated a stable, strong and expansionist polity, whose various parts were tied together through administrative means, marriages of state and personal ties. This was sufficient until 1599 to draw the center of gravity and Shan vectors of attention towards the south (LIEBERMAN/BUCKLEY 2012, 1078-1079). To maintain a degree of coherence in the vast empire, Bayinnaung drew people for the royal administration from all parts of the conquered regions and settled them in the capital in ethnically defined communities, while he filled the ranks in higher administrative echelons with skilled individuals from all over his empire regardless of their previous allegiance (LIEBERMAN 1978, 549).

Trade was a factor that kept this large empire together. Toungoo under Tabinshwethi and Bayinnaung traded with all states from India to China, using its border areas as production site and trading posts. The first European mission from Portugal on the one hand exploited this position of the Toungoo dynasty as well as proved handy for providing arms and weapons for expansionist purposes, such as the 1569 mission against Ayutthaya, as well as for deterring local chiefs and border provinces from breaking away (GUNN 2011, 64).

Despite all these measures, unbridgeable problems persisted. The newly conquered parts in Laos and Chiang Mai were geographically separated so that a unified administrative structure was unfeasible and different centers emerged in the care of members of the royal families. Administrating their parts of the empire as their own fiefdoms, the empire fell quickly apart in 1599, yet at least the Burmese part was restored under the sons and grandsons of Bayinnaung in the so-called Nyaungyan Restoration. To better control the northern borderlands and nearer Shan states, the capital moved away from the coast, a sign of a generally more inward looking policy to consolidate the agrarian base of the economy (FINDLAY/O'ROURKE 2007, 195-197; LIEBERMAN 1980a, 552).

Other issues that undermined consolidation efforts were the scarcity of manpower, lacking mobility and manpower raids, attributable to the inability of the state apparatus to force people to stay in one place and obey the law. Capturing new populations depended on the state-strength to lead warfare, which in such a large territory led to a situation in which local centers raided each other to compensate fluctuations in labor-input, to increase agricultural reserves and to settle war-captives to encourage population growth and to build planting colonies. The lowland centers, such as Pinya, Myinsaing, Sagaing and Ava, and rivaling states in the hill areas let the contest play out in their borderlands, putting the areas of the Chin or Kachin under constant threat of raids from the Shan. However, the constant warfare of Toungoo to capture enough people to maintain an elaborate court and sangha exhausted troops and expeditions against Siam – formerly successful – failed, so that the Toungoo court lost support from its Shan and Tai allies. The hegemonial transition based on personal ties of rule and the desperate need of a headcount-based tax base was so upset by political instability when dynasties changed or intra-chieftain wars broke out. In the end, 1599 Siamese armies could easily capture the capital (GUNN 2011, 66). War captives from the defeated Shan and Tai states populated agriculture colonies, as well as Thais and Lao people, who often banded with rebels and protested against their deportation by force. These measures to sustain populations in agriculturally important areas and to push the limits of direct rule further out as evidenced in the royal edicts of 1598 – and later again in 1643 – however just served as band-aids to more symptomatic problems of a lack of frontier-stabilization, which stayed in flux depending on the military strength and administrative order of the state at a given point in time. The resistance against them also was to a large degree responsible for the interregnum and disintegration of the first Toungoo Empire (CHARNEY 2007 228-230; SCOTT 2009 42).

The interregnum and restoration in 1599 so had a tremendous effect on the shape of the border-area, while not really addressing the cause of the root-problems. While the Toungoo-empire was decimated, it still wielded control over the areas of Lan Na, yet Lan Xang was re-established as an independent polity and the outer Shan-states – Koshanpye – retreated to their former status of double-tributary to Burma and the Ming-court. Essentially, it was a continuation of a tradition starting already in the First Toungoo period to control areas and develop settlements in strategic areas, increase the tax base and intensify the planting of cash crops. In Burma proper, the administrative interregnum and re-consolidation through population transfers to strengthen the tax and military base became an arduous burden for the regions, both the supplying areas, which were supposed to be weakened, and receiving places, whose agricultural output should be strengthened. Outlying areas suffered the most as large swathes of their population had to move and accept hereditary military service in Upper Burma (LIEBERMAN 1991, 5, 9).

In terms of international relations, changes in military and administration after the collapse of 1599 and the disintegration of the empire were exported to the newly independent border-states in Laos and Lan Na, even though their chaotic structure thwarted such endeavors and the multiple tributary allegiances diminished the motivation for large-scale state reform (LIEBERMAN 1993 511-513). The Restored Toungoo dynasty, in addition to moving the capital into the inland from Pegu to Ava, broke off its ties with Portuguese mercenaries to draw the line to its more cosmopolitan and fragile roots. Other than that, the Restored Toungoo period remained fairly calm and stable. While following the reforms of the first Toungoo period, it still eased control over manpower as peace fostered population growth, as well as continued buying weapons to keep its peoples under control. This worked out for well over a century, until in 1752 Ava fell to the Konbaung dynasty (GUNN 2011 64-67).

Overall, for state-border relations in this area, one can observe a bifurcation between greater administrative and territorial-imperial control, as well as relaxing pressure where necessary for the sake of stability and continuation. As opposed to the previous cycle, the relations in this phase of stability between the state and its borders were not just functional and purpose-driven, but relied also on a degree of cultural attractiveness to enter tributary relations, commercial viability to support the state coffers, as well as a matter of power. While border regions on the periphery were before a claim that a state may or may not have followed through – for example Anawrathas claims of the Shan states during the first unification of Burma – in this cycle and with the advent of imperial reaches of territorial and administrative control, these same areas became a political

realm of power-play, such as under the second unification under king Bayinnaung. From an ideational functionality in the first cycle, the border-area was attributed now a transactional-realist purpose directly linked to the fate of the empire.

2.2.2 Tai states: disappearance and consolidating statehood

For the Tai-states, the fluctuations during this period did not end. One also can discern a bifurcation of state in this realm: while being conquered for a certain period by either Burmese or Vietnamese forces, these states also manage to achieve a centralized bureaucracy and division of state-functions (FINDLAY/O'ROURKE 2007, 137). The end of the chaotic process of stabilization among the Tai states was preceded by many wars among smaller kingdoms and an arduous consolidation period starting in the 15th century with the gradual spread of and unification through Theravada Buddhism as enabler of cultural continuity of states (EVANS/OSBORNE 2002, 1). With these changes, also the practice of bordering began to change as smaller independent entities were more closely drawn into cultural and not just political orbits with new models of social control, allocation of resources and labor. With greater specialization and complexity, lowland centers had an advantage over the upland polities, which generally remained less densely populated and could not accumulate and concentrate the economic, military and political means to form larger, expansionist entities (BLANTON/FARGHER 2008, 55).

Among the Tai-states Lan Na had to find a new place in the chaotic times before the 16th century. Except from an invasion from Ming China in 1380, the kingdom was on a constant course of expansion, conquering the kingdom of Payao in 1456, waging wars against Ayutthaya and supporting Lan Xang against Đại Việt in the 1480s. During this golden age of Lan Na, it obtained Keng Tung state as a vassal and conquered smaller entities like Nan and Phrae as well as waged war against Luang Prabang, the Shan region and Sipsong Panna. At his highest strength in the 15th century, it regularly attacked Ayutthaya and was not deterred by Lao complaints to the Ming court over Lan Na's behavior. This was only possible with a strong administrative body that controlled the people and resources, made the influence of the state felt and ensured a cohesion of governance and control. Lan Na was a stabilizing anchor in the region while its action destabilized the frontier-areas around itself. This went on until the 16th century when Lan Na was still a major power broker, interfering in dynastic struggles of other states, yet as it meddled in Keng-tung, Hsipaw armies gave the kingdom such a blow that it never regained its regional dominance. In 1558, it became a tributary state to Toungoo and in 1563, the Burmese attacked Lan Na as it

did not support the Burmese invasion of Ayutthaya. Bayinnaung installed his sons as kings of Lan Na in 1579 and kept strict control of tax and corvée provisions until the break-up of 1599, after which it remained a fairly independent multiple tributary state (SUN 2003 512-513).

Lan Xang, which formed out of Muang Sua, Xam Neua, Muang Phuan and several smaller cities of Đại Việt, filled the area between Burma and Đại Việt and received formal recognition as Chinese tributary in 1402. Its parts remained autonomous so that Muang Phuan could enter a tributary relationship with Đại Việt in 1434 and got absorbed into Vietnam in 1448 because of internal chaos. Đại Việt encroached even more in 1478 with the merger of several Lao provinces into the province of Tran Ninh and waged war with Lan Xang directly as it tried to invade Muang Phuan. Đại Việt captured even Luang Prabang and prepared to attack Lan Na, but was ultimately defeated and driven back by King Tilok. The court of Muang Sua afterwards spread Theravada Buddhism, introduced the Lao script and consolidated its rule. The name of the capital changed from Muang Sua to Luang Prabang. Muang Phuan made troubles in the beginning of the 16th century, however king Photisarath, also responsible for the politico-religious investiture of Luang Phrabang as center of the mandala, put down all rebellions and ensured Muang Phuan's allegiance for the next centuries. This however could not reverse a general trend of decline based on the disadvantages of being landlocked and more or less cut off from innovations, technical and administrative progress (EVANS/OSBORNE 2002, 1).

The kings Vixun, Photisarath and Sethathirat were very conservative and did not introduce any changes into the governance of the kingdom. Rather they intensified the traditional Buddhist kingship, setting up a Phra Bang – a Buddha image – as protector of the realm to which the nobility had to swear allegiance to the kings. This was an important step as it formed the center of the Lan Xang mandala – Luang Phrabang –, linking with it all other sacred places in the kingdom. Statehood and the reach so became a function of stupa and temple construction to physically express the reach of power, animated through rituals and ceremonies in unison with the center. The need for slaves for construction and maintenance further linked the populace beneath the nobility to the center. As the king was in control of the procedure of ritual centralization, especially Photisarath started to outlaw non-Buddhist beliefs and animist rituals that were controlled by the local nobility to increase royal control over and centralize political and religious affairs. Despite the dogmatization of the political theology, political control continued to rest on personal ties, so that factionalism at court and among regional lords occurred regularly. A short unification between Lan Xang and Lan Na was victim to this personalized rule, as king Sethathirath's wife – as symbol

of the throne in Chiang Mai – was dethroned by the nobility in 1457 and Lan Xang's possibility of power-projection were too weak to reassert control. Lan Na became a vassal state of the Toungoo dynasty for two centuries witnessing an outflow of the elite to Lan Xang. To better rule them, Sethatirath moved the capital to Vientiane, leaving the palladium of Lan Xang in Luang Phrabang, but instead taking the Chiang Mai palladium, Phra Keo, the Emerald Buddha, as the new symbolic center of the mandala. Temple building continued, given the access of labour and a fair degree of wealth, establishing Lan Xang as a great – even if encroached – kingdom, with a wide reach of control (EVANS/OSBORNE 2002, 16-18).

Control over people in the border-area to wage wars was one thing – control over resources for state revenue a different one. While enforcing a corvée labor regime was a relatively simple task for militarized states such as Lan Na, it proved more difficult to levy taxes on trade, harvests and livestock and banditry was a persistent problem over which no central state in the border area could impose its authority. The malleable personal links of kings to local rulers complicated the situation even more. As the deal nominally included that each authority on all levels up the king should receive a proportionate share, the flexibility in the relationship construct helped to divert funds when necessary away from the central state. Power and status and the recognition of these factors on which the stability of statehood rested were not something a king was entitled to in the central-borderland relations, but had to earn and enforce it to finance the state. Still, with the strengthening of the military power and the gradual consolidation of Tai-statehood, royal monopolies appeared for items such as salt, narcotics, minerals and metals the trade of which was for the benefit of the crown (REID 1993, 69-70). Thus, the intensity of means of coercion was not a function of economic prosperity but rather an enabler of the latter in the cases of the growing Tai states. The border-area as a sourcing area of valuable goods helped the central power holders to generate revenues to increase military grip and so became a playball between the states as well. Luang Prabang, Lan Na, the Shan-states continued to compete for the region, and while legal and illicit trade-routes tied the fringes to imperial centers and the world economy, it is no surprise that administrative ties struggled to establish political control. Rather, outside of draft and corvée, the *muaengs* in the periphery were political intermediaries in their own right between the lowland centers by virtue of controlling state-monopoly commodities, providing intelligence and participating in battles for territorial extension (BADENOCH/SHINSUKE 2013, 32).

During the expansion of the Toungoo dynasty, which swallowed Lan Na in the 1540s, Lan Xang became acutely aware of the lack of demarcation as well as international relations. A first attempt

was to set up a close relationship with Ayutthaya and agreeing on a border-stele, yet this was not enough. Soon the Toungoo captured the royal family and while some pockets continued their resistance, their fate was sealed with the sacking of Ayutthaya in 1569. Established as a vassal to Toungoo, the succession disputes after Sethatirath's death invited the Burmese to install a younger brother of the late king to the throne, cementing the vassal-status until the interregnum of 1599. Since the death of Sethatirath, the kingdom was in a political crisis for more than 70 years – both as vassal and independent state, with bloody fights among the ruling families. Despite all that, the state and the borders known to the extent as this was possible remained intact accounting for the success of king Photisarath's centralization efforts. The internal crisis, the increased fluidity, factionalism and secessionist tendencies were only overcome in 1638 when King Surinyavongsa managed to establish himself as the guardian of the palladium and as an accepted interlocutor in the maze of personal ties that allowed effective governance (EVANS/OSBORNE 2002 18-20). Thus, the bifurcated trajectory of the Tai states in the Southeast Asian-Chinese border region meandered between the striving of continued autonomy and the integration into the world-system of states in the shadow of which powerful entities such as Lan Na or Luang Prabang emerged. Compared to the previous cycle, the Tai-state area was less a frontier zone as such but reduced with the increasing power of its main centers the space determined by frontier-characteristics to the fringes of influence of these larger states that used to be part of the political borderland-ecosystem. While integration in the world-system of states and economies supported the state-building exercise of the larger entities and put their increased military power to use, the situation for the smaller muaengs was one of specialization in border-activities as a niche to support their survival. Lan Na and Luang Prabang so became themselves centers of vectors of attention in competition with lowland states such as Ayutthaya or the Toungoo-dynasty, while their fringes still enjoyed a similar autonomy and fluidity as before. Both outcomes were financed by the same integration processes into the world system due to legal or illicit forms of trade.

2.2.3 Ming China: functionalization of the borderlands

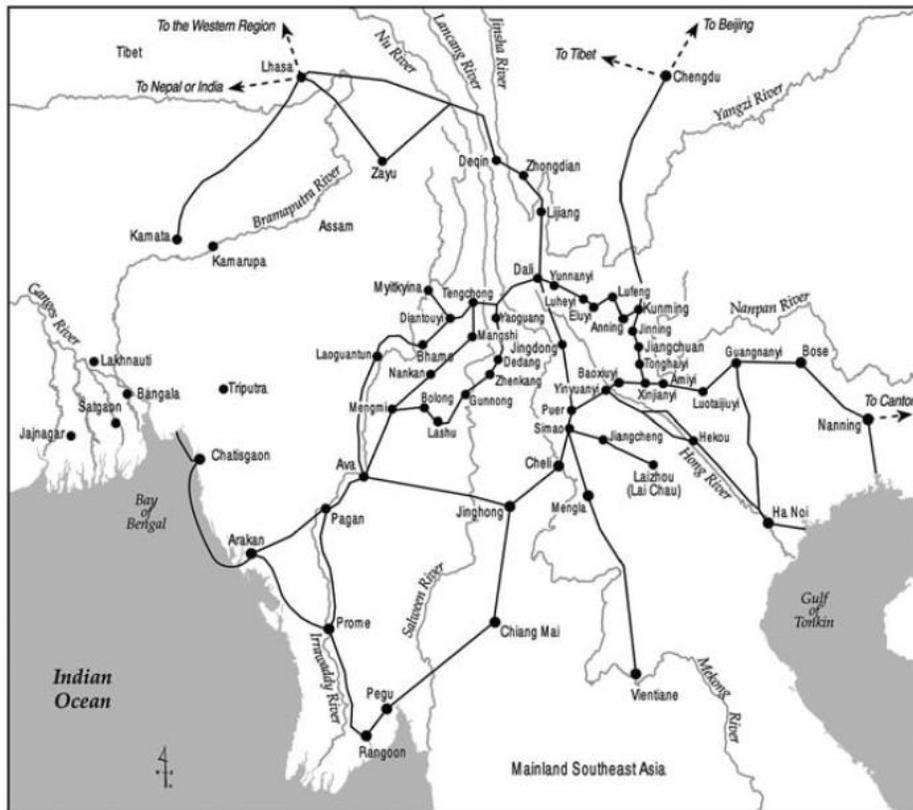
After the Yuan-Ming transition, the border area remained a violent place with limited state control. The Ming sent in more officials from the center to keep close tabs on local officers, but the social structures marked by outlaws, cruel landlords, governmental posts in Yunnan as punishment for disgraced officials and the continued bordering between Chinese subjects (民) and non-

Chinese barbarians (蛮夷) to organize the populace held up a climate of violence, disorder or even state-rejection (SHIN 2006, 34, 112). The Ming tried to reign in with measures to promote morality as well as mundane means of controlling trade, yet their impact was slow and sometimes small (LIEBERMAN 2008, 282). In the 1440s, this attitude incited government uprisings in the border areas that lasted for ten years and covered nearly all southern provinces. The uprisings used the benefits of the time as the Ming were engaged in wars against the Mongmaw state in northern Burma as well as defending the country against a Mongol invasion in the north. The situation deteriorated as changes in the climate caused droughts and flooding and the Ming seemingly were unprepared for establishing an infrastructure of granaries and dams in the border provinces. These changes continued over a century until the end of the 16th century. Damages to the base of the economic livelihood of the southern border were so great that famine broke out in the area fueling rebellions and attacks against Ming rule. Demographically, the depopulation of these areas during that cycle was a sign of state-retraction and increased vulnerability to alternative rulers (ZHANG et al 2007, 410-411, 413). With the focus on the multiple loci of internal issues of state-cohesion and rebellions, the Ming as of the 15th century was on the defensive to maintain its state at its southern border for which it had to find a definition, function and location that fits its needs. (ELMAN 2007, 30, 33-34). The shift of attention to the Southeast and Southwest stimulated a new way of interactions with local power holders and neighbouring states, administrative restorations and increased efforts to categorize the border-areas of the Ming Empire. While many of the measures were successful in stabilizing the borderlands, greater macro-trends foiled their effects.

2.2.3.1 Administrative renovation: the yellow registers and tax-reform

During the 14th and 15th century, the Ming undertook a population registration program for better tax collection and household classification. Households were put on the “yellow registers” with information on the amount of land owned and available labor to determine taxes, corvée and military service duties. This helped local authorities to increase their control along the southern frontier, while tolls levied along the canals subsidized their administrations. Trade bounded these areas closer to the national economy especially through farm products and cloth, while labor as a tax forced each family into the control-perimeter of the state by providing people for grand-scale state-sponsored construction projects. Revenue farming and state monopolies on salt, tea, copper and silver also helped generating revenue on local and national level to provide for an administra-

tion at the border. Other heavily taxed but sought for commodities included silk, colors, forest products and ceramics traded along the network of silk roads which connected the border-region to the world economy impacting the social structure of the area as the labor-intensity in production bounded ever more people to their place of work and so facilitated state-control through territorial reach. Salt was a particular commodity insofar as it was scarce in the mountains. Trade with salt so linked lowland producers and highland customers via salt-roads that not only transported commodities but also information and the state embodied by tax and customs inspectors and censors. For state building, copper and silver proved of great importance regarding both production and trade as well as the product itself. Yunnan's copper and silver mines produced for the massive demand for coins. The Ming kept close control over the mines so that by output value, Yunnan was economically integrated into the state by the 17th century. In general, trade during the Ming era reached to ever more remote locations and linking them with the national and regional economies (GUNN 2011, 140-141, 143-144, 148-149, 152-153, 250).



Map 6: The silk roads during the Ming and Qing era (YANG 2004, 293)

Still, direct control remained weak and local officials were proxies to mediate the situations back to the capital and exercise control over taxes, corvée and military service on the ground. Military

colonies sprung up again and employed by the Ming to the largest scale of any dynasty in sensitive areas to increase agricultural production and set up a foothold of the state. The Ming staffed these colonies with convicts and disgraced officials but the lack of direct control and the many exemptions reduced their effectiveness in the marginal frontier areas (BLANTON/FARGHER 2008, 123-124; WADE 2006 71).

However, the registration system proved still helpful for the Ming in recruiting local forces for its wars against unruly chieftains and Southeast Asian states after the invasion of Đại Việt in the beginning of the 15th century. Without the registration, it would have been far more difficult to define and draft the number of soldiers necessary for these endeavors. It not only helped to foster and maintain a degree of order according to the Ming standards, it also created a dangerous dependence on these native soldiers into which the state later on shall have difficulties to reign. The bureaucratic state-structure and its means of the central state could not be as easily replicated in the tuisis as the establishment of registers and cadasters would have suggested (FAURE 2006, 186; SHIN 2006 64).

2.2.3.2 Strategic overhaul of the tributary system and relation construction

Yunnan was at the foundation of the Ming dynasty still considered as a country. Only 11 years later 250.000 troops were able to make the claim of Yunnan being a part of China since the Han dynasty a reality by taking urban centers such as Dali Lijiang and Jinchi and several smaller Tai polities – among which were also attacks against the later expanding Mongmaw and unruly Mongmit states. The Ming's divide and rule policy that shall keep the numerous petty states from secessionist ideas began to take shape at that time by continuing the recognition of tuisis as hereditary rulers in the service of the emperor. In addition, military colonies settled in the conquered areas, slowly encroaching and changing demographic balance and economic production of the Tai polities in the Southwest. The Ministry of War played a crucial role in the deliberations over military actions and expeditions against the chieftains if they did not follow up to the increasingly outlandish demands of the Ming or rebelled against them. Their duties again covered levying taxes, economic development, following tributary demands and managing granaries, canals and dykes. To identify irregularities, the state set up a surveillance mechanism including a secret police and the central censorate to check on activities of officials and chiefs. A close relationship with the Ministry of War ensured that military force was at hand during the early and mid-Ming

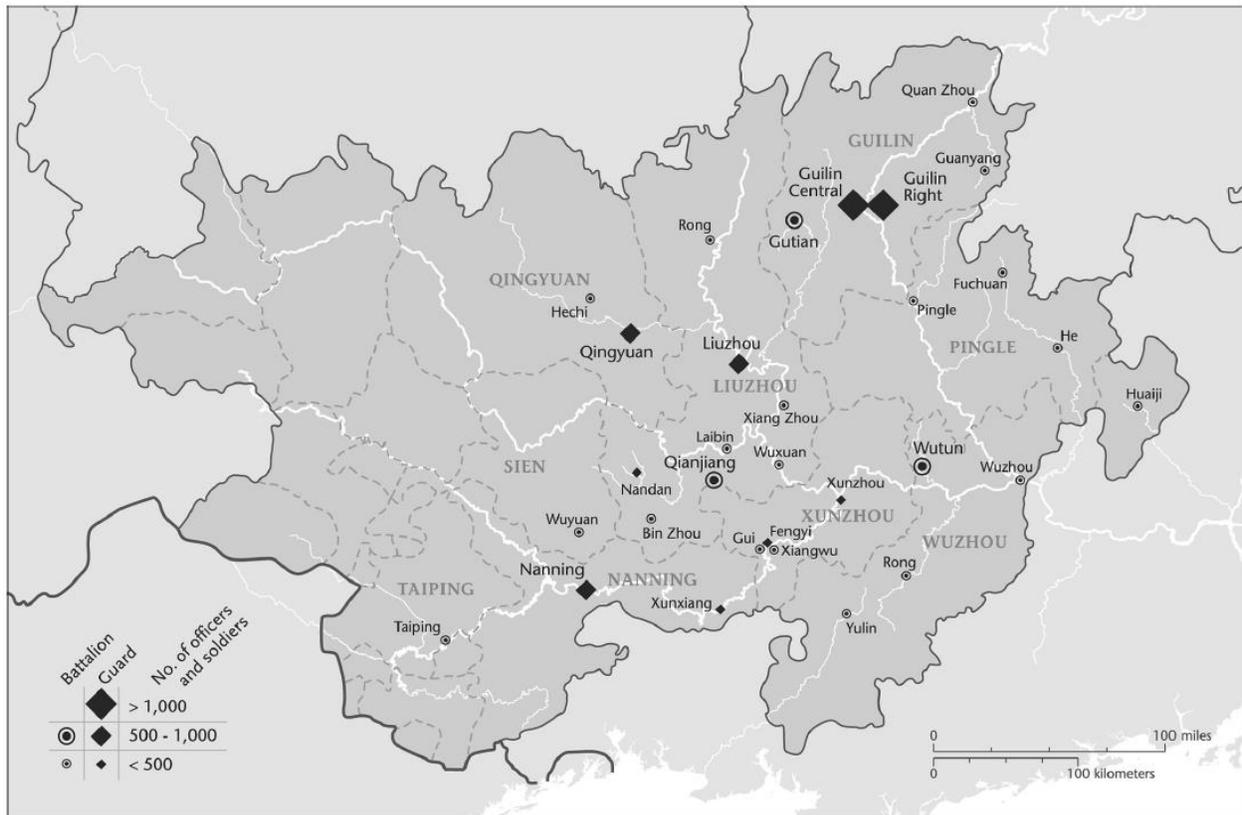
era to support the economic exploitation. With the continued expansion into Yunnan through threat and seduction, the Ming set up guards in the region to ensure security and order, while Chief's Offices in Sipsong Chau Tai, Hsenwi and other areas should steer the colonization process by assisting and advising native rulers. Many formerly Southeast Asian polities so were drawn into the Chinese empire as later on control intensified with police stations in important cities and passes. Offices were set up not only in pacified regions but also across the border in areas claimed by Đại Việt and Ava to purposefully weaken these polities. The offices had to be self-sufficient. At the beginning, administrative self-sufficiency was a virtue to be achieved, but later on served as an excuse for a retreating state when it became clear that the colonization model was not sustainable (WADE 2004, 4-5; WADE 2006, 70, 83-84; BLANTON/FARGHER 2008, 289). Later on, policy offices were added to tighten control at important places such as passes or markets and even used to project influence to neighbouring countries. The Dong Tang Chief's Office was on Burmese territory for the purpose of weakening the Burmese state. The Ming recognized that in order to establish order in the frontier area, more chieftains were necessary. Recognition of tuis therefore sprawled, covering not just Yunnan but also Tai and Burman polities in what was Lan Na and the Shan states to solidify the territorial claims of the emperor and to help the empire with an orderly border at all cost. To facilitate communication, the Ming established a network of relay stations linking the court to the chieftains, military garrisons and civilian administrations, which not always was successful as either the people were not what the Ming expected from tax-paying subjects or did not want to become subjects to an emperor. Often the administration could not find bureaucrats to fill civilian positions in the tuis and the entire tui bureaucracy rested in the hands of native administrators. The ties between tui and the Chinese state so remained fragile, indicating not only a lack of attention but also of resources of the state to administer the area. In the end, chieftains set up their own administrative structure with deputy headmen in smaller counties as the vacant Chinese posts could not prevent them from doing so. Competing interests between state, officials and natives only promoted clashes, which in the end reinforced the distinctions between Chinese and barbarian. Another issue was the expectations for the administrations to be self-sustaining, which in the terrains of Yunnan, Guizhou and Guangxi where the tax base was small proved to be a difficult task and reduced the administrative abilities of officials. Tax extraction happened on an ad-hoc basis and often it was left to the chiefs to determine how much to send to the capital. Assigned quotas were more of a guidance and even the court accepted that enforcement was a difficult task. To mask that fault in the design, the court granted tax

exemptions for disasters as well as made-up reasons to uphold the impression of control. In addition, warfare had impacts on taxes, so were chieftains exempted if they were devastated or lost territory. Increased dependence on the *tusi* for soldiers also made it more likely that the chieftains evaded tax payments when they could (WADE 2004, 14-15; SHIN 2006, 12, 29, 31, 33, 56-57, 67-68, 72-73). The Ming could also not cover the fact of not being in real control by the amount of rules and regulations it imposed onto the *tusis*. The rules included documentations, genealogical charts of the rulers, as well as regular travels to the capital to receive and renew appointments. However, the Ming abandoned most of these rules in practice by the mid-15th century and only used them as a screen to hide the actual looseness of the control the state *de facto* had over the border area (SHIN 2006 69-70).

There were more than 1600 recognised *tusis* managing the internal frontier that singled out half of Yunnan, two-thirds of Guizhou and the southern Sichuan province as beyond direct Ming control. Most of them were military *tusi*. Not all of them were of great importance, yet the belief in their efficacy to secure the border made the dynasty reliant on the chieftains to a degree that it became threatening for its own survival so that it had to reign in on numerous occasions. The Ming categorized through titles the importance of the chieftains – ranging from pacification commissioner to simple chief. Nominally, the Ministry of War was in charge of the chieftains if they had a military purpose, civil chieftains such as prefects or magistrates were under the authority of the Ministry of Personnel. Chieftains received symbolic gifts to formalize the structure such as titles, patents and seals. As they meant a lot to the bureaucracy but had little meaning in the borderlands, one could say the whole structure and the formalization through tributary missions were set up to make believe that there was more control at the border than there actually was. With moving the capital north to Beijing in the 1430s, also tributary missions became more restricted, indicating less interest in the southern realms, in particular as it became clear that the cultural norms of the Ming did not correspond to the needs of the border population. The entire system took the form of a mutually beneficial arrangement with limited impact: the court could believe in having authority over the area, the chieftains gained financial benefits and legitimacy of their rule (HERMAN 2006, 137; SHIN 2006, 58, 61-63; GUNN 2011, 113-115; WADE 2006, 69).

Regarding Guangxi, statehood was claimed early on, expeditions were numerous during the Ming era, and there were administrative and military hierarchies in place, yet the province remained far from being under control of the state. The river system helped integrating even remote areas into

the economy of the state but any attempt to expand the administration and the military into the region through for example registration systems for tax and corvée purposes, were foiled by the terrain and the reluctance of its inhabitants. Essentially, a parallel administration appeared in which state officials upheld the semblance of control, while villages and chieftains continued in their old ways (SHIN 2006 10-12). For strategic reasons, the Ming began with a large-scale settlement policy in the 14th century. All over the border area, military farming colonies (*tuntian*, 屯田) sprung up – the so-called kai zhong system (开中法), playing a crucial role in the newly occupied areas. Not only were they supposed to extend the reach of the administration, introduce sedentary lifestyles and modes of production but also oversee state monopolies to generate revenue for the administration. Importing laborers, merchants and their families to these farms meant settlements of Ming subjects who were under the control of the Chinese administration and so expanded the reach of the state. However, regarding military penetration, the tactics of setting up military farming colonies to project control without large costs didn't cause the hoped for effect. They barely had a assimilating effect on the people, hardly any of them were self-sustaining and most of them were concentrated in the eastern parts – the west remained largely untouched from being even just in view of the central state or an institutionalized border so that there were calls to crush the largest tuis of the area (HERMAN 2006, 146; SHIN 2006 34; WADE 2006, 87-88; WADE 2008, 618-619; LEE 1982, 714; HACK/RETTIG 2006a, 17-18).



Map 7: distribution of military colonies in Guangxi SHIN 2006 35

In addition to these measures, the Ming also exploited enfeoffments (王府) to secure territory as well as to avoid destabilizing succession struggles. The enfeoffed princes could come from the imperial family or from minor nobility to extend the imperial reach and establish order. However, maintaining a network of princes was very costly for the state and sometimes dangerous as rivalries between princes occasionally turned bloody. Especially at the border, revenues from taxes were low and estates costly for the Ming treasury as direct subsidies, a large amount of taxes and income from smuggling often found their way into the princes' pockets. It is ironic that the purpose of establishing order through enfeoffments actually weakened the state and made the border more porous (SHIN 2006, 29-30).

The settlement and restructuring policy showed mixed results. In Yunnan, the population rose in general, but in areas of larger concentration and in frontier colonies, such as Tengyue and Shibing this growth was more pronounced, while other areas remained stagnant. This was largely due to the state's capacities to mobilize capital and investments into settlements. Outside settled areas, growth was difficult to achieve, as the soils required new technologies to provide enough food for settlers. Where land was cultivable, also growth picked up as the agricultural base could maintain

a larger population. In addition, Ming sponsorship helped the growth of certain strategically important areas, like the frontier colonies, where capital was required to recruit settlers and provide them with tools (LEE 1982 716-717, 720).

Another way of increasing the reach of the state was expanding farmland and providing infrastructure such as canals and roads to integrate remote areas into merchant networks and the national economy. Post houses, ferries, bridges, granary networks and schools all should serve the purpose of opening an area to the state and a convenient excuse to set up more tuis to bring taxes to finance these projects and so increasing the purview of the border. These were costly endeavors as official roads and waterways needed constant maintenance. While they facilitated trade, their main purpose was the transport of goods, letters and information for official purposes and so helped increasing the reach of the state by tying a great labour-force to the building projects in the service and under the supervision of the state as well as facilitating communication between capital and the fringes of the empire while providing a kind of macro-economic stability by regulating prices for grain and moral bedrock by providing schooling (BLANTON/FARGHER 149-151; SHIN 2006, 33; FAURE 1989, 4-5).

A major turning point for reforming the tributary system and fortifying the control over the borderland was the Tumu-incidence of 1449, during which the Zhengtong emperor was caught by Mongol invaders. The Ming saw itself under threat both on the northern and southern frontiers with the result that the Mongol attack shook the dynasty in its very foundation (SHIN 2006, 15).

The threat from the Mongols and the capture of the emperor shifted attention to the northern frontier for decades to come, profoundly influencing the Ming thinking and the allocation of resources. The building of the great wall and the expeditions against the Jurchen in the 1460s and 1470s evidence that. In parallel however, the abstraction of this border-issue also changed the way of engaging with the southern neighbors. The Ming opted for a stricter approach towards the borderland polities, as exemplified by the expeditions against the Yao polities in Guangxi in the 1460s and 1470s with the effect that the traditional structures of administration were destroyed. Similar was the process in Yunnan. Assimilation attempts through schooling heirs in the provincial capitals increased towards the native chieftains on which the Ming relied. The aim was made clear to turn them into Chinese subjects following an arbitrary orthodoxy that shall define cultural norms. This was to be achieved through bringing talented chieftain-heirs into the civil service and to indoctrinate them with the Confucian classics and practices of the bureaucracy. A side effect was that from these pupils and native officials, the state could learn about the affairs on the

ground and adjust policies to win over the local population. In addition, a stronger foothold also meant greater economic exploitation, especially rare plants, pearls, mineral resources and metals. Integrating the chieftains into the empire, schooling and showing military strength in punishment expeditions as well as forging economic ties through tributary demands were meant to crush rebellions as well as deterring these polities from allying themselves with Đại Việt (WADE 2004 17-18; WADE 2008 603-604; SHIN 2006, 71; BLANTON/FARGHER 2008 184-187; HERMAN 2006, 138, 141-142).

Towards the Hmong-Miao, the attitude and measures were not much different. Having a reputation for rebellion and migration, the military expeditions to establish order led to a flight of the Hmong from 1413 onwards. The Hmong/Miao and Yao constantly faced some degree of resistance up to attempts to exterminate them. However, the attempts to assimilate, settle and Sinitize them were constantly met with uprisings (SCOTT 2009, 285; SHIN 2006, 81). The largest of these rebellions occurred in 1526 during which Wang Yangming slaughtered the Miao into submission. He was instrumental to re-define the *tusi*-system and bringing direct rule closer to the native chieftains (SCOTT 2009, 118).

The battles against the Mongmaw state were also a case in point. As the polity tried to recover territory, it took nearly 10 years to push them back and even then, Mongmaw was not defeated, indicating the strength of this overlooked entity and the threat it posed to the territorial integrity of China. The Ming tried to replace the Mongmaw state by a pacification commission (宣撫司) which shall become a model for dealing with southern principalities. The incursions against Mongmaw into Burma were meant to instill fear and set an example to better obey the Ming dynasty. A following dispatch of troops in 1454 against Mongmaw and Mohin should finally eradicate any unruly competitors to the Ming administrative structure in the area. The battles won were structurally not as impactful as what the expeditions meant for the chieftains and surrounding polities who were tasked to provide food and troops. This affected Ava, Hsenwi, Maingti, Meungla and others, who were so drawn into the politico-military orbit of the Ming-vision for the area. These states knew what the consequences could be for not obeying China and this fear-factor was a necessity for high tribute, tax and other demands imposed onto the colonized regions (WADE 2004 15-16; WADE 2006, 85-86; WADE 2008 600-602).

In the 14th and 15th centuries, the Ming-colonization helped mark and border the region and so define the Southwestern limits of expansion. The throne reigned in into the fluidity of the borderlands and absorbed western Yunnan into its own tributary structure and installed *tusi* and Pacifi-

cation Commissioners (HACK/RETTIG 2006a, 19, 21). To avoid a new Nanzhao, the pacification commissions staffed by local chiefs and Chinese bureaucrats should expand control over the area between Southeast Asian lowland kingdoms and Ming-administered areas known as the dong (洞/峒). For the sake of completeness, the area of Lingnan (岭南) shall also find mentioning here, as it constituted a regionalist but not secessionist power within the Chinese state, quasi-autonomous but not quite to the degree of the tuis. Integrated into direct administration early on, the Ming especially had difficulties to keep it as part of the state and drew as for the tuis on pacification commissions, staffed by only Chinese bureaucrats. Motivating them to do so followed a distinct strategy. First, a reason for a military expedition was needed, a local leader made to pledge support, local chiefs, their families and administrators were killed and in the end with the help of the supporting chiefs a new administrative structure got set up. In this structure, bureaucrats worked as managers for military guards and administrative offices, overseeing the institution of levies and monopolies. The Ming did not stop there. In order to maintain control, they took away human resources, and continued searching for new reasons to launch military campaigns. Piece by piece the Ming could achieve greater control over the dong-area and even ventured beyond as the episode against Mongmaw showed. In addition, the Ming employed their influence over obedient chieftains to use their military forces for the benefit of imperial expansion. They used Mongmaw troops in the 14th century to track down rebels and later on Lan Na military to attack the Bayi. Only under special circumstances – such as the Mongmaw expedition to avoid a new Nanzhao – did the Ming army interfere directly. Overall, until the end of the Ming rule, tuis in the Southwest were drastically reduced, accounting for a pushback of the fluid region marked by native chieftains into more remote areas (WADE 2004 22-24; WADE 2008, 591, 601; FLYNN 2006 19-20; HERMAN 2006 146; LARY 1996, 16-18).

An important factor was finding a balance between social stability and economic exploitation, especially for gold, silver and horses. The aim was to deplete the polities enough to not let them become a danger but not as much as to incite rebellions. As this was not always observed and there were no remedies against the demands of the court, rebellions broke out repeatedly. So revolted Hsenwi in the 1440s against Chinese forces to have its debts cancelled. Forfeiting debts happened when chieftains engaged in Ming-wars and providing military assistance often in battles against neighbouring chieftains – weakening ties among them and incentivizing allegiance to the Ming (WADE 2006, 87; WADE 2008, 616). How effective divide-and rule was shows the case of the Lahu. Pressure and clashes with the Chinese state instigated their southward move-

ment into the Tai territories of the dong area, where the divide-and-rule approach of the Ming further marginalized them to a frontier-existence in serfdom of the Tai chieftains. This was a very rigid structure so that direct rule and officials records, tax regimes or cadasters did not appear until the Qing period (SCOTT 2009, 289-290). It was thus not necessary to build walls as the Ming did in the north, the separation and use of local peoples to further the cause of the Ming and so transforming this fluid area into a political boundary with the integration of Yunnan and the adoption of Guizhou as a province and none the least, the border between Đại Việt and the Ming after the failed occupation (SHIN 2006, 8).

A more structured approach to catering to competition within members of ruling families was also in the toolbox of the Ming. At many occasions, the dynasty supported alternate rulers to the actual heirs to destabilize polities and install them as docile agents of the throne. Like this, the Ming could fragment power of the Tai polities in Yunnan against the backdrop of using military force. So it could also make promises and then simply did not need to keep them. For help against Mongmaw, Hsenwi was promised to receive a part of the captured lands, yet as the Ming already installed offices there, they did not receive anything. The same happened with the capture of Bhamo in the 1490s (WADE 2004, 25). A more sophisticated divide-and-rule strategy and fewer restraints in using military power fragmented Tai states in the dong-area. Mongmaw could have become a powerful player comparable to Lan Xang or Lan Na, but it was driven out of the region.

With a stronger foothold and integration of Yunnan into the Chinese state, the Ming also started to regulate international interactions. So did the Ming edict in 1560 that the chieftains in Yunnan were not to have any links with the Toungoo Empire and its closer vassals. In addition, the Ming refused to give the Toungoo any recognition if they were in alliances with chieftains of strategic importance to the Ming. In the context of tributary relations, this has to be understood as an extension of divide-and-rule beyond the border of the Ming realm through the threat of using military force of the chieftains. The dictum of using barbarians against barbarians outside of Yunnan, where it had been in use for centuries, so got a completely new dimension, as it included entire new states as equal to the small chieftains of Yunnan within the Chinese cosmos (WADE 2006 88-89). This cycle for this part of the border-region was marked by this transformation of upland polities into Chinese administrative units by reducing and dismantling by force and absorbing them into the state. This consolidation was one of the major effects of Ming rule (WADE 2004, 31).

In the nearer frontier areas, the Ming state so followed a policy-combination of military power projection, targeted migration, creating a local pro-Ming elite and fostering the adoption of Chinese ways and mores. All of this had direct repercussion for the daily life of the local population, which either was drawn closer into the Chinese orbit and pushed the zone of fluidity further away from the center or rebelled against the Ming. In state-to-state relations, Chinese influence remained a more abstract matter of elites. Repercussions were not a matter directly imposed on the ordinary populations but showed their effects on the inter-state relations. The major factor in these relations was the quest for autonomy and the use of Chinese recognition for legitimizing rule. The impact and importance of legitimization through Ming-recognition was that attractive, that it became a tool for state-independence. The tributary system so was not a system to project power but rather one of engagement and spinning a web of defense, security and trade purposes beyond the border which remained in equilibrium as long as all sides followed the ritualistic rules of the game. Therefore, it should not come as a surprise that the Tran state of Đại Việt was the first to congratulate the new Ming emperor in 1368 and anxious to establish a tributary relationship to eliminate a potential threat of invasion from its north as well as to receive an imperial sanction of its existence. These actions helped to define political and cultural borders wished for by both sides as Vietnam wanted to avoid incorporation into China and Chinese officials warned that unlike Yunnan or Guizhou the civilization was so different that an annexation was not necessary, as it did not represent a security threat. The Ming followed some red lines, the most important one that it only could bestow recognition as vassal to a legitimate dynasty. Apart from that, China rarely intervened directly – even when its territory was under pressure. For example, end of the 14th century when the Tran occupied a prefecture in Guangxi, the Ming did not intervene betting on the barbarians to fight each other before finding back a stable equilibrium of forces to the liking of the emperor. Also regarding the legitimate dynasty, the Ming were not always very orthodox about it particularly in cases when it was easier to support a usurper than to restore a legitimate line. The short-lived Mac-dynasty for example was readily accepted as tributaries when they offered five frontier-districts, even though the Lê dynasty was the legitimate line of rulers (BALDANZA 2016, 53-58).

In the web of relationships with major states that share a border with China, the Ming continued labelling every polity to which it entertained diplomatic relations as tributary that recognized the Chinese civilizational hierarchy. Titles in official documents reflected that – only the Ming ruler was an emperor, everyone else was a king. The continued practice of granting seals, robes and

titles continued to mark the cultural difference while the need for tributary relations helped the Ming with their own security and fostered their position as supreme state. End of the 14th century, the Hongwu emperor already stated not to attack states neuralgic for the Ming's security, among which Đại Việt. As the text of the Hongwu emperor does not mention the various Shan states nor Lan Xang or Lan Na, it seems they fall into a grey area of the border region. Đại Việt remained a large source of concern throughout the 15th and 16th century. The borders with Yunnan and Guangxi were porous and the cultural proximity to the native chieftains could incite rebellions the thinking went. The Ming went as far as supporting the Cham-kingdom to keep Đại Việt busy on its southern border in addition to edicts that should prohibit smuggling of copper to Đại Việt for its weapons production. The irony, that Đại Việt acquired this technology during the Ming-occupation and that it was the Ming who spread gunpowder technology in northern Southeast Asia not only shows the importance of the borderlands as mediators of technology and places of exchange but also how their importance and role in tributary relations became an important tool of independence (WADE 2004 17-19; WADE 2008 604-605; GUNN 2011, 305-306; SUN 2003, 516).

Đại Việt used the tributary relations with the Ming to maintain its own independence and helped with troops and assistance against rebellions in the borderlands. That was not always a given as the Ming considered invasions after dynastic disputes in Đại Việt in 1527 and 1547. The tributary model as a communication channel and influence without direct military involvement stayed intact over most of the time relying on rules and procedures for maintaining relations and spanning over and across the petty states in the borderlands to major centers. China was never an arbiter in case of dispute though. Case in point was King Tabinshwehti of Toungoo whose self-proclamation as charkavartin was challenged by King Chakkraphat of Ayutthaya and King Xetthatirat of Lan Xang. During the subsequent battles, wars and pillages, no one appealed to China to intervene, and China did not care. The only interest in disputes arose when there were succession struggles as the Ming only endorsed legitimate lines of succession – a policy that allowed for intervention when it seemed necessary but which it did not follow slavishly (STUART-FOX 2003 102-103).

2.2.3.3 Reinforcing a cultural border

Since the beginning of their dynasty, the Ming was convinced of the appeal of their rule under the doctrine of pacifying through military force and subsequent assimilation through rituals and institutions to bring the entire realm under the Mandate of Heaven. With greater attention to the southern border however, this fervor that every people can be made part of the empire began to fade as the situation, infrastructure and knowledge of the terrain was inadequate and the appeal of Chinese rule not that strong as envisaged. This dichotomy between claim and reality as well as the lack of a consistent border strategy set off a new way of looking at cultures and differences, which led to a strong differentiation between what is Chinese and what is not, and how to make this differences work for securing the border. Such a defensive standpoint had two effects. On the one hand, it required a new set of categorization and mapping tools to define the reach of the state, whereby culture worked as an amplifier to determine where China ends. On the other hand, it provided a degree of pro-activity on the side of the tuisi if they wanted to benefit from an alliance with the Ming-state. Looking at the campaign against the Great Vine Gorge, it becomes clear, that this campaign was the result of a chief, whose territory was contested by neighbouring tuisi and who hoped by openly allying with the Ming and adopting Chinese ways and customs to avoid his chieftain from extinction. These effects resulted in the creation of many internal, cultural frontiers (SHIN 2006 158-159; 160-162, 164; WOODSIDE 1998, 206; FAURE 2006 185).

Emphasizing the roles of rites and rituals played an important part, as it was a hierarchy of rituals organized by the bureaucratic offices such as the Bureau of Sacrifices, the Ministry of Rites and Court of Imperial Sacrifices that bound people to the emperor and the land to throne. Participation was thus an act of allegiance to the Chinese state mediated through the civil service, whose reach found an end in the dong-region. In that way, rituals and rites performed for the benefit of the state were also a demarcation exercise in which the decision to participate was used by both subjects, allied barbarians and barbarians beyond the pale of Chinese civilization to show which side they supported. Allegiance to the Ming state also had an effect on the self-understanding of the tuisi-chiefs. They adopted more and more of the ritual understanding in their own practices, for example regarding marriages and interactions between leaders and ordinary people of the chieftain. The cultural prestige of Sinicization let them appear as educated elite similar to Confucian scholar-officials that formed a unique caste of government officials, whose practices were a bordering exercise (BLANTON FARHGER 2008, 228-230; HERMAN 2006 157).

The greater social change happening during the Ming dynasty also had its effect on the border management. This was due to trade and commercialization of the border area, the integration into nation-wide or even international networks of merchants and increased travels into the area. More efforts were undertaken to categorize and index the borderland population of which the yellow registers were only an administrative functionality for a better understanding of the geography and local conditions. More important was to cement the difference between what is Chinese and barbarian for which myriads of gazettes and publications flooded bookshops across China describing in detail geography, customs and lifestyles of the people in the borderland. This cultural border had implications for matters such as defense and state extension. While a general belief persisted that with economic expansion and greater integration through merchant networks and political participation, assimilation could occur – and this was true for those communities producing specialized and luxury items – gazettes and the administrative structure helped laying down a state-border alongside the cultural border as well as showing an increased presence of the state where they were published. Descriptions of the land as inhospitable and barren as well as the lack of writers reinforced a perceived boundary between the civilized center and the barbarian border area (SHIN 2006 14-15, 46-47, 167, 170-171, 182).

The effects of assuming a natural boundary between the different natures of the civilized and barbarian worlds and a need to safeguard the ethnic differentiation between the people of the empire and those on the fringes accounted on the one hand for a certain degree of restraint vis-à-vis Đại Việt and certain Shan states, as evidenced by the manifesto of Vice-Minister Tang Zhou in 1537 that should define Ming international relations towards South for decades to come. On the other hand, the continued belief in the assimilationist forces of the Chinese culture allowed the border while becoming more pronounced to at least not become a hard boundary. Continued reliance on native chieftains as buffer zones in addition set a path dependency so that the dynasty was not prepared for strengthening the border defense with Ming-forces. The agricultural potential of the region, the proximity to Chinese population centers and the lack of military benefits that a continued border-policy could bring – except maybe the case of Đại Việt – so incited a cultural colonization of the borderlands through spreading agricultural techniques, schools and pressuring people to adopt a Chinese way of life in norms, dress and language. Apart from the household registration, this was furthered by recognizing local deities and worshipping communities, and opening the participation to official examinations. Economic exploitation supported this process as the rising demand for minerals set off Chinese immigration, which in turn created a set of rela-

tionships that were beyond government control, and either had to the effect a self-barbarization among the new settlers or diminishing autonomy of the chieftains. With the greater orthodoxy of the Ming towards its international relations in the 16th century, such relationships were increasingly seen as suspicious while an enforcement through rituals and ceremonies should avoid such mingling. Rituals as an aspect of statecraft were a defense mechanism to minimize contacts with foreigners, established for all non-Chinese to see the supremacy of the emperor and cemented a cultural differentiation in the border-interactions. In the end, while the cultural and political ideas of the border accounted for a more firm border-practice and an expansion of the Chinese cultural sphere, it was far from clearly defined or defended. Rather, the cultural border should demarcate a political location in the attitude of the people towards stateness – not their location was important but their attitude, whether they pay taxes, dress and speak in Ming style and do not object to registration and governance under Chinese administrative norms, which defines their location as in or outside the empire (SHIN 2007 90-92, 101-102; SCOTT 2009 121; LIEBERMAN 2008, 286; WILLS 2012 441-442).

In addition, military campaigns to increase the reach of the state reinforced the difference between China and the chieftains at the border as at the basis of these campaigns, it was necessary to distinguish between friend – people, who would pay taxes, provide corvée labor and pay tribute – and foe who would forego assimilation attempts. This was an inherent differentiation along cultural lines, which were reinforced by battles and the necessity of alliances to win as well as incited rebellions against Ming administration and military. The native population was so a growing military and civilian concern of the state, as disorder continued to flare up and spread since the 16th century, leading to mapping exercises to determine where the state existed in cultural terms, where it is supposed to exist in administrative terms and where it ends. It should not come as a surprise that fringes of Chinese civilization and administrative reach did not necessarily overlap (SHIN 2006 125-126, 129-131).

The use of currency also helped manifesting a cultural border. With Chinese tribute-trade at the center of the regional economy, the shift from copper to silver-based currency had ramifications for the states at the border. China required silver as a bullion to supply the liquidity for its currency, mining activities grew while in the southern border, and Chinese-style copper coins became the standard currency, whose value depended on the silver-price set by the Chinese intake. The dependency of Đại Việt on these coins meant that fluctuations in prices affected the economy to the degree that this was a main factor to ensure economic stability (GUNN 2011, 137-138). The

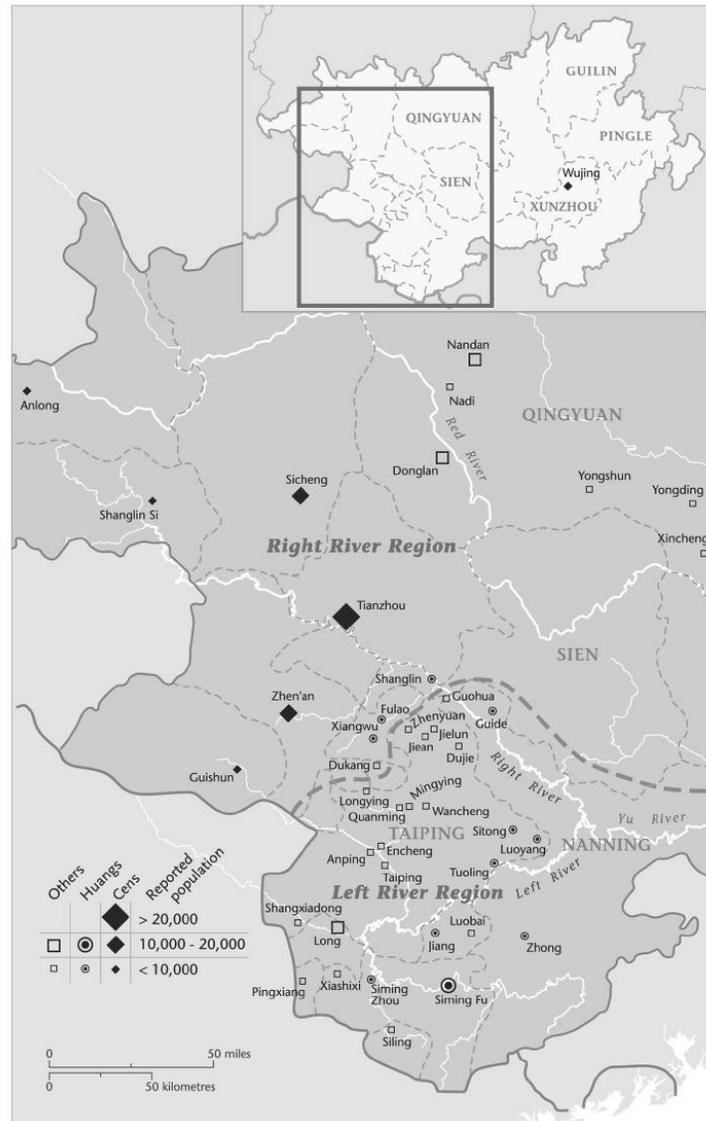
cyclical ebbs and flows of economic stability based on currency fluctuations added another layer in demarcating the end of the Chinese world.

The cultural border helped fixating political realities in the space of the dong-area and became a function for interdependence between tusi and the empire as well as the advantages of the Chinese empire in terms of troops, cohesion and administrative technique. The tusi-policy so reflected the situation on the ground of people that were submitted and those who were still able to defy Chinese rule and its obligations through knowledge of terrain, social organization and mobile subsistence strategies. The ramifications of this demarcation exercise were important factors in the decline of the state's grip over the area. In particular, the self-contentment that not all people could become assimilated and that the Chinese territory is bounded, the inward-concentration after 1430, the move of the capital north to Beijing and the mental fortification of a cultural boundary provided more freedoms for the chieftains and neighbor-states. Reliance on moral virtue and superiority of culture to ensure submission of chieftains without having to resort to the costly use of force thinly veiled that the Ming didn't have the resources and the reach to introduce the kind of order it wanted to see. Đại Việt benefitted from it as it could – once the threat from the north diminished – intensify the adoption of the Chinese model of governance it learned during the Ming occupation and expand its regional influence among the chieftains. (SCOTT 2009, 122-123, 125, WOMACK 2006, 129; STUART-FOX 2003, 96; FLYNN 2006 20-21).

2.2.4 Đại Việt: stabile border-fragmentation

Đại Việt was not a particularly easy neighbor in the run-up to the occupation as can be seen in the case of the chieftain Siming. Đại Việt encroached on the territory of this chieftain, seizing counties that are now all in the territory of Vietnam, depriving the Ming of tax revenues and causing unrest in the population. Đại Việt had an easy game to disregard any potential border, as no one knew where the location of its marker – a bronze pillar erected during the Han dynasty – was agreed. While Ming advocated that the disputed territory had already been absorbed by the state, Đại Việt rather followed actual practice on the ground and seized what was not official taken or guarded – that many chieftains in the dong-area also submitted taxes to the court in Thăng Long supported their view. The Ming let this – and other – episodes slide, reluctant to use force, yet the eventual occupation of Đại Việt as the province of Jiao-zhi only happened a few years after this incident (SHIN 2007 92-94). While the Siming issue – and generally ongoing border issues – were for sure one reason for the invasion and the occupation, the war itself was brought about by

following the Ming-rule of only recognizing legitimate houses of rulers – and they were under the impression the Lê lied about their usurpation. In addition, it was an opportunity to control the trade of precious metals to and from Đại Việt and to clamp down on smuggling (O’HARROW 1979 162; SHIN 2007, 95).



Map 8: Chieftains in the Guangxi-Đại Việt area 1580 (SHIN 2006 60)

The Ming occupation from 1407 to 1427 was a watershed for the Vietnamese state and had great ramifications on the practices of ordering and demarcating between these two states. Nearly 800,000 troops – both Chinese and local – marched towards Đại Việt, supplied with goods from the chieftains of Yunnan and Guizhou and armed with firearms far more superior than the Vietnamese weaponry. While the Chinese state so could pull more chieftains closer to the cause and

resource-allocation of the national economy, Đại Việt was in disarray, the new emperor Tran Qui Khoang fled to its western borderlands where he was finally caught and the Ming set off a plan of outright and direct colonization of the revived province of Jiao-zhi. This included hefty taxes on the general population to maintain the new administration, conscriptions to fight against rebellions and work on military farms. The focus on maintaining administration and army expanded the range of the Chinese state not just in Jiao-zhi but the border-area in general. The Ming occupation also spurred military technology transfers, which increased the defense capabilities of the Vietnamese. These new weapons employed in Lê Lợi 's guerilla tactics finally pushed the Chinese troops out. In hindsight, the Ming invasion in the beginning of the 15th century was not a weakening of Đại Việt, but rather a confirmation of the state's identity. With the failed attempt to incorporate it as a Chinese province, a new wave of political and intellectual self-assertion emerged, that beyond the pride of military mastery also found its way to the general populace. The Ming set up 472 military and civilian offices staffed by Chinese and Vietnamese that regulated all aspects of life from tax and toll collection to household registration, while the army was tasked to crush the leftover Vietnamese forces and pacify the land. While the Ming with their tusi-policy broke up a Tai cultural zone and re-appropriated a part of it for its own purpose of border-protection, the failed occupation of Vietnam showed a limit to the southern expansion of the Ming. The Ming so rendered a huge service to the Vietnamese state as the administrative structures the Ming occupants set up to rule the province of Jiao-zhi helped with the self-assertion as the state suddenly had a network of communication channels, an apparatus of officials and representatives in nearly all corners of the country at hand, also in areas in which the Vietnamese had no actual foothold (WOMACK 2006 129-130; WADE 2006, 78-80, 82; SUN 2003, 499, 509-510; HACK/RETTIG 2006a, 27; FRENCH 2017, 137).

Vietnam so emerged from the Ming occupation with a strong Neo-Confucianist agenda under the Lê dynasty in 1427. Đại Việt could do so, as the threat from China was after the occupation drastically reduced and the Ming was generally more occupied with its own cohesion than expansion. This allowed shifting away from military cohesion and intellectual differentiation to civilian rule and ideological appropriation for identity building. The acknowledgement of a Vietnamese space was invaluable for the Lê dynasty to neutralize the threat from the northern neighbor, and to get access to the information necessary to conduct its external relations and internal governance. In general, after the end of the occupation in 1427, Đại Việt enjoyed a century of peace with strong trading relations, a settled population that also pushed into new arable lands, and a bureaucratic-

administrative model, which allowed setting up a military shield to support that agrarian expansion. Economic growth and market integration filled the treasury of the Lê dynasty and spurred investments into the dissemination of norms and values through schools and academies, helping to unify the state and emerge as a regional role model (LIEBERMAN/BUCKLEY 2012, 1081-1082; FRENCH 2017, 138-139, 142).

Đại Việt could so consider itself as the center of the galaxy of the lesser powers in the region and expand its territory. It also asked for demarcation of the cultural-political realm. The state ideology under which the governance followed strong meritocratic-bureaucratic principles foresaw scholar-officials at the core. The state spread the new doctrine over the country by sponsoring Confucian temples and provincial offices for public works. Following the Chinese role model, military farms were set up while registrars and maps shall define the boundaries of the state. The objective was to create a common level of understanding through the prism of Neo-Confucianism, reduce the risk of rebellions, and to increase the capacities of the state, while provinces could benefit from improved revenues through better censuses and a professional administration. Together with public executions and a hard stance against minorities to adopt Vietnamese names and ways of life, this strategy enhanced the reach and cohesion of the state and introduced a structured and orderly approach towards border-management, reducing the area of fluidity. These were integral parts of the formation of the border, and the Ming started to show great interest in finding geographic key points indicating the border. The chieftains Pingxiang and Long Zhou emerged as official contact zones between the states while Siming was left to Đại Việt. To instill a greater sense of order, the Ming launched efforts to better control cross-border traffic (WOMACK 2006, 132-133, 135; DUTTON 2006 67-68, 127-128; LIEBERMAN 1993, 484).

Major issues persisted with the border. For once, minorities such as the Zhuang, Hmong and Yao were the majority in this area and had no appetite for the strict Confucianist codes the Lê dynasty wanted to impose. Access to the abundant mineral resources was important to the state but the ignorance regarding national sovereignty on the side of bandits, Chinese miners and disenfranchised army remnants from the tuis undermined state control in this area, making the border a guideline for military intervention rather than a confinement of national space. The Ming and Đại Việt also had a different understanding what the border meant. For Đại Việt it was a boundary of territory wrested from China, while the Ming viewed it as a line of concession within its tributary orbit. The Ming stayed mostly loyal to this concession and rejected petitions from minorities to become their own state (WOMACK 2006 133-134).

While the northern border was essential for the Vietnamese understanding of independence and statehood, the Lê dynasty had a more flexible approach to the Western borderlands. Đại Việt enlarged its territory towards Lan Xang, but plunged into civil war when Mạc Đăng Dung gained more power, pitting two noble families against him: the Nguyễn, under Nguyễn Hoàng Dụ and the Trịnh, under Trịnh Duy Đại and Trịnh Duy Sản. Both left the court in 1522, starting a civil war against Mạc Đăng Dung during which the emperor Le Chieu Tong was killed. In the far north, a new entity emerged when the brothers Vũ Văn Mật and Vũ Văn Uyên wrestled off Trịnh rule and founded their own state Chúa Bầu. This entity, despite loyal to the Lê emperor shall remain until 1699. The weakened Lê dynasty could not hold its territories anymore and noble families filled the power vacuum. Mac Dang Dung proclaimed himself emperor in 1527, founding the Mac dynasty and reducing the Lê dynasty to a residue living off the support of the Nguyễn and Trịnh families. The king in exile Le Duy Ninh was crowned in Sam Chau, today Lao territory, and it was not until 1539 that the Lê dynasty began to set foot in Đại Việt territory again. The Nguyễn and Trịnh fought for their own power, driving the Mac further north as of 1533. In 1592, the Mac lost control over Hanoi and later had to move even further north where they controlled the borderland provinces of Cao Bang with support of the Ming and Qing dynasties until 1677 (VU/SHARROCK 2014, 125, 128-129; BALDANZA 2016, 135-136).

2.2.4.1 Reordering of tributary relations

The main tributary relation defining the standpoint of Đại Việt in the international arena remained with the Ming. The border remained permeable after the failed colonization attempt, yet first demarcation efforts were under way. The early recognition of Đại Việt as the kingdom of Annam in the south was rather a sign of pre-occupation of the Ming with the potential Mongol threat, not so much of special attention for the southern border as there tributary relations seemed stable and the chieftain-buffer has not yet developed and was orderly enough to warrant for expansionist measures (SHIN 2007, 92-93). Therefore, the tributary relationship Đại Việt maintained with the Ming dynasty was an important framework to negotiate relations and secure continued independence through the routinization of exchanges and rituals. When it was stable, Đại Việt could attribute resources to other purposes than preparing for an attack from the north such as into external relations of its own. Đại Việt claimed to be a center of the region for lesser states, inducing a divide-and-rule factionalism for its own benefit (WOMACK 2006 137). Gunpowder technology acquired through the Ming occupation helped to that end. Đại Việt spread gunpowder

through its borders to Muang Phuan, which it annexed in 1479 as Tranh Ninh province. Following the Ming example in Yunnan, it allowed manufacture and use of firearms in the province, and tried its best to shape it as a Vietnamese province. Vietnamese know how and technology also helped Lan Na invading Nan and the constant influx of technology from Ming China allowed Đại Việt to substantiate its claims militarily in the Sipsong Chau Tai and Sipsong Panna region and to make Laos a tributary. Troops managed to get as far as the Ava kingdom, yet warnings from the Ming and threats of using military force at the northern frontier made the Vietnamese withdraw in 1480s (GUNN 2011, 305-306; SUN 2003, 514).

The Ming doctrine after the occupation of Đại Việt, the reliance on chieftains and the tributary framework opened wide liberties for Đại Việt to act in the border area. It continued to encroach on Ming-related chieftains, while the rulers in Beijing were contented by relying on tributary communication channels to pressure Đại Việt to refrain from entering its territory. On the other hand, the Ming also used Đại Việt as a tributary of its realm and thus subjected to a strict divide-and-rule policy to foster order at the border on the Ming's behalf. Only late in the 15th century, the Ming court got more preoccupied with the exact location of the border and still relied on cooperation of the chieftains as well as Đại Việt to determine where it should be. The reverse case also happened – Chinese chieftains encroaching on Đại Việt territory as in the case of Xialei and Guishun in the 1580s. In this particular case, the Ming receded the territory to the Vietnamese for the sake of maintaining order. This also accounts for a shift in the Ming behavior. In the 15th century, they followed a doctrine of an omnipotent state, yet in the 16th century, the Ming recused themselves to avoid troubles in the southern border. While the situation may seem contradictory, these instances show that demarcation was rather pragmatic and transaction based affair as long as it pertained to tusi-territory and not areas under the direct control of Ming authorities for which Beijing didn't have the willingness to compromise: defected villages were forced to return, the leverage of recognition used to force Đại Việt to return settlements or threats of war exchanged (SHIN 2007, 97-98).

2.2.4.2 Territorial fragmentation among Trinh, Nguyễn, Lê and Mac

Since the intensified Sinicization under the Tran dynasty and the appropriation of the dynastic style of rule, it was clear that borders – or at least the one to China – were supposed to be fixed and not porous, and that it's the job of the emperor to defend them. However, the fragmented so-

cial structure and localized understanding of statehood and rule across the claimed territory of the state was not conducive to set these ideals into reality, as they depended on circumstances on the ground more than the perceived eternal prestige of institutions and morality. This web of political ideas and obligations – with the emperor at its center – rested to a large degree on personal and informal exercise of power through different channels and outlets of the royal family as a whole and its representatives and bureaucrats on the ground. While bureaucratic on the surface, loyalty and reliance was an essential feature, as there were hardly schools teaching the virtues of the empire like the ones in China. The state so could only hold together when its agents were united, a situation the Lê dynasty abated a bit but not totally, accounting for a tripartite split of the country (WOLTERS 1995, 73).

The Lê dynasty was at its height of political and military strength at the end of the 15th century, yet a dramatic decline set in in the 16th century when a series of weak emperors came to the throne – unable to continue national integration and alienating the people until numerous uprisings and rebellions spread. Mạc Đăng Dung emerged as the undisputed ruler by 1527, and while first defending the Lê-court he soon seized the throne and chased away the Lê. The two large military clans of the Nguyễn and Trịnh families emerged as de-facto rulers of large swathes of Đại Việt in a protracted and confusing civil war, whose fault lines broke open between all three parties. 1533 the Lê dynasty was restored except for the northern part as of the Red River delta, which remained under Mac-control. The Mac finally had to retreat to the far north of Vietnam in 1592 where they set up their own state in opposition to the Trinh. In line with their policies regarding succession struggles, the Ming, despite many petitions, never recognized an independent Mac kingdom in the north – though they were considered tributaries when they offered some mountain ranges to the Ming dynasty (WOMACK 2006, 138; DUTTON 2006, 19-20). The Trinh on the other hand had to fight with popular unrest against their rule throughout the entire territory, but especially in frontier regions (DUTTON 2006, 21).

Despite these upheavals, the shift towards the Chinese model continued in all three administrations, whereby the Mac adopted it in a more orthodox form. Driven out of Thăng Long in 1592, they survived under Ming protection as Commissioner General in their enclave while the Trinh-Nguyễn divide continued despite the official restoration of the Lê in 1533, who were at the forefront in all diplomatic exchanges with the Ming. A peculiar situation so emanated at the northern border area in which neither the legitimate ruling house, the Lê, nor the two powerful military clans Trinh and Nguyễn had control or authority despite repeated claims. The area was fragment-

ed between the Mac dominion and the appearance of the Chua Bau principality in addition to the Zhuang/Chuang polities. The ties holding these parts of Vietnam together and the claims that left them apart as individual polities made the frontier difficult and dangerous to navigate, either because they had the skills and knowledge to contest the state or a tradition to resist against central authority. This fragmentation was a remarkably stable arrangement, not the least because after the Ming-expulsion from Vietnam, the focus shifted away from lines of succession and political legitimacy to territorial administration along the frontier – from idealistic orthodoxy of Confucianism to the pragmatism of border-management in which military power and family connections determined political authority (WILLS 2012, 454-456; DUTTON 2006, 61-62).

2.2.4.3 Chúa Bầu – utilizing the border to maintain power at the center

The roots of the often-overlooked Chúa Bầu state that played a major role in maintaining a fragmented equilibrium in the autonomous border-region lay in the usurpation of the chieftain Dai Dong by Vũ Văn Uyên by exploiting the chaotic situation at the border around the time when the Mac took over the throne in Thăng Long. He quickly expanded his territory to the entire region of Tuyen Quang and Hung Hoa. The sparsely populated and remote area would not have been too difficult to re-take, however from this location Vũ Văn Uyên could play the infighting factions of the lowlands to his own benefits. In 1533 he teamed up with the Lê and Trinh to fight against the Mac, as well as built good relations to the Ming dynasty who, when they discovered the new state, simply saw in it another chieftain. The Mac tried several times to invade the region, yet suffered setbacks. When the Lê/Trinh families were fighting against the retreating Mac in the 1550s, the Vu-clan provided auxiliary troops and defended their territory against Mac-incursions. For his services, and the fact that they had such a large military force and could credibly refuse to join the Lê-dynasty and surrender their autonomy, the Vu clan was bestowed the title of Governor of Tuyen Quang – quite analogue to the Chinese model of trying to incorporate too powerful tuis. The Vu-clan fortified their seat and turned Dai Dong into a regional center. They consolidated the territorial reach through the foundations of hamlets, villages and cities, an effective administration dividing the lands in 11 provinces, each of which setting up their own troops. Chúa Bầu could develop in this way as throughout the period, the clan provided troops, resources and infrastructure to fight the retreating Mac with considerable success. The fights continued throughout the 1560s and 1570s when the Mac-territory was already reduced to the area north of the Red River delta, while the actual borderline between Mac and Vu territory remained stable. The major

upset happened in 1593, when the Trinh ousted the Mac from Thăng Long and installed a Lê emperor. The Vu-clan came with tribute offerings and troops hoping for a promotion or at least confirmation of their long-held title as Governor of Tuyen Quang – yet it was Trinh Tung, the head of the Trinh clan who was installed as Admiral of the North and Guardian of the Frontier. Insulted, the Vu turned against the Lê, starting attacks against the neighboring provinces in 1594. Having defeated several provincial power holders and annexed substantial territory, Vu Duc Cung proclaimed himself as King of Long Binh in 1595, financing his court by robbing silver mines and heavy taxation. Trinh Tung had to send his troops, yet was defeated and the Vu rallied with their erstwhile enemies, the Mac. The Trinh, busy to fight the Nguyễn in the south, tolerated the situation in the north as it shielded the Lê-court for the time being from greater Chinese influence. As the Vu were tributaries to China as a vassal state, a potential invasion also did not seem the best choice. It was only in the 1672, after the reunification in the South, that the Vu-Mac-area got under such great pressure that the clan-chiefs fled to Yunnan with the help of the Qing dynasty and the Vietnamese court could reclaim Tuyen Quang. The Lê granted the Vu-clan Tuyen Quang as a lordship, yet Vu Cong Tuan crossed over to Yunnan in 1685 and raised rebel troops of Nung/Zhuang and Tho/Tu, to raid the province he was supposed to rule. In 1689, the Lê-court sent troops and captured Vu Cong Tuan, yet in the chaos of raids and pillaging, three border settlements of Nguu Duong, Hồ Điệp, Phở Viên that supposedly belonged to Tuyen Quang had run over to Qing China – and now wanted to re-submit to the Lê-court. This eventually led to conflicts between the Qing and the Lê, eventually leading to an incorporation of these areas into the Qing administrative system (BALDANZA 2014, 121-123; BALDANZA 2016, 135-136; ZOTTOLI 2011, 102, 104; VU 2016, 50-51; NGUYỄN 1991, 190-192).

The Vu-clan could keep its power for such a prolonged time as it navigated the difficult territory, benefitted from the political situation of a split Vietnam, secured its grip through relations to the Ming as well as the Trinh when it was opportune, and could count on a strong, even quasi-religious allegiance of its subjects. It established itself as a firm block on the border for more than a century and as a root-cause for border-fragmentation stabilized it by maintaining the existence of the Chua Bau state through strong international ties reflective of the geopolitical situation.

2.2.4.4 Mạc – continued fluidity in the border-area

The house of Mac remained an odd player in the statehood-biotope in the region. Mac Dang Dung being a usurper and the legitimate Lê-line of heirs still intact, the Ming refused him the

recognition of king of Annam and settled only for the title of Commissioner General – a title also provided to larger tuis. As the Nguyễn-Trinh alliance swiftly took over most of Vietnam, the Mac implemented a kingdom in the red-river delta in 1533 and later when driven out from there a state in Cao Bang province in the far north of Vietnam in 1592, using the remoteness of the terrain to create facts by claiming and ruling over Chinese chieftains. After the six-year interregnum, Mac Dang Dung carried on with this title when his territory was reduced to the area north of the Red River delta and even later, the Ming did not reduce his title. The Mac maintained their autonomy in four provinces around Cao Bang in the far north, kept their title as Commissioner General of Annam and proved to be a loyal tuis to the Ming. As they navigated the fluidity of the frontier-zone well and depended on recognition in some form for their political survival, the Mac state continued to exist until 1677. Their local power was greater than most of the other tuis on either side of the border, and while they were loyal to the Ming, they also used the general lawlessness of the area to snatch counties, people and arable land from beyond the Vietnamese border since an expansion towards the south was no option for the Mac as Nguyễn and Trinh controlled it on behalf of the Lê. Only very late, the Ming increased their vigilance towards the southern border trying to reign in together with the Trinh clan to avoid a powerful contender to their authority to rise. In the end, the Mac only made one strategic mistake – that was to support the Ming against the Qing end of the 17th century who in turn withdrew their protection and crushed it together with the rebellion of Wu Sangui (WILLS 2012, 456-457; SHIN 2007, 96).

The Mac were very shrewd in employing Neoconfucianist principles introduced during the Ming occupation through civil service and law codes as an attempt to unify the territory of the country. The schooling system and state-examinations administered by the Mac proved to be an effective tool as records show that people from the outer provinces were broadly integrated into the bureaucracy at all levels – a situation that changed in 1592 to the end of the Lê dynasty (COOKE 1994, 288).

The Mac dynasty in combination with the tuis-system proved to be a double-edged sword for the stability in the region. As relations with the Mac and local chieftains allowed to imagine a degree of order in the dong-region, rivalries, competition, hostilities and violence between and among these players emanated now and again whenever chieftains or the Mac wanted to enlarge their realms or acted not in line with national policies. This was true during the Mac dynasty as well as the reduced Mac-house in the far north Cao Bang province of Vietnam. The Guishun chieftain provided refuge for the Mac clan, for which it was battered by both the reinstated Lê, the Ming as

well as the Mac who felt betrayed. Later half of Guishun was offered to the Mac as compensation; as a buffer zone, a native chieftain also served as scapegoat for whatever problems arose around its actions. Later, however, the Mac helped Guishun with taking over a neighboring chieftain (SHIN 2007 100-101). The Mac behavior in the north gives a glimpse on the fluidity of alliances, boundaries as well as the gap between the actual situation on the ground and the idealistic attributions and hopes the chieftain-system should have fulfilled.

2.2.4.5 The end of the interregnum – restoring order through rituals and rites

With the restoration of the Lê-dynasty after the six-year Mac interregnum, the power still stayed with the Nguyễn (south) and the Trinh clans in the northern half, fighting on behalf of the Lê to restore the dynasty over the entire country – except the Mac state in the north as of 1533 and reduced to Cao Bang province in 1592. The main issue for the Trinh was national reunification. Sticking to its traditional military orientation, the Trinh did not have much spirit for the bureaucratic model embraced by the Lê as well as the Mac. Only when this approach began to fail, the Trinh decided to re-introduce a bureaucratic administration with a particular focus on state-motivation for agriculture, monetization, market proliferation and a reduction of the role of chieftains. Taxation was centralized, household registers replaced by village-level population figures (WHITMORE 1997, 672).

The fragmented border-stability Đại Việt enjoyed was an anomaly. From 1527, when the Mac usurped the throne, no legitimate dynasty had control or could credibly claim autonomy over the border. The fragmentation between the Mac and the Vu-clans proved surprisingly stable, as it not only outlasted the fight for Lê-restoration, the chaotic situation to the West in Laos, the split of Đại Việt between Nguyễn and Trinh, the fragmented border seemed like a beacon of stability for more than 100 years during the civil war starting in 1627, the decline of Ming power and the multiple rebellions in Yunnan and Guangxi. It evidences that the border-area taken by itself is not a violent region, yet only a result of the interplay of central state forces. The fascinating fact, that these two polities existed for such a long time, is that they could do so as their existence was not politicized. Claimants, like the Trinh or the Ming were caught up in their own domestic struggles and issues so that the polities could develop more or less shielded from central-state influence to whose behavior they otherwise would have had to adapt. In addition, the stabilizing factor of elite

behavior, especially in combination with recognition as Chinese vassal state carry a long way towards implementing a stable border polity.

2.2.5 Upending the era of stability in the 16th and 17th centuries

One may argue that the independence of Đại Việt in 1427 and subsequent retreat of the state and increased reliance on tuis was already an early sign of decline of the Ming. These issues broke open later with the administrative changes, the reduction of military colonies and the restructuring of the tuis, so that by the end of 16th century banditry was endemic in the Southern border, vastly outnumbering regular troops. Military farms were illegally converted to private enterprises, people defected from the draft, became bandits or joined troops of local states – phenomenon that started already end of the 15th century to flee from the killing, terrorization and exploitation by government forces. Eunuch officials were infamous for over-exploiting and mistreating the populace and siphoning off tributary payments and taxes, and going as far as supporting private armies and establishing their own fiefdoms. With the more inward-looking, laissez-faire approach of the state, while continuing demanding large indemnities for recognition, such incidences became rampant in the 16th century. People so simply vanished from government registers to operate outside of the law. In addition, since the occupation of Vietnam, which marked a turning point for the military deployment, the scale of warfare increased, death tolls skyrocketed and soldiers began questioning the purpose of their deployments. It became more and more difficult to find enough conscripts, neighboring provinces to Yunnan and Guizhou had to supply troops while mercenaries took a toll on the state finances. So-called farmer soldiers – natives to assist the Ming in warfare and settled in newly-recognised chieftains – were relocated all over the borderlands with only loose ties and limited loyalty to the Ming. They became a destabilizing factor as they started to band up with the chieftains they settled in or became autonomous units. In addition, the Ming relied more and more on hired tax collection agents and private contractors for maintaining infrastructure and administrative tasks, so that lack of coordination, corruption and lack of quality of government services increased discontent among the local population which eventually led to more and more rebellions (SHIN 2006, 36-39, 76-77, 113, 114; BLANTON/FARGHER 2008 82-83; WADE 2008, 617; FLYNN 2006, 24).

The entire chieftain system rested on mutual benefits and was therefore inherently unstable. The chieftains forged alliances with or waged wars against each other, with territories and domains

shifting between different clans. By the 16th century, the violence was at its peak, the Ming could not uphold the carefully crafted façade of control any longer and the established chiefs used the situation for their benefits to the detriment of the Ming. Even though the Ming frowned upon wars between tributaries, it was not often willing or capable to send troops to prevent violence from happening. Infighting and seizing each other's territories became so a normal state of affairs in the border area while the Ming hoped that these infights were a natural check so that no tusi would grow too big. Interestingly, despite all concerns over security threats, the Ming at no point of time had an issue if a principality was tributary to more than one power, as long as relations remained civil with China. Not being willing to send troops was one thing but many chieftains were already strong enough that any use of force from the central state only led to greater backlashes increasing the dependence on the chieftains to keep order in the border region, setting off a vicious cycle in during which the Ming at its border became more a captive of the chieftains than vice versa (SHIN 2006, 73-74, 81, 82-85, 88-89; STUART-FOX 2003 102).

The only conceivable solution seemed to use more native officials to secure the border, which in turn reduced the grip of the state over this territory. Continued reliance on chieftains so became a curse, especially as the capital needed more and more native soldiers to suppress rebellions, such as in Yunnan or Guizhou in the 17th century. To settle conflicts among chieftains, the parties stopped seeking support from Beijing but shifted their attention more and more to the southern neighbours, especially the Mac clan of Đại Việt, evidencing the loss of relevance of the Ming at its own border and inducing a new era of fluidity. This was marked by chieftains still fulfilling their role as buffer states but reduced willingness or ability due to warfare and dislocation of population to really prevent intrusions and effectively demarcate the border (SHIN 2006, 93, 100-101). The ability to extort taxes from the chieftains also diminished over time. Tax reductions and exemptions happened more frequently as a sign of goodwill and so extended the reach of the state through benevolence and attractiveness, however it either became clear to the chieftains that this was just a façade to create a semblance of order, or that middlemen to retrieve the taxes used the lack of control to enrich themselves, which eventually led to more violence against Ming representatives and settlers. This worked up to the point at which the Ming recognized the mere presence of non-Chinese people as the source of all trouble at the southern border and the long time it would take for them to get civilized was often taken as a pretext for the use force against the chieftains (SHIN 2006, 115, 116, 137, 140; WADE 2008, 601-602).

The chieftains never were passive participants in a Ming projection of order mediated through rules and regulation, rather their ability to form, bend and decide on the observance of these rules for the sake of a semblance of order and for their own benefit began to become more evident and the fluidity of political boundaries celebrated more openly. This dynamic was longer lasting than the Ming dynasty as even the Republic of China still had to rely on similar interactions with these chieftains as did the Ming (SHIN 2006 104-105). The factionalism at the border exacerbated already around the time of the Ming-retreat from Vietnam. With the growing consolidation attempts and influx from the core-state of the Ming, the Yao retreated initially towards the border, yet as of 1437, they launched major attacks against Ming symbols of governance. In 1437, they took a county seat at the border when they teamed up with bandits and formed a veritable army. More attacks should follow, spreading violence and terror in the Lingnan-area against which the local military commanders could do little due to a lack of troops, means and materials. Attack followed counter-attack but in the end, the Ming contented itself with a lenient Yao-policy, relying on pledges of allegiance, formal tributary relations and gradual integration into the tusi-system. Three Yao wars took place nevertheless in 1465, 1526 and 1537, testifying that the situation was out of control for the Ming state. Interestingly, while the area plunged into chaos, the campaigns were seen as a show of strength in Trinh-Đại Việt, which submitted as vassal so that while the interior border was set ablaze, the transborder-relations stabilized (FAURE 2006 173, 178). Another example was the Shuixi tusi, that was controlled by thirteen clans forming a powerful alliance and eventually responsible for one of the largest rebellions at the border. Through the Shuixi-area went the two largest trade routes connecting China with Yunnan and with the general trend to integrate tuis closer with the central state, around 1600 the Ming set their eyes on Shuixi. The 13 clansmen by that time expanded their political control into Ming territories as well as continued raiding Chinese settlements to obtain the workforce needed for their economy – a fact that became increasingly less tolerable for the Ming. In addition, Shuixi boasted a deep and wide trade network, which changed the strategic balance in the border-region, so that after 1600 any attempt of Shuixi to expand further or raid villages was met with a high degree of violence in retaliation (HERMAN 2006, 149). This set off a vicious cycle that together with succession struggles in which the Ming intervened plunged the entire Southwest frontier into chaos during the 1620s and 1630s – the so called She-An rebellion (奢安之乱), named after two pacification-commissioners who fought each other as well as the Ming state. The Shuixi troops succeeded in occupying major cities – among them also Chengdu and Chongqing – and pushing back the

Ming-campaigns. The Ming had to mount a large, multiprovincial army in addition to the already conscripted tusi-forces to fight back. The “using barbarians to fight barbarians” only worked this time as the Ming promised ownership of land, goods and people seized during battles. This time, the Ming faced an enemy with an attractive economic model and a social model that was closer to those of the tusi than the Ming-state could offer. It had so massive difficulties to keep morale up and prevent large-scale defections. As the state saw the threat of losing access to Yunnan due to the expansion of the Shuixi polity, it was not only faced with its limited control over the area and the impracticality of indirect rule but also with its cultural-institutional limitations to attract tusi-loyalty. It finally had to concede that there were no mechanisms in place through which the Ming could project control and authority over the elites. Splitting up larger polities into smaller ones that were easier to handle, only incited more violence at the border. In the end, the Ming could not reap the fruits of the abolition or splitting-up of several large Pacification Commissions. While they started setting up civilian institutions in the more unruly tusi, native chiefs still stayed in power to supervise the ethnic population and so perpetuated the indirect rule system. So while the Ming polity aggressively tried to extend its influence over the borderlands in the southwest, it had to constantly make compromises with the non-Chinese population and models of rule to not set the entire region ablaze. In the end, the transition from indirect rule never really happened, rather indigenous leaders continued to rule more or less autonomously large parts of the area over which the Ming seemed to lose more and more its grip of control as evidenced by vacated prefecture positions well into the Qing-dynasty (HERMAN 2006 151-153; HERMAN 2005, 154).

The cultural border also showed early on symptoms of decline that were catalyzed by the Great Rituals Controversy in 1520. It led to attempts to standardize village rituals and the emergence of ancestral halls as key-loci of villages, which drove away villagers used to their traditional ways of worship. The yellow registers also began a different role to play as they were continuously used as a tax account, which in turn alienated villagers who did not want to provide the services connected with being a registered household (FAURE 2006, 183).

The combination of military campaigns, loosening grip of actual power and a greater wish of the local population to dissociate itself from the sometimes onerous Ming-requirements to be part of their civilizational-administrative orbit led up to a situation in which the cultural border stopped overlapping with political boundaries and didn't match the reach of government-force anymore. The fragile stabilization ended up in greater desires for autonomy and actual realization of these

desires by force or insubordination to Ming-protocols. Paired with a weakening interest of the Ming court towards its southern border since the 1580s, which resulted also in a reduction of tributary missions to Beijing, these trends catalyzed the end of an increasingly decadent Ming, that more and more lost control over its southern realm and vassals (STUART-FOX 2003, 103). Growing resistance against the Ming in the north and the capture of the capital in 1644 by the Qing drastically changed the dynamics of the border-area. Receding Ming loyalists tried to set up strongholds in the South, but the tuisis – not bound anymore to the emperor – readily made use of their new autonomy, as did Đại Việt. The Southwestern frontier was in turmoil for nearly thirty years until the Qing managed to re-conquer Yunnan and Guizhou. It was not just the desire for autonomy among the local people, there was also a massive influx of Ming loyalists who tried to escape the Manchu. To illustrate the degree of chaos, rebel leader Zhang Xianzhong (张献忠) even established his own Daxi (大西) dynasty in Sichuan, Yunnan and Guizhou, whose army negotiated territorial questions on equal footing with the remnants of the Ming-court in Guilin even after Zhang was killed by the Manchus. In the meantime, Đại Việt seized the hour, renamed a river further in China's territory with the name of the old border-river and seized the land in between which was rich in copper, silver and lead. Đại Việt did not stop there but encroached further, while the Qing rejected a campaign to retake territories lost under the late Ming. The borderland with so many entangling interests so became the final battleground between Ming and Qing forces and those of local rebels and smaller states. While the battles were fought out in the 1660s and 1670s, re-establishing the Qing-territory to approximately the geographic reach of Ming-reign, the area continued to be in disarray and it was a bright and equally ruthless border-official, Ortai, whose policies shall later calm the situation and set up an order that should last until the modern era (HERMAN 2006, 156; WILLS 2012 457-458). The consequences of these decade-long fights were dire: the population dropped, cultural facilities were destroyed, the education system uprooted and locals had hardly any possibility to compete in the imperial examinations, so that there were no indigenous links that could connect the province with the imperial center (LI 2003, 923-924).

The adjacent border-countries followed a similar trend. All major cities except Thăng Long were captured and even destroyed during the messy 16th and 17th centuries, with special attention from European traders that in many cases such as Myanmar supplied arms in return for access to commodities. Changes of capitals such as in the case for Lan Xang or the restored Toungoo dynasty indicate the wish for order through a fresh start and a reduction of foreign ties (REID 1990,

653; LIEBERMAN 1991, 3). In Đại Việt the truce between the Trinh and Nguyễn in the mainland and the Mac and Vu-clans in the border provided a stable fragmentation for some time, but civil war broke out in 1627 with arms support from the Dutch and Portuguese (STUART-FOX 2003 104-105).

This was one scene where European meddling in Southeast Asian affairs started to appear trying to influence state development and bringing the region into a capitalistic economic and social order. Others included Burmese-Portuguese ties that provided the Toungoo with arms and destabilized their grip on power, leading eventually to a relocation of the capital. Regarding China, foreign contacts with the Dutch and Portuguese happened along the parameters of tributary relations – on par with the Southeast Asian states and reinforcing the Chinese view of the world order despite the dissolving tendencies at its fringes (HALL 1984, 85; STUART-FOX 2003, 95-96).

The chaotic situation in the Tai states since the Toungoo expansion, the fall of Lan Na, the reduction of Lan Xang to a vassal state of Ayutthaya and the continued Burmese-Thai rivalry were also accompanied by a steady stream of upheavals and rebellions throughout the 16th and 17th centuries that weakened the polities in their entirety. Firearms, agrarian expansion, increased state-capacity to meddle at its margins catalyzed the issues and helped on the one hand with territorial consolidation as evidenced by the successes of the first Toungoo dynasty and later the reduced restored Toungoo dynasty, on the other hand accounted for fissions, frictions and multiple competing alliances and defections that plunged the area into chaos. The basic issues around the difficulties with controlling outlying dependencies and maintaining a sound treasury due to personalized rule, the political prowess of the sangha and the governance parameter of ruling over people while ignoring territorial control remained and contributed the chaotic situation at the end of this cycle (LIEBERMAN/BUCKLEY 2012, 1084-1085).

This period leading up the beginning of the 17th century – a watershed moment of the border area with the collapse of the first Toungoo dynasty 1599, the decline of the Ming and rise of the Qing in 1644 and the retreat of the Mac dynasty to the Cao Bang area 1592 – was generally marked by a strengthening of ideological authority of rule and centralization, putting the throne and king at the center and spreading the order through the infrastructure of social governance. This could take the form of temples, schools, military farms, rituals in Theravada-polities, legal codes and scholarship in Confucianist polities, which rendered the fringes into more of a resemblance of the state both in terms of administrative structures as well as expected behavior of the inhabitants. While the regulatory ambition was different between the polities, the state in its abstract form

pushed stronger into its borderlands by officially sanctioning them as borderlands of the state and imposing a functionality of bordering through ritual, legal codes and ways of life. While the means were very different when comparing the centers, they all managed to reduce the zone of fluidity, pushing the frontier into further outlying areas. Integration into the national and regional economy supported this trend in general and transmitted through trade and interaction cultural norms and a national conscience, which in turn increased the potential, costs and scale for warfare and conflicts (LIEBERMAN 2008, 290-291). Expanding territory and incorporating more distant polities while consolidating the reach of power was not straight forward, but rather messy and often following its own logic. The fluidity did not vanish but was just pushed further away from the respective centers, stability was enhanced only insofar as some infighting disappeared and was labelled internal rebellion when the state believed to have the capacity to reign in. Generally, military capacity was rising, administrative procedures more sophisticated, resource extraction and taxation ranging over larger distances and merchant networks got denser and cheaper to handle when the state guaranteed security, maintained an adequate toll regime and looked out for standardized weights and money. The reliance of the frontier areas on the state for their development however was mirrored by the reliance of the state on the frontier area for its security purposes. Buffer states thrived and were the real mediators of stability, especially towards the Ming, and used this position to avoid administrative integration where possible. The state could expand and so pushed its administrative and economic ordering agenda to the margins, which in turn helped the state to grow by providing security at its borders. The general push for administrative integration during this era was in synchronization with the cyclicity of economic development and technological innovation.

2.3 Cycle 3: Re-consolidation under new banners (1600s to the 19th century)

This cycle was by far not a stable era of peace – rather the wars and conflicts were a sign of growing territorial awareness and the labor pains of newly consolidating and integrating states. This chapter thus looks at the factors that determine the trajectory of the states and their wish for greater integration and territorial consolidation in a geopolitical new situation – due to the Qing, the Tay Son uprising and Siamese meddling with Laos – as well as the effects of refined bureaucratic expansion, international trade relations and the manifestation of these factors in border politics and border policies. In essence, this cycle saw the emergence of territorial states endowed with a sense of nationhood, with direct implications for the border as evidenced by the many wars and drawn out conflicts described above. At the same time, this cycle lays the foundation for the instability and weakness of the states and border regions, which shall prevail until the 19th century and be one of the causes that the states could not adequately respond to the colonialization attempts by the Europeans.

Towards the close of the 16th century, the border area was again fragmented, with local players as well as major lowland states vying for control. In the end of the 16th century, the Ming dynasty showed first signs of decadence and decline, leading to upheavals and the eventual capture of the capital by rebels. The Ming allied with the Manchus to drive them out, yet as the Qing seized Beijing, they set on conquering the rest of China. 1644 is seen as the starting date of the Qing dynasty, yet it only achieved full control over the territory in 1683. The so-called Southern Ming set up camp in the Southern provinces, trying to enlist chieftains to fight back against the Qing. In the 1650s, the Qing chased the Yongli Emperor into Hsenwi and established three generals as feudal princes (藩王) to govern over Southern China. These generals maintained a high degree of autonomy, which was only broken up when the Kangxi emperor decided that these fiefdoms were not hereditary. The backlash Revolt of the Three Feudatories lasted eight years with Wu Sangui, the most powerful of the three, trying to establish a new dynasty – the Great Zhou dynasty. The Qing counterattack followed suit and by 1683, the last remnants of anti-Qing forces were eradicated. Thanks to their Central Asian descent, the Qing did not face threats from the North and so could concentrate on managing the southern border areas. It made use of the tusi system, yet with Toungoo and its expansionist policies encroaching on the Chinese Shan states, it strengthened military banners in the frontier and waged four wars against Toungoo, essentially demarcating the border. Higher tax demands led to occasional Shan revolts, which by 1730 became so united

and coordinated against the Qing that a Shan army managed to invade a Qing garrison. The Qing solved the military standoff by brute force and resorted again to granting titles and powers to neutral sawbwas to keep control on the Qing's behalf. This paid off as many dual-tribute payers started to side with the Qing, providing it a projection area of their power that included Mogaung, Bhamo, Hsenwi, Kengtung, Kachin and Sipsongpanna (LEE 1982, 721; GIERSCH 2006, 39-40).

2.3.1 Zoning through trade and commerce

Trade and economic exploitation once again served a vessel for state-power, migration and the integration of the border area into territorial states. New economic opportunities and the attempts to control trade flows, operations and tax revenue opened the gates and increased the interest in the border areas. This was especially driven by mining operations, tariffs on salt and other goods as well as state monopolies, which drew both the local population and migrants into a closer web of state control, pushing the effective borders of the states closer towards each other. As this chapter will show, this process was not gradual, neither linear, as the interactions between centralizing-territorializing state and border-polities had to re-calibrate repeatedly a compromise in which they could form an equilibrium.

2.3.1.1 Exploitation of the Burmese borderlands

After the short collapse of the Toungoo dynasty in 1599, the restored dynasty faced the issue to bridge the re-appearing dichotomy between upland and lowland principalities. The Shan states in particular, with their distinct culture, administrative system, own Buddhist scholarship and systematic social organization, used the freedom of the interregnum and being located in between two major power centers for their own autonomy. Being a distinct civilization in the eyes of the Burmans and the Chinese – as they did not use the term “barbarian” to describe the Shan, but saw them as rather less civilized than China – they could exploit their own patron-client relations with highland dwelling chieftains for political and trade benefits, something Toungoo refused to do in order to keep the uplanders at bay (HLAING 2007, 13). This chapter will look at the political and commercial developments that helped the restored Toungoo to overcome this divide and territorialize stronger than ever before the area of Burma. By moving the capital from Pegu to Ava in 1635, the Restored Toungoo dynasty re-focused its economic base on agrarian production and overland trade with China. To maintain an adequate tax-base, means of control were needed

through increasing population and economic output and mobilizing military means of coercion. The increase of control through tax-officials and customs offices on trade routes increased and stabilized the reach of the Restored Toungoo until its demise in 1752, when the Mon took Ava. During that time, Toungoo rulers reinforced their wishes for consolidation and by doing so grew more concerned over threats across the borders in the North and South (FINDLEY/O'ROURKE 2007, 277). The main vessel to transport power and integrating individuals into the state was through building a road system linking regional centers with the capital as well as marking boundaries of state control. Another way to increase the commercial consolidation of the state was through public-sponsored irrigation projects, which due to scale and need of manpower tied administrative divisions to the central authority for funds and maintenance of canals – others could manage autonomously at local level. Where the state could tax agriculture and levy tolls on trade and transaction, it could make itself felt, and so pushing the boundary of actual control closer to the territorial claims. Servicemen (*ahmudans*) that were not tied to landownership were crucial in this process as they could provide different services that tied the country together: palace guards, *corvée* and raw materials. Their activities were monitored by the central administration. This interplay of administrative work through custom posts and tax officials on the one side and infrastructure building on the other increased the state's grip over time as can be seen in the decline of rebellions and invasions, though banditry was still endemic. The state directly controlled tax collection, and through the management of *ahmudans* reduced the margin of manoeuvre of local elites. In the end, around 40% of the population was so drawn into the service to the crown and came so under direct control of the court (BLANTON/FARGHER 2008, 119-120, 144). The crown-service was an *apanage*-distribution system of platoons with an agro-military purpose to defend the throne against Shan and other menaces. With the restored Toungoo, these *apanage*-lands concentrated more and more around the capital as opposed to the previous practice of keeping them as far away as possible to use their buffer-functions, as LIEBERMAN (1980, 561) points out. Apparently, this was because locally installed princely kings (*myozas*) were more closely drawn into the state system to defend the borders.

To finance these endeavors, the state also became a major player in trade, taxing goods on the land and maritime boundaries. Customs and tariffs of international trade flows as well as crown-monopolies helped to finance the patronizing system of *ahmudans*, *bayins* and *myozas* and thus funding the *sangha* as well as the military (LIEBERMAN 1993, 491-492; TAYLOR 2009, 33).

An economic factor was also the state sponsoring of the sangha through government-constructed stupas, funded festivals and lavish offerings. At the same time, the restored Toungoo dynasty reined in by restricting the land donations, leading to the use of goods and cash to pay for religious merits. This increased the dependence of religious life and the sangha on state administration. Privatization of monastery lands and establishing government-appointed custodians further reduced the sangha-control over territories, while increased examinations and a forced professionalization of the monkhood under state auspices allowed spreading the politico-religious state-ideology to far removed places. More garrisons and abolishing hereditary chieftains in the Shan states buttressed direct control and the gradual disempowerment of hitherto autonomous governors and local elites. The hallmark of this centralization was the census of 1635-1638 under King Thalun, which recorded tax obligations among other information, which in turn led to the opening of more court-positions in the countryside and strengthening of local loyalists against rivals (LIEBERMAN 2010, 160-162). With the restoration of control over the cis- and trans-Salween states in the 17th century, and the disorderly and violent Ming-Qing transition which was only concluded in the 1680s, state expansion and consolidation worked rather smoothly, as there was a mutual interest of border-chieftains and the Burmese state to cooperate. On the Chinese side, as there was no authority with legitimate control, market access was simple. After the Qing dynasty gained control and expelled the remaining Ming loyalists in the 1680s, trade with Yunnan took up its pace again. Copper and silver mines opened in the Yunnan-Burmese borderland, which further increased the tax base and the control-possibilities of the state. The monetization through copper and silver coins fostered the production of goods and spurred trade as well as labour mobility – on both sides of the border (LIEBERMAN 2010, 171-173). In addition, the VOC, that arrived in the 17th century, drove the monetization further. It entered the market, buying copper coins from the border to Yunnan to use it as tender in the Dutch colonies (GUNN 2011, 205). Peace in the heartland also helped consolidating state-power and while the restored Toungoo were anxious to curb internal migration, economic incentives distributed people all over the country up to the fringes. In addition, deportations of war captives from Shan and Kachin areas to the center had the effect to strengthen the crown-serviceman system and so increasing control in the heartland while depopulating and weakening potentially unruly border states (LIEBERMAN 2010, 174). New crops and spreading rice and tea cultivation in the northern Shan states provided them with new sources of income while trade in woods and minerals spurred job growth and the influx of workers, increased the tax base and let the state expand through establishing royal mo-

nopolies in certain goods for which a merchant needed to obtain a license. With greater trade and monetization, the crown established standards and made sure that its legal system reached all corners of the country, increasing control through economic expansion and interdependence through specialization. Specialization in economic activities depending on region, resources and expertise increased interdependence between the different parts of the country, spurring intra-state trade and strengthening further central authority vis-à-vis local elites as it was the court who had the resources to control these transactions at checkpoints. Since the 17th century, the Shan became more dependent on rice supplies from the South, so the court could benefit from international trade while keeping close checks on agricultural production and demographic developments, while weakening the political clout of the states at the margin and drawing them closer to identify with the throne as enabler of prosperity (LIEBERMAN 2010, 174-179, 180; LIEBERMAN 1991, 18-19; cf. HENG 2015, 215-216).

Tax farms, royal monopolies and monetization took away control over resources from chiefs and other actors depending on subsistence and self-sufficiency such as the *ahmudans*, reducing the impact of personal ties in rule and based them more on formal, impersonal capitalist factors such as debt and credit and brought the interaction with the court much closer to the subjects (LIEBERMAN 2010, 181).

While trade and commercial considerations led to a gradual integration and territorialization of the state, the new structure also led to problems and the eventual demise of the Toungoo and rise of the Konbaung dynasty in the mid-18th century. According to LIEBERMAN (2010, 182-184), the new economic order and strong focus on trade undermined the balance between the royal service system of *ahmudans* and officials with their obligations and a new mobile merchant class that enjoyed many freedoms. In addition, the complex system of registers led to more confusion than control. These factors incentivized factionalism, venturing for fortune, and eventually a weakening of the throne. The court was ripe with intrigues fostered by ministerial families and *ahmudans* without provincial bases, so that only weak candidates for the throne could count on their support. Commercial growth increased evasion from tax-service, population pressure reduced the land lots of crown servicemen while their tax burden remained the same, and borrowing money to service tax-debts increased the amount of debt-slavery. Ministers as primary receivers of market taxes benefitted greatly and were interested to keep the court weak. The factionalism in governance dissolved the unified system into fiefdoms for exploitation by ministers by the 1730s, who start to fight each other, undermining the authority of the crown and alienating

the periphery. The subsequent rebellions against taxation, the retreat of Shan leaders into their states and the perception of inequality between exploited north and enriched south catalyzed the north into a coalition against the short-lived Mon-rooted Restored Hanthawaddy dynasty, eventually bringing Alaungpaya, the first Konbaung king to the throne. From the far north, he reinstated the military service, conquered the south and by 1759 had reconquered the Shan states. These events also changed the functioning of the border-areas. Not only had they to face four Chinese military campaigns from 1764 to 1770, also more and more Han Chinese settlers came into Yunnan and the borderlands, quadrupling the population from 5 million in 1700 to 20 million in 1850 (LEE 1982, 711, 713; SCOTT 2009 138-139).

This was driven and also drove the administrative reform of the Qing of the *tusi*-system into official counties (改土归流) in the 1720s and increased economic activities. Especially mining was a drive for extending the reach of the state through economic exploitation. Mine owners scaled up their work-force and became powerful players in local politics, often across the border. The abolition of the native chieftains and the Tai-aristocracy out of the way in combination with new officials who did not know the realities of the area helped mine owners to exploit the region, expand operations and foster cross-border networks to sell and transport their ores. After the cease-fire agreement of 1770 that concluded the Qing-military campaigns against Burma, the Qing retreated their army to Yunnan but at the same time introduced a trade embargo. The immediate effects were a decline in mining, even though trade never really stopped at the border. Only ten years later, an imperial edict to lift the embargo helped with the recovery of the mining activities. Copper and silver mines employed hundreds of thousands of people and formed an independent community, the infrastructure to transport ores away and supply workers with food spanned the border area and drew in ever more people to engage in trade in goods for mines or in commodities for the Chinese market. Tax monopolies also sprung up on the Yunnanese side of the border between the 1720s and 1750s. In particular, Ortai established a tea-selling system, which was of particular importance as a commodity traded from Burma. Making this trade official also created an official border along trading routes as tea could only be traded by prefecture-issued coupons in one official shop in Pu'er. The Sipsong Panna region and the adjacent Shan states so were drawn into the economic administration of both Qing China as well as Burma through the custom stations through which they had to trade their tea (MA 2013, 57-59; MA 2014, 1646-1647; KATAOKA 2013, 71; HILL 1989, 326, 337; GIERSCH 2006, 54-55). The network and personal ties formed between producers and customs officials in such a control environment led to mo-

nopolistic price setting for certain goods such as tea, salt or copper but also increased the stability in the area. Like this, Chinese officials could control resources coming from Burma and their distribution, while merchants could expand their networks and solidify their status through institutions such as guilds (会馆) that opened and penetrated markets and provided invaluable services to organize passages of caravans. Like that, with the degree trade became more organized, it also remained under Qing control, whose market size allowed for scaling effects. This drew borderland families into the Qing orbit and the world economy by establishing firms and trading companies (商号) – and by venturing in the civil bureaucracy – to facilitate the transactions along networks spanning from Tibet to the Red River delta (GIERSCH 2010, 225-226, 236; FINLDAY/O'ROURKE 2007, 279).

Monasteries along the network cooperated with these family-firms as they provided goods and managed transactions of commodities the monasteries produced. Like this, monasteries could control the access to export markets of local businesses, reducing their economic agency while establishing a socio-religio-political hierarchy for the benefit of the state. This was particularly the case in the Tibeto-Yunnanese-Burmese triangle (GIERSCH 2010, 229).

On the official state side, Qing China tried to control the trade flows through customs posts, yet with the greater influx of people, it also had to deal with land issues and clashes between migrants and indigenous people over farmland. New taxation and land management systems appeared, with detailed cadasters cataloguing land, making it available on the open market and determining the tax burden. Especially in the not-yet converted tuis, Qing-officials had indirect control over land issues beyond its actual reach. Thus, the administrative reach of the Qing also touched upon Burmese territories, as also the outer Shan states and Tai chieftains of Mubang, Mengmi, and Mengken that were closer to Burma, were affected by this integration into the Qing economic system. Financial aid from the Qing also tied those places to the Qing, as did the organization of miners into military units during times of war (MA 2014, 1650-1651).

The changes spurred local resistance as of the 1720s, changing the functioning of the frontier and shaping multiple borderlines with different degrees of control and ownership depending on the state prerogatives. The Qing had to underline its claims and consolidate the conversion from tuis to official counties not just with policies but also adequate infrastructure. Army camps, granaries and supply chains for maintaining the military at the border scaled up state-sponsored economic activities and so extending the border further. Given the state expansion on both sides, the mining industry and caravan routes changed the political situation on the ground. Trade, mining and car-

avans pushed the reach of the state and created resistance, while the slow transformation of the administrative structure and control mechanisms – especially the abolition of chieftains – turned the former outside (编外) of the empire to an integral part of its interior (内地). With shifting the borderlines for political control and economic activities, the indigenous groups mobilized themselves to determine their role in this border-formation process. In addition, the increased administrative pressure on economic activities intensified struggles for resources and power among immigrants, locals and upland dwellers leading to rebellions and uprising throughout the 18th century. The role of Siam in pushing out Burmese from Chiang Mai, installing king Kawila as vassal and supporting his expeditions against Kengtung state and Sipsong Panna as well as the Konbaung expansion towards the Shan only increased tensions over distribution of wealth and political participation in the border area between Burmese, Han-Chinese and Shan and Tay polities. The political changes from abolishing the native chieftains and the multi-angle competition over resources further pushed the border closer to the areas where Qing and Konbaung claimed their influence without necessarily exercising it, eventually reducing the fluid character of the border areas even more, and finally catalyzing themselves in violent clashes to determine the territorial reach. Eventually, settlers, miners and new farmers of legal or illegal cash crops benefitted from the political transformation that drove the indigenous people away closer to where the border was perceived to be, where their form of resource extraction continued. In this process though, the mobilization to shape the social changes also led to a stronger focus on ethnic boundaries and roots among the people living in the affected areas and supported the rise of new actors such as the Five Buddhas Districts of the Lahu/Luohei, turning border policies as a frame of reference for ethnic self-assertion (MA 2013, 60; MA 2014 1638-1640, 1648, 1655; KATAOKA 2013, 71-72). While fragmentation was reduced and the boundary line became clearer, it was not a given where this line shall be or what it shall signify. It was only in the 1750s that Burma re-gained political control over the important Shan states of Mongmit, Hsenwi and Mohnyin while economically they already had been tied to Burma. Mining operations paid Burmese taxes but operated under Chinese licenses and served a Chinese markets. The border of political influence – through taxes and administration – did not match up with the economic border, which was in favor of China (NUGENT 1982, 517). This situation of mismatching borders in the Shan and Kachin-region was duly exploited for opium growing and smuggling and only stabilized slightly in the 1890s at the advent of British rule (NUGENT 1982, 518).

Under the bordering mismatch, increased administrative control and the set-up of monopolies reinforced by army and government-sponsored shops the frontier area also militarized steadily, eventually spinning out of central control. An example is the Five Buddha District system that formed in the 1790s west of the Mekong and prevailed until the 1880s. It has its roots in the White Lotus Sect whose different off shooting secret societies spread also into the border areas after the Konbaung-Qing wars, with many indigenous people converting and eventually forming their own polity known as the Five Buddha Districts. It was a mix of religious persecution and discontent with commercial policies of the Qing that allowed the polity to grow in the borderlands. The monk leaders mobilized people in the borderlands against the Qing and Konbaung by feeding into their worries regarding the new commercial policies and occupied salt mines and trading posts for tea, silver and salt and militarized the area between Ailao-mountains and the eastern side of the Mekong river, fighting the salt policy of the Qing and the prohibition of their religious practices of the Big Vehicle syncretism (大乘教) (MA 2013, 62-63, 66-67). When discontent with tax policies and monopolies grew, more people joined the Five Buddha Districts, among them also miners and people from Dali and Shiping, spreading the teachings of the monks into Burmese territories. This not only applied to indigenous people but also Han settlers who joined the monks in their resistance against the Qing and Konbaung and in some cases even assimilated and became district leader of the polity. A new cultural and social system and even identity emerged with Han, Lahu, Laomian and Wa elements under a religious leadership and linked to the political center of the monks. The monks through their temple network and trade monitoring centralized their power stripping village heads from responsibilities and gradually militarized the society against the Qing (MA 2013, 70-71). Like this, the monks carved out their own political space and a new system of hierarchy based on temples and monks appeared, superseding the village heads and competing with the officially sanctioned tuis. The multitude of overlapping political systems and taxation along the fault-lines of pro-Buddha Districts, pro-Qing or pro-autonomy brought in more conflicts.

Chieftains, mainly of the Tai and Wa outside the temple system attacked the temple-polities, setting off a spiral of violence and increased the resolve of the monks to enlarge their territory further south to Sipsongpanna. The Qing's new mobilization capacity through better administrative control and reduced spaces of perceived lawlessness as well as denunciation of adepts of the Five Buddha Districts as bandits and an army attack on their strongholds allowed to reduce them to a few centers in the beginning of the 19th century where the monk families continued to have

religio-political influence until the 20th century (MA 2013, 64-65). The mobilization, changing political situation and greater state penetration fostered militarization and the construction of a self-understanding emanating out of conflicts with lowland populations. The monk-elites depending on the circumstances were marked as either local chiefs or rebels at any given point during their existence. They so shaped the frontier and created a space for their own polity and ideology – as did the Tai-Shan chieftains. While the Qing and the Konbaung were in constant negotiations, these local powers shaped an interdependent body of states competed over resources, markets and trade (MA 2013, 53).

The consequence of this state penetration on the one hand was an ethnicization of border politics as the different statelets reclaimed or constructed identities based on ethnicity. On the other hand, the interdependence among the different borderstates as well as with the lowland states blurred the situation insofar as the different systems of social organization merged or colluded when interests aligned or sought the backing from the empires if that was not the case. The fluidity of organization thus can be interpreted to range from anarchy, to a macroregional market for salt, tea, copper and cotton to a distinct form of state-like self-organization based on long-term relations underlying cultural and economic exchanges (MA 2013, 54, 56-57).

This situation of multiple, fluid allegiances and overlapping yet never congruent borders depending on what state-propiety one looks at, was only reduced through the extension of the official borders but not solved. Clear borders only existed internally between official counties and the tributary chieftains, the latter ever more getting re-organized into counties. What remained left of the frontier area was settled by miners, exiles and local peoples, building new forms to govern trade in goods and mining licenses and so shaping more hybrid forms of borderland communities – somehow connected to state control but not under imperial rule, somehow independent but in the need of large markets yet always in full ownership of the polity they created. The Five Buddhas Districts and the Lahu were just examples of this hybridization and the fine line between becoming a state and eventual integration into an empire. The Qing so gained ever more benefits at the expense of indigenous chieftains and areas under Burmese control. This included resources, taxes, and political influence in international trade relations (TAKOAKA 2013, 90-91; MA 2014, 1663-1664; MA 2013, 72-74).

Trade and the infrastructure to monitor it so was a catalyst in state expansion after the embargo was lifted in 1780. Goods were traded overland with China, migrant communities in Yunnan and northern Burma facilitated transactions and the state tried to put taxes and tariffs on them. Trad-

ing networks and commercial institutions fostered both state and merchant driven penetration through the licensing and monopoly system established by the Qing, of which the effects spilled over to the border-communities. Investments into mining spurred investors' interests for steady return and stability in the area, while other bulk goods such as cotton and silk incited the creation of new market places, caravan routes and networks spanning from Kunming to Ava and from Tibet to Thăng Long, linking the states to their fringes and supporting their reach into the borderlands (GIERSCH 2010, 221-222; GIERSCH 2011, 48-49, 50; FINDLAY/O'ROURKE 2007, 277-278). In that way, trade and commercial regulations helped expanding the reach of the state to a greater degree than trade helped border polities to use the income to manifest their autonomy. The virtuous cycle that appeared was one in which tariffs from trade funded the central state who could use these capacities to control and enforce better the application of these tariffs while providing pretexts to expand administrative structures or go on punitive expeditions in the northern borderlands of Burma.

2.3.1.2 Border blurring through commodity frontiers

After the crushing of the rebellion of the Three Feudatories under the leadership of Wu Sangui in the 1681, the area was quite devastated and took decades to recover. It was with the greater attention to the natural resources beginning of the 18th century, that the population stock dramatically rose and with it the commercial integration of Yunnan into the Chinese economy (LEE 1982, 721; MCMAHON 2009, 87). Mining played an immensely important factor in the state expansion during the Qing-period. The Yunnan area until end of the Ming-regime used cowry as coins, yet with the advent of the Daxi-regime, their use was forbidden when Sun Kewang occupied Yunnan. Later on, when the entire economy monetized and trades were conducted in cash, copper grew in importance for the state to levy taxes and have a running economy (YANG 2004 309). The Qing era so saw a massive expansion of mining activities along its southwestern frontier for two reasons. First, at the beginning of the dynasty, after the Qing crushed the Wu Sangui rebellion, economic output increased to fund the Qing-occupation of the area. Soon the state monopolized copper mining and salt trade, which increased state control, but led to a decline of productivity as it became more difficult for entrepreneurs to make profits. Second, as most metals for coinage in China – but also for Southeast Asian states in general – came from Japan, disruptions to this trade automatically had an impact on the Qing-focus on Yunnan given its large mineral resources (REID 1990, 647). In the 18th century, the mining frontier expanded into more remote corners of

Yunnan when Japan reduced its copper exports to the Qing in 1715. Copper was essential for the economic functioning of China and the stability of its currency. When rationing did not offset the shortfall in copper-supply, the Kangxi and Yonzheng emperors saw themselves forced to expand mining operations to the southwest through Han-immigration (HERMAN 2014, 77-78, 93-94, BEAUD 2015, 325; FEI 2018, 30).

Migrants flocked in to work in silver and copper mines, and operators became important power brokers between quasi-autonomous mining communities, local chieftains and the major states. Under the Qing, the borderlands so underwent a large transformation in economic terms to better control and reap benefits from silver and salt mines and tea plantations, supported by Han migration and eventually leading to a full reform of the *tusi*-system. Tensions increased between settlers and local people such as the Dai, Lahu or Yi that were only exacerbated through the administrative incorporation of the *tusis* into the Qing bureaucracy. The effect of this was mobilization and resistance movements, often with a religious connotation, against which the Qing apparatus had difficulties to proceed. The Lahu of the Five Buddhas District for example were supposed to come under direct rule in 1725, yet their rebellion of 1728 – which soon spread to Tai, Hani, Lopang and Yi-people – against taxes, the tea-monopoly and land grabbing of settlers lasted for six years. The Lahu could achieve a degree of autonomy, yet the rebellion set off a wave of migration into the Shan-states of Burma. The remaining Lahus became Sinicized, yet rebellions broke out repeatedly – mostly led by monks. Like that, some Lahu polities with their distinct religio-political systems were only fully incorporated in the 1880s (MA 2009, 113; SCOTT 2009, 289-290; FEI 2018, 42-43).

Burmese and Chinese miners eventually met in their exploitation areas and the bullion trade in copper and silver increased the trade volume at the border. By the end of the 18th century, tens of thousands of Chinese miners were working in mines on Burmese and Vietnamese territory, on the one hand stabilizing the region by employing sometimes-unruly people, on the other hand leaving a large ecological and social impact behind once the mines exhausted (GUNN 2011, 250-251; GIERSCH 2006, 44). The need for goods from the frontier area in combination with economic opportunities and exceeding demands on taxation, *corvée* and military service drove people into the border area from rich coastal provinces. These migrants to avoid these demands continued to organize themselves along pseudo-lineage affiliation and temple communities, which helped to form integrative communities to expand exploitative operations such as mining. These close-knit communities shaped the space and managed power and resources, fragmenting the border-area

into controlled and uncontrolled zones (KWEE 2006, 630-631; LEE 1982, 742). The effects of mining – as well as the trade in other products such as cotton and tea – however went beyond that: transportation networks were necessary to carry the ores away, supporting businesses let towns develop into cities and trading hubs emerged in the 18th century. Trading networks became denser and expanded to ever more remote areas. With growing trade volumes, also monetization expanded and required more copper – a virtuous cycle of increased economic output and integration of the border areas. Local rulers, like Shan sawbwas, began to benefit from the trade by selling monopoly contracts and collecting tariffs. The emerging trading network linked the border zone with the Chinese empire and the lowland states of Burma and Đại Việt, transforming the area by connecting it to the world economy. Northern Vietnamese provinces saw a similar development: greater monetization fueled demand for metals and pushed miners into the borderlands – promoted by the Trinh dynasty (GIERSCH 2010, 221; GIERSCH 2011, 42-42, 51-52; TAYLOR 2009, 38-39). Infrastructure – physical and administrative – for transport and trade was necessary to exploit the area better, and it was primarily the state on which merchants relied for protection, communication routes and to carry out their business. The state in turn had an interest to have efficient communication and logistic routes for its expansive campaign, like the 1728 Tibet expedition. The Qing so opened postal stations to connect the frontier with the center as well as in the lands beyond such Tibet and Myanmar (GIERSCH 2011 48; GIERSCH 2006, 45-46 DAI 2009, 166). Through the overlapping interest of state expansion and business, the state could penetrate into remote areas of the borderlands by using trading networks and requiring local communities to adapt to the state orthodoxy in order to participate in international markets and to increase the scale of economic activities in the border polities (GIERSCH 2010, 222).

The changes the reduction in copper-trade from Japan in 1715 brought to the border were far reaching. Where fragmentation between state authority and tusi-autonomy was concealed by the fluidity, lack of information and rough terrain for most of the time, state expansion laid open the rifts and pitfalls that opened up over the centuries. The tuis as a vessel of state expansion until the early Qing became an impediment to central control at the border and so calls mounted to abolish the system in Yunnan and Guizhou under the Kangxi reign. In other areas, like the Kham in Tibet, tuis remained the method of choice to advance the empire. The hitherto internal frontier advanced and solidified at the same time (HERMAN 2014, 80, 92-93). The edict of the Yongzheng emperor to not follow a laissez-faire policy regarding tuis anymore was the apex of a development that started with settlers colonizing the region, civilian institutions regulating trade

and economic activities and military officials entering the area to quell rebellions (HERMAN 2014, 93).

The watershed moment was the appointment of Ortai as governor-general of Yunnan to replace tusi with civilian institutions of the Qing state to protect the natural resources and bring the area into the Qing tax jurisdiction (HERMAN 2014, 92; GIERSCH 2006, 62-63).

Ortai used both persuasion and force to bring the tusi under direct control. The Lolo-area, Dongchuan, Wumeng, Zhenxiong and Liangshan as well as the trading town Malong through which most of the copper passed were still under tusi-control, the leaders of which often disrupted production and trade. He followed through with his plan to bring this area into the territory of Yunnan to better exploit minerals and pacify the Lolo by dispatching troops to allegedly protect the miners. Once done, investors returned and the mining business flourished in the area, setting off a reinforcing cycle of migration and increased control (HERMAN 2014, 94-96; GIERSCH 2006, 63). With the expansion of mining, tensions arose between migrants and natives due to massive land grabbing along the lines of different agrarian and social traditions between miner-migrants and local (YANG 2004, 310-311). There were also cross-border tensions. Regarding Đại Việt, which still laid claims to territories taken by the Qing in the 1680s, Ortai directly negotiated and traded mining concessions for Han-settlers against nominal territorial control for the Lê dynasty (WILLS 2012 457-459).

As the doctrine of the days was that tusi have outlived their purpose and the demography of the area already tipped in favor of Han-dominance, Ortai ordered an education campaign to assimilate those people that still clinged to their autonomy and resorted to the use of force if they continued to refuse to be absorbed by the Qing state (HERMAN 2014, 97-98). The resistance of the Lolo against the Qing mounted however and ended in a revolt in 1730 involving Lolo-people in the entire border-area, not just Yunnan. Ortai used brute force to crush the rebellion, slaughtering and enslaving natives by the tens of thousands. He managed to capture some strategic posts linking the border provinces among each other and with the imperial center (DAI 2009 106). These atrocities brought the Lolo effectively under the provincial control of Yunnan, Ortai purged the tusi-leaders and secured access to raw materials. The stationing of troops along a network of larger and smaller forts and outposts guaranteed security, protected land-grabbing campaigns and crushed occasional rebellions. The capital each garrison received was distributed to smaller units to invest into the development of their region of control. The military used this revenue to purchase land for rent, pawnshops, warehouses and stores, employing merchants and brokers to

strengthen the state's economic foothold. These soldiers became permanent settlers to maintain order and administer the settlement of constantly inflowing migrants and land reclamation projects, while copper-production fed the mints in Beijing and promoted monetization of the border-area which became ever more interwoven with the national economy (HERMAN 2014, 103,104-105; DAI 2005, 22-24).

Agriculture expanded in parallel with mining to sustain the mining communities and so tied up the productivity of people in food-production. Also specific agricultural networks, such as for tea, salt and grains, emerged tying the hinterland to the greater economy and integrating it into the Han-Chinese agricultural tradition. In Sipsong Panna for example, Han migrants leased plantations from local Tai landowners, and sublet them to tenants who worked and paid fees for the use. The emanating commercial-political network helped the Han to set a foothold and provide norms that changed bordering practices by bringing the area under the control of imperial norms. As the Qing could use agricultural practices to clarify the course of the border according to cultivation techniques, this was not just an economic issue but also a political one, in which the Qing tried to balance security with costs and which opened new channels of interaction between migrants and indigenes (BELLO 2016, 179, 181-182, 184; GIERSCH 2001, 81, 85). These interactions were not always on friendly terms. Provincial officials accused the Yi-people to know nothing about cultivation, and painted native populations as generally incapable to make use of the resources they have. Officials, who hoped this would spread Han-techniques in cropping and harvesting and yielding higher revenues, therefore often welcomed Ortai's policies of land re-distribution to Han settlers and creating agricultural settlements under direct supervision. The Yi were a prime target for agricultural conversion with the aim to bring them inside the frontier. That this strategy largely failed was due to the inhospitable and disease-ridden environment in which the Yi lived (BELLO 2016, 187-190). Quasi-autonomous chieftains in outlying areas therefore continued to exist to supply the Qing with foodstuff and service them as vicars in lands where the Han would not survive (BELLO 2016, 191).

As the state organized much of the grain-trade, as private trading was too expensive for these perishable goods, it not only wielded another commercial lever to have its authority felt in the southwest but also could promote its agenda through popular policies of grain-redistribution. In addition, the throne ordered to build military granary networks along the border provinces in case there was an emergency. This was first tried during the Tibet invasion of 1720 and in the later campaigns after 1728. With that, order could be established, as shown in the decline of rebel at-

tacks in Xixiang County in Sichuan. At the same time, the carrying capacity of the area was greatly expanded, as was the availability of arable land to provide a food-base for the newcomers. Extensive agriculture so pacified the lands and supported the formation of administrative centers in cities for trade and cultural proselytization (MCMAHON 2009 87-89; LEE 1982, 739-740, 741; DAI 2009, 74-75, 169). Extensive agriculture was also part of the motivation to go to war. For example, the desire for cotton incentivized the Qing-invasion of the Hsenwi-state (GIERSCH 2001 81-82).

There were also tensions over land rights between locals and Han. When these turned into violence, costs for border-security increased and required active management. The Qing tried to uphold security and stability of the border at the expense of curtailing some economic interests of immigrants. This happened sometimes even through the enforcement of native land rights traditions or as in the 1740s by disapproving land-purchases by Han from local people, excessive and abusive credit practices of merchants and implementing a degree of protection for local people. These measures were not very effective, especially during the Qing-Konbaung war, mortgage practices bound Tai fieldworkers to Han investors as indentured labourers, a practice that continued despite governmental measures against it (GIERSCH 2001 83-84).

The only area left where tuis still were the spearhead of the state along the border was the Kham territory, which unlike the rest of the border was not part of the empire until the 18th century (HERMAN 2014, 106-107).

The expansion of the mining frontier brought 300,000 Chinese miners into the area by 1750 and 500,000 by 1800. The fragmentation of the border-area and the location of profitable deposits around an unclear borderline – especially metals, gems and jade – eventually led to border-infractions, and spill-overs of the migrant inflow into the Shan states and other mining areas where Chinese demand drove political changes along the frontier (REID 2011, 24; CHANG/TAGLIACCOZZO 2011, 8).

The Wa illustrate this case. Its richness in silver, gold, iron, tin and gemstones made it an important area as tributary and source of wealth for state-building exercises. The Wa-wealth was one of the main reasons to expand the state into this area through tributary relations, Han immigration and ultimately direct administration. The Maolong silver mines were one of the main sites which was developed by Ming-remnants retreating from the Qing, providing not only valuable metals for the Ming – and later the Qing –, but also drawing merchant-entrepreneurs into the area and increased at least the semblance of Chinese administration of the border area – even

though it remained out of official scope. Bawdwin silver mine was a pendant in Burmese territory. The difference between those two places was that the former was part of the self-administered Wa area outside direct control from China or Burma and the former was subject to the Burmese administration. The Wa benefitted enormously from the Maolong mine, which was a tax-source of the Wa rulers until the 20th century (FISKESJÖ 2010, 246-247).

To somehow achieve a degree of control, the Chinese needed interlocutors among the Wa, who then were bestowed the hereditary Qing-title of king. With the creation of these roles, however, the Wa adopted the kingship ideas of the Shan and so drifted again away from the grip of the Qing. The more they styled themselves as sawbwas and adopted Shan ritual practices and a Theravada kingship model, the Wa not only managed to keep the Qing at bay but also carved out their own niche as the distinct Banhong-dynasty and competed with Shan polities, backed by their wealth in natural resources. Only in the 19th century would the Chinese state integrate the Wa fully in its administration (FISKESJÖ 2010, 248).

The Wa-kingdom itself fared moderately well, it borrowed civilizational techniques from both the Chinese and the Shan yet was in the eye of the Qing a remote and inferior culture, that only could be reached through Shan intermediaries for civilizing purposes. So were the Wa still unknown to most courtiers in the 1740s, even though it was the Chinese emperor that bestowed the Banhong-dynasty with its king-title (FISKESJÖ 2010, 251). The Wa were gradually drawn into the Chinese orbit not only because of mining but also by officials who taught Chinese script and Confucian values. Mining was just a vessel to enter the Wa kingdom, not a reason or a catalyst that spurred assimilationist tendencies (FISKESJÖ 2010, 249-250).

The most important miner in the area, Wu Shangxian, who operated the Maolong silver mine, so fell somehow between two stools: on the one hand he was supposed to make profits from his mining operations and deliver metals to the Qing, on the other hand he had to provide tribute to the Wa-kings, which was strictly forbidden in the eyes of the Qing. This went so far, that the court forbade its subjects to work in mines outside of its control – to not forego taxes, avoid loss of knowhow and prevent over-extension and social conflicts. The Konbaung-Qing wars were disastrous examples of how uncontrolled sprawling of quasi-state actors outside the reach of the empire could peter out. The Qing already in 1746 cut border trade that was outside its control to prevent such a situation from happening – and let the Wa be, because they were outside control as well. Encroachment from north and south until the 1780s led to militarization and a strengthening of Wa autonomy efforts, pushing back Burmese trying to seize the Maolong mines. The

Wa with help of the mining operators such as Wu Shangxian or the Wa-natives of the Maolong mines, navigated the gulf between Chinese and Burmese desires for the territory, yet their role as mediators was not successful. Wu Shangxian for example never was allowed to actually mediate between Qing and Wa but was arrested, the Maolong mine reduced its activities and was closed in 1800. The Wa remained independent for the time being, at some point even tried to expand their mining operations towards the Shan states. Their bet was to remain single players around the Maolong area, not allying themselves with other polities or developing their kingdom into a Shan-style chieftainship. Individual Wa-leaders tried to break out of this system and allying themselves militarily with Hsenwi-state yet, despite all the political maneuvering the Wa state was more and more incorporated into the Chinese state system until it was recognized as an official tusi in 1891 (FISKESJÖ 2010, 252-253, 255-256).

Other sites where mining worked as a catalyst for state expansion shifting effectively borders was the Bawdwin mine in the Shan states but also the border-area of Đại Việt, where Chinese miners settled but instead of resistance found a middle ground with the Trinh-regime in the north. They could exploit the mines against some levies, which amounted to half of the revenue of the court. The economic interdependence raised the stakes so high that in the end, the Trinh refrained from actually executing decrees to expel Chinese miners from their territory. To the contrary, the acute shortage in metals and the fear of rebellions as they occurred in the 1730 and 1740s, the Trinh even allowed an expansion of Chinese mining enterprises (REID 2011, 24-25, 27; GIERSCH 2011, 43; GUNN 2011, 257).

After 1740, ten core-provinces were authorized to send representatives to Yunnan to acquire metals, linking the southwest with metropolitan centers but also creating a divide between along the border. Private enterprises however rather viewed the area as a network, not a divide, and so nested in a network that could be described as interlinked macro-region (GIERSCH 2011, 44-45). The increased civil control through Qing-officials and control of revenues to local leaders however increased the power of the Qing state enormously (GIERSCH 2011, 46). Mining and the trading activities of the Chinese so brought capitalism, a connection to the world economy, new techniques, infrastructure and state control into the area, connecting not only the border with China but forming a macro-region encompassing Shan states, Yunnan, Tonkin and Lao-states based on regional long-term relations in a global setting that linked towns, mines, producers, officials, entrepreneurs, migrants, locals and other groups. The networked and interlinked character of the changes around the nexus of autonomy, control, trade and business allowed for a solidifica-

tion and expansion of the boundary through commerce (REID 2011, 32; GIERSCH 2011, 39-41; YANG 2004, 311-312). Han not only spilled over into Tai-territories but also expanded their commercial networks across cultural and political boundaries far into Burma, linking both sides through long-distance trade. The Qing administration however tried repeatedly to use the distinction between inside and outside states to maintain a spatial order and to prevent its imperial citizens from leaving. The culmination of this policy was the trade-embargo after the Qing-Burmese wars (1765-1770), which only ended after shrewd interventions of the rulers of Gengma and Bhamo-states (GIERSCH 2001 82-83).

With this, also administrative consolidation took place. The rise of the population in the Yunnan-Guizhou area to 11 million by 1775 incited a fervor to establish accurate population registers, furthering the oversight of the state, determining who is within its remit and rendering settlers there to taxable subjects (LEE 1982, 725, 738). However, administrative resources were not sufficient to actually provide the necessary infrastructure for such an amount of people. The Qing therefore also turned to merchants for transport and even supporting armies with their logistic networks. It could so mobilize an impressive amount of resources, for example for campaigns and frontier wars, like the Jinchuan campaigns in Sichuan during which nearly half a million people supplied the armies with silver, clothes, weaponry and food in their fight against the local chieftain. These networks of merchants-logistics and military remained and penetrated the conquered or pacified areas. This was just reinforced when the Qing decided to abolish the chieftain system and replace it by either a civil administration or military colonies (DAI 2001, 36-37, 39, 41). These ad-hoc networks at the interface of military and civilian sectors encompassed swathes of people and enlisted the bureaucracy of entire provinces into a network tying the outposts to the center as they often stayed in the frontier after the fighting (DAI 2001, 47). A final impact the mines left behind after their exhaustion was the dependence on state-funds to run provinces. When the core could not extract resources anymore, the periphery received financial support starting in the 18th century without making many contributions to the state anymore and so became tied financially into the empire (DAI 2009, 76).

The overall trend for China was thus bordering through integration into networks of its own national economy with side effects such as territorialization through land grabbing and administrative reform to better control the southwest. The border so started in the 18th century to demarcate a rift between monetized and pre-monetized polities, while the new modes of production favored lowland-polities on their path of expansion and consolidation (GUNN 2011, 257-258). Mining

and agricultural expansion fueled the urban and commercial development of the Chinese frontier, but only centered on the larger sites – western and southwestern areas of the province did not benefit from the growth on the same scale (BELLO 2016, 180).

2.3.2 Demarcating through administration and warfare

The 17th and 18th centuries showed an increase in warfare and administrative expansion into the border areas. This was for once due to the need of the Qing-dynasty to re-conquer the tusis and eradicate Ming remnants, but also due to a general interest of the Qing in the southern border since the northern threats was largely banned. In addition, with ever-greater economic opportunities, administrating these trade flows required better-integrated administrative practices such as a major reform of the tusi-system, shrinking the borderland further.

Territorial consolidation took the shape of more structured state-tributary relations, reducing the number of polities at the border. Politically, petty states had it more difficult to claim real autonomy as the lowland states territorialized administratively and culturally as well as devised mechanisms to concentrate resources and so to control larger territories (LIEBERMAN 1993, 480-481, 483).

Wars and squirmishes and subsequent fortification efforts so began to demarcate a boundary which became increasingly hard during the 18th century, setting the precedence for the consolidation of bordering exercises with the advent of colonialism and the Westphalian idea of statehood. This chapter explores how the borderlands arranged themselves with new administrative practices and managed to carve out niches of autonomy.

2.3.2.1 Burma's enlarged zone of influence

The restored Toungoo dynasty in the 17th century tried to continue projecting authority over its empire. King Naungyan expanded the territory after the interregnum to the nearer Shan states and changed the system of territorial control to reduce the power of local rulers for the benefit of a centralized state (LIEBERMAN 1980a, 553). That started in the tradition of power as function of control over people with mass deportations to the center. King Thalun took uncountable prisoners from the uplands to the center where they were organized as platoons as crown-servicemen (ah-mudans) to provide military service and grow produce, deliberately weakening the borderlands (LIEBERMAN 1980a, 559). At the same time, the sangha expanded into new areas and the re-

stored Toungoo made use of schooling to spread religious and legal knowledge coined according to the state's interests. The spread of literacy and state-sanctioned knowledge allowed for greater identification with the center as well as more accurate census reports. Buddhism and belonging to the state became so more and more intertwined and practices more standardized. Since the 16th century, ceremonial liquors disappeared, burial rites changed among the Shan and also commercial interactions gradually adapted to the norms provided by the center (LIEBERMAN 1993, 509-510).

The kings Anaukpetlun and Thalun also established a tax-record that was meant to list all taxable land relating it to the people to pay those taxes, local officials, their boundaries and tax-duties as well as members and lands of the ahmudan, the crown service people on whom the king could draw for services to the crown. Thalun made it illegal for people to move without permission or changing their status, so to keep the record intact. Yet, the king faced issues with the constant erosion of the crown servicepeople as it was in their interest to raise in status and become a commoner, seek out a patron such as a minister or become bonded to the sangha. The drain from the crown service became threatening for the stability of the dynasty so that the court forbade relocation without permission or changing fiscal status. As short-term solutions, deportations increased, from the border to fill up the crown-service, capturing and depleting border regions (SCOTT 2009 92-93, 161). This made things just worse as people disappeared from the official map and tax demands grew on the remaining population leading to unrest.

The border with China on the Burmese side remained fairly stable during that time – the larger issue for the border polities was the unrest during the Ming-Qing transition and migratory pressure. Kengtung for example was recognized as an autonomous polity and listed like that in the tax-register of Thalun. Interference from the Toungoo was limited and the often double-tributary status accepted. Only in the 18th century did the Toungoo meddle with the border states and used their military power to install more obedient leaders or extract services or products from the polities – a strategy that led to unrest (AUNG 2015, 3). Another reason for the short period of stability was the reform of the *myoza*-system of princely kings installed in border-polities to defend the heartland. They came under greater control but they continued to be a threat as control-mechanisms remained weak and information of the situation on the ground did not always reach the capital. Their mandate included defense of the heartland as well as local administration, they had to swear allegiance to the king, their heirs had to stay in the capital to enforce docility of the local rulers and royal agents kept them in check. This shifted the power to the throne, yet the

danger of rebellions and revolts was not banned (LIEBERMAN 1980a, 561). Expeditions against local rulers, *bayins*, *myozas* and their rebellions happened regularly to restore personal ties of loyalty, in particular when a new king in the capital came to power. Every new king had to restore the bonds, and reign into the independence declarations of local rulers, and fight against their challenges to stop paying tribute (LIEBERMAN 1980a, 551). This seemed like an orchestrated cat and mouse play that allowed for a degree of autonomy in the borderlands and a manifestation of control over these same borderlands by the state. This was nothing extraordinary, but just an extension of the trajectory of governance: despite all the measures the Toungoo and Konbaung undertook to turn tributaries into provinces of the central state, the entire system of statehood remained a galactic polity after all, and control over the satellites remained a weak point of any ruler. While the border became clearer with claims, the posting of agents and the spread of government-sanctioned knowledge and social norms, tensions remained between center and province, even though reforms tipped power-relations more and more in favor of the central state to spread centrally defined norms of governance and identification (LIEBERMAN 1993, 478-479, 485; LIEBERMAN/BUCLKEY 2012, 1085-108).

These systemic weaknesses in structure and administration led to major issues. Burma under Toungoo in the first half of the 18th century so was beset with rebellions and revolts, losing manpower, military strength and authority to reign into the dealings of abusive provincial officials. Rising tax-burdens fueled resentment in the entire country against the rulers in Ava, until the Toungoo were dethroned by the Mon, who in turn were eradicated by the new Konbaung dynasty under Alaungphaya (LIEBERMAN 1978, 462-463, 466). Alaungphaya came from the far northern frontier areas, mobilized his men against an ever more controlling and exploiting center – and could do so as governmental checks and control were still weak enough to be effective and the loss of manpower too acute. Persistent raids by the Shan in the run-up to the foundation of the Konbaung dynasty and growing tax-free religious lands weakened the Toungoo even further who could not afford campaigns to put the far-flung north in order (LIEBERMAN 1978 470-471; LIEBERMAN 1980b, 76-77). Reunifying the country was not a simple task given the involvement of French and British interests, which led both powers to back different contenders of the throne. Especially the successful warfare against the French during which Alaungpaya captured not only ships and weapons but also entire crews helped Alaungpaya to improve his military capacity. This shall pay off in later wars against the Qing dynasty in which the captured French crews served as elite corps. In addition, their postings as headmen in the outskirts of the kingdom

should anchor the influence of the center there (FINDLAY/O'ROURKE 2007, 277). The foundation of the Konbaung dynasty so brought a new wave of centralization efforts and a deepening of the reforms envisaged by the restored Toungoo dynasty. Part of this effort was the making of maps to demarcate territory, tax land and plan irrigation systems (SCHWARTZBERG 1994, 117). On the border to China, a similar development towards more structure and order took place. The Konbaung reduced hereditary authority wherever possible by putting officially appointed governors responsible for tax collection next to local rulers, pushing state control towards the border (BLANTON/FARGHER 2008, 178). Rituals by members of the royal family or even the king brought the state as a spiritual as opposed to a bureaucratic concept to the margins, buttressed by the moral code of Theravada Buddhism how rulers and ruled shall interact. These rules, bringing ruler, people and sangha into one system of mutual dependence provided the bedrock of governance at the center of which was the palace that controlled the sangha and provided well-being to the people. It could not resolve the dilemma of the discrepancy between Buddhist ideals of the ruler and worldly constraints that run against these ideals so that the state could never use its authority fully to project power (BLANTON/FARGHER 2008, 218).

The Konbaung-Qing war of 1766-1769 was a watershed moment for the integration of the borderlands on the Burmese side. When king Alaungpaya came to power, he tried to expand and enforce a tighter control over the undefined northern border. Yet, chieftains, for whom the concept of Myanmar and Yunnan was unknown, refused to pay tribute. His expeditions against Pu'er to enforce payments in the 1760s, led to complaints of the Shans to the Qing emperor, who decided to launch an attack that eventually failed and was settled in a truce – and a hard border (PERDUE 2007, 115-116; DAI 2004, 154-155).

This war is a prime example how a regional conflict escalated into a war, drawing resources and attention to a border, for which the Qing neither had much interest nor showed much concern compared to issues with the Zunghars or Tibet. Ignoring the causes of the issue and relying on flawed information from hearsay, provincial actions escalated into an all-out war. Deploying troops and increasing surveillance as a counter-measure to verify the information received by the throne from over-ambitious border officials only made matters worse while the ambitious bannerman Yang Yingju acted on his own behalf when he launched several offensives against the Konbaung, justifying his actions with falsified reports of mass-submissions of Shan chieftains to the Qing (DAI 2004, 155-157).

The Shans were not necessarily pro-Qing. Numerous Shan-*sawbwas* supported the Burmese king against the Qing as well as in other wars against Chiang Mai in 1766 and – as in the case of the Hsenwi and Bhamo sawbwas – served as diplomats to keep communication channels open. In return for their service, they received protection from outside powers for the price of being drawn into the international relations agenda of the center (MAW 2015, 2-3). With rising death tolls due to fights and climate conditions and frustration with Burmese guerilla tactics, withdrawal was the only option left – and accepting the limits of the territorial reach of Qing-power. The troops burned their boats, melted their weapons and retreated to the Hujuguan pass, built in the 16th century to demarcate the two countries, while the brokered truce required the Konbaung to submit as a tributary to the Qing. (DAI 2004, 169-170).

The resumption of tributary relations on paper concealed the fact this limit constituted a hard boundary in all respects – not just regarding military projection – in the otherwise all-encompassing Qing world order and that the initial plan to take over the state and pacify it along the lines of the Yunnan pacification campaigns with settlers and economic exploitation has utterly failed (DAI 2004, 145-146, 159, 163-164, 165).

The subsequent twenty-year trade embargo for not submitting in person to the Chinese throne, fence building and stationing of troops all over the border, physically but involuntarily fortified this limit. Intended to subjugate the Konbaung, these measures proved only to reinforce the boundary between Burma and China, as the Burmese did not rely on border-trade to run their country and fostered in addition relations with European powers. Given that another invasion would be fatal for Qing-legitimacy, that the effects of the embargo hit Chinese merchants more than the Konbaung dynasty, and that in the 1780s new border expeditions – this time against Đại Việt and Tibet – were looming on the horizon, the Qing had to lift the embargo and accepted the boundary (DAI 2004, 170-171, 172-173, 175).

This newly established boundary was the continuation of a process that started with the border-wars of the Toungoo in the 16th century, after which the Ming built border passes to demarcate the countries. These were not absolute, yet the new agreement and direct diplomatic relations manifested a geographic line that reflected the fact that Burma only happened to be a neighbor and not in any way part of or attracted by the Qing cultural sphere. Only the border-statelets and feudatories mediated in line with their own self-interest between these two waxing and waning spheres like a sponge soaking up imperial desires projected on the area. In addition, the new line of control proved the orthodox maxim of barbarians keeping barbarians in check to be wrong,

necessitating the acknowledgement of other civilizations as well as better intelligence gathering (DAI 2004, 148,149-150).

As neither Qing nor Konbaung were victorious, both sides used their influence over the border region to substantiate their territorial claims. The Qing allowed loyal native groups to settle inside its nominal territory – not out of benevolence but as protection against Konbaung-revenge. More unauthorized settlements followed later, especially during times of famine, linking border-permeability to food supply. Most of the time, these settlers kept to themselves, however when incidents occurred, the state by extension of its chieftains responded usually by force where it was possible to exert control. They could not though prohibit trans-boundary contact and collusion with Burma (BELLO 2016 207). In other parts, the state intervened directly to maintain its interest at the border intact. The Mäng Khön polity was of such strategic importance, that despite officially part of the tusi-system, the Qing garrisoned troops there in the years after the Konbaung-Qing-war. The goal was to reduce contacts between Konbaung-related Tai polities and Chinese native officials. The Konbaung refused to pay tribute, and the Qing, conscious of a possible invasion, stopped all trade routes with and through the Shan states loyal to the Konbaung and imposed a travel ban until the 1780s. Even by then, troops remained stationed in the area to monitor Konbaung activities at the border, to man checkpoints to control border movements and to protect Chinese settlers in the mountains to keep the growing political influence from the Ta'ang, a Shan-subgroup, at bay (DANIELS 2013a, 138, 140, 143). This did not spare the area from instability: internal rivalries, such as in the Five Buddha Districts or unruly polities in the mountains, such as the Jingpo, put continuous damage to Mäng Khön. (DANIELS 2013a, 144).

To successfully maintain this regime of control, the Qing administration set up new institutions in the form of sub-prefectures in the Chinese Shan areas, pushing further towards the actual border-line. This was warranted by the many different rebellions that occurred at the beginning of the 18th century, for which the Qing needed access to soldiers and military avenues to battle them.

For Konbaung kings, this meant a constellation of rising trade, Chinese immigration, greater monetization and higher levels of literacy, which incentivized a deepening of fiscal and administrative reform, better enforcing rules on resource extraction, putting the sangha into the state's intentions and spreading socio-religious norms of the capital to the border (LIEBERMAN/BUCLKEY 2012, 1085-108). Systemic issues of the crown service and the constant understaffing remained unsolved though. Deportations were necessary and especially increased warfare

and the eventual capture of Ayutthaya under king Hsinbyushin in 1767 brought in new waves of captives (FINDLAY/O'ROURKE 2007, 278).

Warfare also had unintended consequences of consolidation and territorialization. The areas around the Chindwin River in Upper Burma were spared by much warfare, yet due to fear of conscription and economic pressures to flee the bonds of crown service suddenly produced a wave of migrants in this area with their centrally-indoctrinated ideas of statehood and social organization. The population expanded and the hitherto existing forest monasteries were forced to move to more remote places. In their place stepped village monasteries, preaching to townspeople and engaging in activities beyond teaching. Most importantly, even though forest monasteries were closer to royal resources, these new villages and their spiritual needs formed a new bloc of a laymen-sponsored sangha. This rivalry had an impact on the entire state when forest-monasteries used their knowledge of Pali and Sanskrit texts as justification to take control over religious knowledge in Burma as a whole under King Bodawhpaya, further standardizing the teachings of the state at its fringes (CHARNEY 2007, 235-236).

Like this, warfare over the 17th and 18th century in interaction with administrative changes and aggressions from the northern neighbor, pushed the Burmese zone of influence and control further up north, tying the outlying areas closer to the center. Despite persisting problems, such as the drain on royal resources and understaffing of the crown service, both the later Toungoo and early Konbaung ran a tight ship and ensured allegiance and obedience through incentives and their military capacities. Much of that may seem as driven by the watershed of the Konbaung-Qing war, yet the Chinese administrative agenda and reform in this era was much further reaching and had simply provoked a better internal organization of the Southeast Asian states.

2.3.2.2 Qing China's territorial reach towards Southeast Asia

The watershed period for the northern neighbor along the border was the period from 1644 – the fall of Beijing to the Manchus – until 1659 when the last Ming remnants in the far South were eradicated. This campaign was possible as the Qing with their central Asian origin managed to stabilize the inner-Asian frontier and banned the danger from nomadic peoples with which the Ming had to cope (PERDUE 1998, 263). The Ming started with a reorganization of the administration of Yunnan to fend off the expanding Qing, mended and improved relations with chieftains and border polities by bestowing Ming-titles while at the same time set up naval forces to fight back the Qing (ELMAN 2007, 40).

The Qing entrusted several generals to recapture the Southwest. The most powerful of them – Wu Sangui – pushed forward into Sichuan as of 1652 as an attempt to fight the Daxi-dynasty of Zhang Xianzhong. The entire battle-arena was quite messy with shifting alliances among a myriad of Ming-loyalist warlords so that only in 1659 Wu Sangui managed to capture Kunming in Yunnan. Zhu Youlang, the last Ming emperor fled to Burma. Fighting lasted until 1664 to eradicate the last bandits and warlords were driven out (DAI 2009, 21-22). This warfare changed the political landscape from an area of lawlessness and competing interests to one at least nominally under a unified rule. However, the transition was catastrophic. The devastations of the border-provinces were huge with human existence in some areas totally wiped out. Given that the Qing did not attribute strategic importance to the area at the beginning of their reign, the three border-provinces Yunnan, Guizhou and Guangxi did not receive many funds for re-construction – with changes in the internal frontier due to rebellions and threats this neglect was about to change (DAI 2009, 22, 67).

The border provinces Sichuan, Yunnan and Guizhou were the last provinces the Manchus conquered, a process that was not done until 1662. This was due to the necessity to build up resources and troops first before launching an attack against warlords and Ming-remnants in the southwest. Even after the conquest, the situation and reconstruction relied on ad-hoc measures rather than a clear investment plan (DAI 2009, 15-16). The government established the Three Feudatories under the leadership of the three main-generals, Wu Sangui, the most powerful, Shang Kexi, and Geng Jimao with the task to rebuild the province and set up administrative structures (DAI 2009, 26). Wu Sangui experimented with direct rule by eliminating the political responsibility of the Shuixi chief and the Wusa tusi and establishing prefectures under direct provincial control of his leadership. He went on setting up departments and counties to eliminate tusi-rule, however the direct control did not manage to establish structures that would keep the local population under control (HERMAN 2006, 158-159). Wu Sangui started a rebellion in 1673 after the edict abolishing heredity of these fiefdoms, leading to an eight-year war on the inner frontier. The results were twofold. First, hearing about the failed experiment of establishing direct control let the Qing rely on the chieftain-system for another fifty years before a reform took place. Indirect rule was a means to better prioritize resources for consolidating the Qing's authority. Second, seeing how a provincial leader could start a secessionist rebellion sparked fear among the Qing to increase surveillance and control of the political situation and so increased the

resolve to find way and means to abolish tuis and hereditary position in favor of appointments of officials in the early 18th century(DAI 2009 9; HERMAN 2006, 160).

While retreating to the south, the Ming created an administrative interface in which the Qing could easily continue relations on the one hand – on the other hand, it helped fortifying a boundary between China and the border polities. An interesting case for this are the Wa who were granted a kingdom that was recognized until the end of the Republican era. Even though the Wa had no role or rank for a king in their own social structure, they adopted the idea from the Shan, blurring the line between being part of the Chinese administrative body and borrowing organizational structures and ruling and legitimizing customs from other border polities – such as taking a Shan queen and following patrilineal succession lines. Even more interesting, the Chinese recognition became less important over time, yet recognition by Shan royal houses and adoption of Shan language and dresses was essential to the ruling family. Like that, despite the efforts of Ming and Qing, the Wa kingdom gravitated away from China and formed a distinct Shan-style polity that formed a border between China and Southeast Asia (HLAING 2007, 8). However, this was an exception. The Qing's push to the south still led the dynastic wars to spill over to Burma, as the Ming pretender to the throne sought refuge in Ava. China's incursions were mistimed, as the Burmese were fighting in the south against Siam. As the state proved incapable to establish stable state-structures in the north, marauding bandits and soldiers brought destruction to Upper Burma. In the end, a palace-coup and the retreat of Chinese troops on delivery of the Ming prince restabilized the border-region. The border became recognized again as a frontier of China as a polity despite the absence of any tribute (STUART-FOX 2003, 106-107).

During the conquest of Yunnan in the 17th century Ming remnants fled to Dai Viet and for example settled in Minh Huong villages in South Vietnam, where they could continue a Ming loyalist identity while being incorporated into the Vietnamese state. These Ming loyalists would later become a powerful and privileged elite in commerce and administration and gradually merge with the local society. They managed cross-border relations but followed Vietnamese state interests and advanced within Vietnamese hierarchies from which they brokered power and wealth in the Chinese world order (WHEELER 2015, 40-41).

The efforts to stabilize the border were in vain when Wu Sangui started his rebellion and declared himself emperor in 1678. It took eight years to crush this rebellion, devastating the three border provinces and again depopulating the area. At that time, the southwestern provinces still were not considered to be in any way strategically significant, yet it was not negligible in terms of the dyn-

asty's ability to rule (DAI 2009, 27). Warfare therefore was not over and continued throughout the entire 18th century. In addition, it opened up new frontiers and enemies as a curious alliance emerged between the Wu Sangui-rebels and the Tibetans in the 1680s, which motivated the Kangxi emperor to increase surveillance at the border and subsequent emperors to turn the border provinces into a launchpad against Tibet (DAI 2009, 42; WELLENS 2010, 36-37).

As the Qianlong emperor recognized that the frontier-wars did not harm his people's prosperity, he continued an expansionist policy, eventually leading to the Konbaung-Qing-war of 1765 to 1769, which ended in a disaster. Other wars included the incorporation of the Jinchuan tusi after the Konbaung-Qing-war as well as the Tibet-expeditions of the 1720s under massive mobilization efforts that tied the economy of the border provinces to the military. There were two campaigns against Nepal as well as an expedition against Đại Việt – all in all victories were not really clear-cut and the costs of the Qing ambitions couldn't justify the expansionist course over the long-run (DAI 2009, 132-133; YANG 2010, 184; PERDUE 2007, 115-116).

To build their state, the Qing tried at first to constraint mobility through bond servitude to Manchu nobles, though that did not always had the wished effect. More effective was the organization of captured people into banners, which were military and administrative units that were supposed to defend and administer the conquered lands. Listings of members and compulsory registration helped to keep the population under control of the state, yet especially in the borderlands, these banners were less strictly supervised than in the Chinese heartland –requiring a degree of flexibility and adaptation to ensure territorial consolidation (PERDUE 1998, 266). In addition to these census exercises, expeditions wrote extensive reports on the regions and how to legitimize bridging the space between heterogeneous frontiers and the center of power and adapt technologies of consolidation and control. These reports should inform the border-activities of the Qing for at least until the beginning of the 18th century (WOODSIDE 1998, 201).

Overall, this period did not see changes in the course of the border but a gradual hardening towards a singular boundary through stalemates and repulsions of Chinese invasions by Burma and Vietnam and an uneasy stability that rested not necessarily on tributary relations (STUART-FOX 2003, 110).

This might seem surprising, as the Qing at least during its early era – despite conquests in Central Asia – still relied on the tributary system as a cornerstone of territorial recognition. The tributary network inherited from the Ming was still largely intact and a major tool of control. So were rulers of Korea, Vietnam and other minor states still listed as tributaries. However, the Qing as a

foreign dynasty also had a different understanding and saw tributary missions as only one of many tools to establish an international order. It adapted the system to changes and perceived needs of the empire in the international context (WILLS 2012, 440-441; ZARROW 2001, 156-157). As a result, the Qing gradually changed the role of the native chieftains. They could still exercise some autonomous power, but increasingly were drawn into the service of administering the polity of China at its margins (DAI 2004, 151; ZHAO 2006, 5). What changed in the self-understanding of China under the Qing was relaxation towards ethnical classification and the adoption of a more integrative connotation to the term China, shedding references to a specific ethnicity or location and embracing the idea of a multi-people state. This on the one hand softened the constructed boundary between Confucian and non-Confucian peoples, on the other hand the definition of the Chinese empire became more embroiled with abstract ideas of belonging through territorial administration. The political domain so became more important than the cultural realm to define what and where China is and who is inside it. This was supported by expanding literacy of the Chinese logographic script, the spread of a standard dialect to participate in central examinations, a strong emphasis on Confucianism to organize society and an open examination system to raise in the ranks of the bureaucracy. Like this, the Qing state could fairly easily penetrate societies on local level and tie border regions to the center by a unified elite, culture and information flows as diversity so was not a threat to unified territorialization anymore (ZHAO 2006, 11; LIEBERMAN 2008, 297-298; BELLO 2016, 2; GIERSCH 2006, 67; HOBBSAWM 1992, 62). Measures at the beginning were nevertheless quite harsh, as in 1777 the court gave students in the borders a grace period of thirty years to shed their dialects and conform to the court-sponsored version of Chinese. The Qing at this point became – despite all references to multi-people-state and relaxing ethnical criteria of Chineseness – more orthodox and dogmatic regarding the cultural conditions to participate in the Qing-state (WOODSIDE 1998, 212).

While referring to the same polity as the isolationist Ming, the Qing so broadened the scope of its claims and how they understood what China should mean. The more the Qing dynasty became synonymous with the Chinese state, the more the spread of titles and Qing-seals demarcated the state, forged a border, and so incited an expansionist course (ZHAO 2006, 6).

The adoption of the notion of a multi-people state did not mean that the Qing perceived border polities as equal – a cultural hierarchy was still in place and differences were still constructed – yet the context in which the Qing enacted this hierarchy changed to ensure continuity, facilitate expansion and demarcate the space in which it could exercise its authority. The approach became

just less orthodox in terms of categorization – even though ethnic categorization became substantially more refined for information gathering purposes – and more lenient in accepting border polities as part of the bureaucratic system and so tying them closer to central authorities. Through direct control or the help of chieftains the Qing could not control fully, a new equilibrium emerged in which Qing-laws governed interactions with chieftains while chieftain-laws shall help keeping the border in order. Like this, the Qing balanced an expansionist agenda while projecting a demarcation of its own reach which eventually led to a boundary line (SHIN 2006, 184-185; BELLO 2016, 4, 186; HOSTETLER 2000, 634-635).

This was driven by the understanding of the Qing as a pacifying force at its borders while not being dismissive or discriminatory towards those that would like to enter in tributary relations or assimilate. The conflation of the Chinese state with the Qing dynasty was at the basis of a territorial understanding that required boundaries and promoted expansionism. A distinction between barbarians and non-barbarians was no longer needed in its original sharpness, neither was it necessary to rely on tributary states when these could as well be incorporated into the empire in a more direct way by turning the outer barbarians into inner barbarians through an administrative expansionist-assimilationist agenda (ZHAO 2006, 9-10, 13; STUART-FOX 2003, 108). What was left were those who rejected Qing rule, and those who were undesirable in Qing eyes – coining the term Wild People Mountains (野人山) to describe essentially a no-go zone for state administrators. The people of this area though began to mix with other border peoples, such as the Kachin and Shan, forming their own area beyond Chinese control and so demarcating a boundary between civilized and wild polities (BELLO 2016, 186).

The expansion of borderlands and the immigration pressures led to a greater involvement in local polities and politics to construct borderlands in the southwest and tying them closer to the center by adapting the imperial system to the circumstances on the ground and allocate people, resources and officials accordingly. Thus, to solidify their reach in the second half of the 17th century, the Qing used their resources to put out rebellions, curtail the autonomy of chieftains making them part of the imperial bureaucracy and turn Yunnan, Sichuan and Guizhou into a launchpad for military expeditions against Tibet in the 1720s (DAI 2004, 152; BELLO 2016, 10,12). Only by then Sichuan was attributed strategic importance after having been neglected during the Ming-Qing transition devastation. Only because of the strategic location against Tibet was Sichuan transformed into a key-frontier as a connection point between northwestern and southwestern frontiers equipped with a banner-garrison and a single governor-general – the highest rank of a

civil and military commander and so bringing this frontier-province into a functional unit of the center against Tibet (DAI 2009, 5-6).

Kangxi, Yongzheng and Qianlong emperors were adamant to “pacify” Tibet and so mobilized huge resources from Yunnan, Sichuan and the other areas such as Muli to launch a campaign at the Tibet-frontier. The Zunghar invasion of Tibet in 1719 spurred new integration efforts of Yunnan into a coherent frontier strategy with the dispatch of troops, officers, information network infrastructure and mobilization of resources for an invasion. Kangxi still got defeated but the mobilization efforts militarized the southwestern provinces and his embargo on Tibet fortified a border with frontier outposts. However, trade continued. At the time of the Yongzheng campaign of 1728, eastern-Tibetan areas such as Chamdo were already heavily enmeshed in the networks of the border-economy, so that capturing the town only increased the Yunnan and Sichuan influence there. The campaigns increased the influence of the merchant networks and the establishment of trading posts tied this frontier-zone ever closer into the dynamics of the border-development (DAI 2009, 80, 85, 87, 137, 185; WELLENS 2010, 26).

Especially smaller frontier polities like Muli often felt compelled to provide resources and tie themselves to those states whom they could not afford to offend and so furthered Chinese claims. Muli had its own system of officials managing contacts with the outside world (bazong) and was in close contact with Naxi and Nuosou chieftains. It was entrusted to manage this meeting point of Shan, Tibetan and Chinese states in the service of Tibet, but the line of allegiance was very blurred given the troop provisions to the Qing (WELLENS 2010, 34-35).

As such, the border-area was far from being consolidated during the early Qing-era, and wars, squirmishes and resistance was a defining feature until the end of the Qianlong-reign.

2.3.2.2.1 The changing character of native chieftains

The emperors of the 18th century were so much focused on bringing Yunnan into the orbit of direct imperial control of a state that coalesced with the self-understanding of its ruling dynasty that they sponsored road building projects, promoted mining operations and – since the Qianlong era – migration into the area – and beyond into the Burmese Shan states. 1765, when large numbers of miners entered the area, marked a year that upset the status quo of a fragile balance between autonomy and tributary obligations of the Shan states towards the Burmese center. This was brought about by the Chinese autonomous mining communities, whose powerful heads were power brokers in the triangle between Qing, Konbaung and Shan chieftains, whose officials were

all to some degree in the pockets of the mining operators. The destabilization of the border area was furthered by the out of shape Green Standard troops who could not project any military authority anymore and rather were complicit with the activities of the miners (DAI 2004, 153-154; DAI 2009, 196). Maintaining the reach of the mining enterprises was not sustainable in the context of a rivaling Konbaung dynasty in Burma and cultural and ecological constraints and natural conditions, which simply fostered resistance to centralized control and so strengthened the border between Chinese centralization and autonomy of polities (BELLO 2016, 169).

When the Qing took over from the Ming, a third of Yunnan province, three quarters of southern Sichuan and half of Guizhou province were out of the reach of the state as fiefdoms of native chieftains. Despite being tied to the capital by regular tribute missions, in the wake of the inflow of Han-migrants, these polities were increasingly seen as hampering the Qing-state to project control (HERMAN 1994 50-51). In the very beginning of the Qing-dynasty, the Shunzhi emperor tried to gain the allegiance of the tusi by edicting to border officials to provide Confucian education to the ruling families. A campaign started to gather information on native power-holders and their lands, as well as the state of the relations of the chieftains with the throne. It became clear, that these relations need to be restructured if the throne can be sure of their loyalty (HERMAN 1994 52-54).

The Qing at the beginning rewarded loyal tusis with grand titles and autonomy. Governor General Cai Yurong, dispatched to Yunnan to rebuild the province after the Wu Sangui rebellion, followed this policy as the Qing did not have enough resources and so needed to rely on the chieftain-system. To better control them he embarked on a doctrine to create a new elite, loyal to the court and serving the state to better control the people outside its remit (HERMAN 1994, 58).

In a first step, the throne decreed changes to adjust the tusi-practices to Chinese norms, such as patrilineal succession and Confucian schooling for the heirs. This caused competition and clashes within the local elites, and put distance between the ruling family and other elites of the tusi, sometimes even antagonizing the community they should control. The new rules of succession increased the political control of the imperial administration over the chieftains and opened avenues for local officials to exploit succession quarrels for the state's benefit. Like this, the Qing bureaucracy gained more control over the border administration (HERMAN 1994, 54-55, 57-58). Such policies to increase supervision started out in Guangdong, and then spread over Guangxi, where hostilities between Han settlers and locals were growing. The fear of losing control over natives and settlers was so great, that even the emperor pushed for expanding the school systems

and protection of the rights of indigenous people (HERMAN 1994, 55-56). The result of these reforms was that the political functioning drastically changed under the greater oversight, as it was the state as an institution, not a personal relation to a governor, with whom the native chieftains interacted and so replaced traditional relationships of power with new institutions as well as diminished the role of native intra-elite power relations and created new hostilities (HERMAN 1994, 59). So were heads of the chieftainships not always allies of their retainers and even attacked their villages. The policies thus to tie chieftains closer to the Qing state and so increase the power of the state over the frontier areas provoked chaos in the borderlands throughout the first half of the 18th century. All the violence led to a re-thinking of the border-policies, to avoid chieftains becoming a destabilizing factor in this sensitive area (HERMAN 1994, 60-61, 64).

To effectively control the borderlands the Qing aimed at integrating local conditions and practices into their universalist empire as a symbol of military power and imperial authority. Centralization and fragmentation however went hand in hand in their endeavor. The Yongzheng emperor – forced by the need to explore copper-resources – started a campaign to secure the southwestern border. He saw the ethnic communities there still as a threat to the empire, easily manipulated by Tibetans into secession as it happened with the Nanzhao-kingdom. He sent Ortai, a trusted official to reform the administrative structure in Yunnan, who with support of the military reigned in against the *tusi*-system, especially in Guizhou (Zhongjia) and Yunnan (Lolo) (DAI 2009, 101-102). Starting in the 18th century, first conversions of chieftains into regular administrative units took place under Ortai's "gai tu gui liu"-policy (改土归流) to centralize power and shorten the chain of command and power projection between emperor and subject. This worked well in already loyal areas where the "civilizing" agenda of the Qing through education found fertile grounds in people who aspired to become officials in the Qing civil service. In fragmented areas, these efforts only led to resistance from powerful chieftain families against any centralization attempts. Ortai on the one hand so managed to widen the administrative reach of the Qing, by removing or absorbing chieftains, establishing new administrative posts, garrisons, granaries and schools, but the cost was the death of tens of thousands who resisted his attempts. Many locals fled, leaving a vacuum in agriculture and logistics, so that Ortai recruited farmers to reclaim the land, which ended in a massive revolt against the Qing in 1731 – that only ended in the Qianlong era some years later (DAI 2009, 103).

Given this pattern, area-wide civilization missions were too high a cost, migratory pressures and rebellions only alienated the more reluctant chieftains further. Ortai so did not dismantle all the

tusis – only those where direct rule was possible and desirable. Therefore, certain chieftains that were not engulfed in quarrels or showed secessionist tendencies, or were in malaria-infested areas or located in far too remote areas remained in place as they fulfilled a critical imperial need of control and mobilization for border campaigns. Instead, Ortai resorted to winning these chieftains over through ideological attraction and incentives – and so produced stable chieftainship identities that were very distinct from the directly controlled areas (SUTTON 2003 45-46; BELLO 2016, 186-187, 208). These groups still colluded and conspired with other states or did not embrace Chinese civilization as demanded, however they had a stabilizing presence in an area, where *zhang* (瘴) – a disease that befell and killed Chinese – was rampant. Zhang was like a membrane that did not allow the Qing-state to penetrate this area, yet through which benefits of alliance could pass through (BELLO 2016 209-210). The rest of the more accessible tusis were incorporated, mostly by force. Warfare in the 18th century so became a primary tool to maintain order and crush resistance. That this was not a sustainable way and did not win over hearts and minds of the chieftains was clear from the onset, so that defending the boundaries between local population and Chinese settlers became the primary doctrine to reduce conflicts and confining different ethnicities in their respective spaces, which in turn only fortified the distinction and so the boundary between the Chinese and non-Chinese world in the borderlands (SHIN 2006, 186-187; HOSTETLER 2000, 630). The reform of the chieftainship so fragmented and intensified control over the local elites depending on their allegiance and ties to the Qing-state. This development changed patterns in power-brokerage relations as access to decision-makers was not mediated anymore through personal ties but rather administrative rules. Also, chieftain-politics became more driven by bureaucrats than the families in power. As there were different degrees of integration within the Qing-state, intra-tusi-violence increased regarding economic exploitation, wealth and land rights. This fundamental structural change helped the Qing to expand its grip over some tusis, others were rather left out (HERMAN 1997, 49).

Over time, the changing role of chieftains and the greater culturally orthodox consolidation in the fragmented borderlands made the chieftains rather an exceptional outlier in the borderland administration. They were permitted to temporarily keep their autonomy for the sake of stabilizing the borderlands, yet the Qing orthodoxy gradually forced assimilation. The motivation behind were security concerns of possible invasions from Burma or Đại Việt. Over time, chieftains were forced to accept institutions, taxes and services and were supposed to gradually turn from allies to subjects (BELLO 2016, 174). To overcome resistance, the Qing relied on the attractiveness of

Chinese culture mediated through compliant chieftains to subject the borderland population to the throne, yet the question of what cultural contents to be mediate in what way and how to adapt to local circumstances remained largely open and hampered assimilationist endeavors at the southwestern border. As standard adaptations of administrative and cultural practices as employed in other newly annexed territories failed, effective control did not take the form of a blanket over the entire territory but was concentrated in mining and other migrant communities and strengthened the role of the province as a conduit between Qing and Konbaung states. Ethnic divides so became reinforced to some degree through the distinction between Han and local people in different ethnic administrative areas, i.e. chieftains from the beginning of the Qing period, to maintain order and provide a foothold in this strategically important area. Borderland construction was therefore fragmented and bringing the outlying people into a central administration lied often with local officials (BELLO 2016 169-170, 172). The ever more pronounced dichotomy between direct control and local autonomy prevented a coherent territorial consolidation as practices and identity building differed more and more from the orthodoxies prescribed by the states (BELLO 2016 182-183). This however provided new roles for chieftains. Shan chieftains of China became mediators between Qing and the people beyond imperial control and so served as vessel of state authority in the area across the inner frontier. Border prefectures so re-achieved the role as arbiters of statehood and supporting local provincial officials in reducing the fluidity of administrative boundaries (BELLO 2016, 173). As a result and to maintain order, officials in the border provinces were strengthened in their authority and responsibility to provide information on the situations in the neighbouring countries. By having to provide all information to the court, all administrative and war-related activities were centrally sanctioned in a bureaucratic system of checks and balances. This automatically made any activity happening at the border a state-affair and reduced useless squirmishes or unnecessary misunderstandings that could start a wider conflict. It not always worked out as shown in the 1788 invasion of Đại Việt largely due to the fact that observation across the border never provided the same accuracy as a resident delegate or ambassador in a foreign capital could do (WILLS 2012, 478).

The uneven territorial consolidation so saw smaller polities rise in niches outside of state control. A Hui state in Yunnan appeared under the leadership of the Du (杜) clan and only later was taken in the 19th century. Other Muslim polities were scattered around the border of Yunnan, especially after the expulsion and anti-Muslim persecution of the years 1781, 1784, and later on 1856-1877 (CHOY 2006, 696-697). Expeditions like these to put out rebellions and unruly chieftains also

generated an extensive body of campaign histories as a new genre that promoted the empire across the Qing state territory (WALEY-COHEN 2006 101-102).

2.3.2.2.2 The expansion of the bureaucratic state

Over time, the fluctuation of state penetration set the space for the fluid area between the Chinese empire and the Southeast Asian polities. Chinese dynasties had to establish their *tusi*-system of indirect control repeatedly when a new dynasty came to power or a war destabilized the region (FLYNN 2006, 26). When migrants entered the area, they could not just displace the local population and dismantle existing institutions, such as multiple tributary loyalties of *tusis* and Tai (Shan) political and religious practices, which all oriented the polities towards the Theravada-states of Southeast Asia rather than China. In addition, there were already earlier settlers, with their own institutions and structures –now considered barbarians who also interacted with the expanding state. The Qing also feared barbarization of their own subjects, which apparently must have happened in large scale in the Miao-lands, where even walls were erected to keep the Han in place as sedentary, tax-paying subjects. From this “in-between” place, the Qing carved out slowly a new bureaucratic coverage through negotiations, warfare, and relationship building (GIERSCH 2001, 73; PERDUE 2009, 249; SCOTT 2009, 173).

The border-area spanned from the edges of Upper Burma to the Mekong River and the Ailao Mountain range, where the official county-system started. Along the river, the chieftains of Mengmian, Mengmeng, Menglian and Sipsongpanna were lined up. Already in the 1720s, the Qing began expanding its county-system into that area, setting administrative, commercial and military borders that did not necessarily overlap. Like that, two areas emerged, the newly integrated interior formed out of former chieftains and the rest of the chieftains stretching south towards Burma (MA 2014, 1649).

The Qing gradually reduced the reliance on the native chieftains which they – despite being inexpensive surrogates to a full-fledged civil service – put under ever greater tutelage and reporting obligation. The aim was to destroy any potential local political or cultural agenda, and establish a Qing-military grip on the area. The Yongzheng emperor began with the first – and arguably very violent – incorporation project of *tusis* in Guangxi, Guizhou and Yunnan, transforming native chieftains into directly governed counties (改土归流). In Guangxi, the Zhuang-*tusis* were abolished, leaving only some smaller *tusis* at the border to Vietnam. In Yunnan, the Naxi-*tusi* was the

first to go, as it was too powerful with its mobilization capacities and as sponsor of the Karma-pa sect in Sichuan and southeastern Tibet. At the Burmese border however, many tusis survived even though the Qing reduced their authority and tightened the control. Sipsong Panna was maintained but Qing-influence through bestowing high-ranking titles to low-ranking princelings relativized the position of the paramount Sipsong Panna-leaders and introduced rivalries. The mix of closer surveillance, migration of Han-Chinese and increased rivalries eroded the authority of local leaders further, while migratory pressure forced upland people to move further up the mountains and newcomers across the frontier to Burma and Laos, setting up mining operations for silver and tin in Munai, Maolong and Bawdwin, using the lack of control for personal enrichment and defiance of state-authority (DANIELS 2013 12-13; GIERSCHE 2001, 68; NING 2007, 79-80). Violence was always an option, yet education was a second means to extend Qing-authority over chieftains in a quasi-imperialistic attempt to integrate the borderlands. Transforming people to civilized, tax-paying subjects by making them adopt the basics of Chinese social norms through studying classical texts was a core-believe of officials (PERDUE 2009, 252).

The Kangxi-emperor promoted the establishment of charitable schools even in remote areas to promote loyalty to the empire by teaching language, script and Neo-Confucian morals. 74 schools were so built until 1722 in Yunnan. The schools achieved some degree of assimilation, as pupils understood the benefits of adaptation, yet the imposition of proper language and customs only reached a small group, which still was heavily influenced by their own Tai-culture. In addition, teachers were often locals, teaching local dialects of Mandarins. These schools were still not ubiquitous, so that they could not cover the entire territory. Sipsong Panna's school closed already in the 1730s (GIERSCHE 2001, 86-88; HERMAN 1994, 65-66).

The imperialist agenda also involved migrants and economic development. The process though was not monolithic and alliances out of opportunity emerged arbitrarily between migrants, indigenous people, administrators and merchants. Despite the increase state presence in the form of bureaucracy and control, many peoples resisted and developed their own means of agency further. Sinicization was never straightforward as the body of traditions and cultural techniques were not monolithic and bent to local circumstances and so always creating a new range of cultural norms. In particular, many important bannerman, such as Ortai, were not Han but Manchu, and the ruling house' interests did not necessarily converge with the opportunity-driven calculation of Han migrants. Rather, it was often the migrants against which the Qing put native chieftains in service and so not only brought the latter into the state but prevented secessions of the former (GIERSCHE

2001, 68-70, 71-72; NING 2007, 76). Tensions between migrants and officials showed their effect in changing settlement-policies: lenient practices prevailed in the 1740s, yet a ban against Han on the frontier was enacted in the 1760s – meandering between two extremes, depending on how much migrants were seen as threat to border stability (GIERSCH 2001, 75, 77).

Migration patterns were very uneven. Places like Sipsong Panna were left fairly untouched, rather settlements concentrated around mines and anchor-points were followers of the last Ming-throne claimants were already established. With the government-promoted migration, also new jurisdictions appeared, such as the Pu'er Prefecture to allocate troop quotas, maintain garrisons and so even further incentivize migration to the border. Funds, grants of seed and land and tax breaks also showed their effects. To govern this development, officials were dispatched, forming the interior border (内地) of state-led reclamation policies (GIERSCH 2001, 73-74; DAI 2009, 74).

In this area, local and Qing cultural and political institutions co-existed for a long time, even when already migrants formed the majority – rather they interacted to shape the political and social border-space in unison and formed a dual administration, in which eventually the Qing imperial aspirations prevailed. In the Muang Jia/Mengjia for example local officials for example controlled the Tai and hill peoples, while the Qing-officials were responsible for the migrants – at least on paper as the territorial distinction between these two groups was far from clear-cut (GIERSCH 2001, 78-79; ELMAN 2007, 44). According to GIERSCH (2001, 80), both institutions adapted under the mutual influence to gain more ground. Imperial education for example adapted to the context of local knowledge to teach Qing-values to both indigenous people and migrants alike to find some common ground for cooperation within the imperial system. This did not mean full assimilation – most of the time different cultural norms were allowed to co-exist – but rather the provision of a base for communication. There was a belief of inherent goodness of all people that can be fostered through education that was in constant struggle with the Qing-concern over compliance. With education and implementing a common set of values, this issue of personal development and compliance with universal state-norms was thought to be reconciled to bridge the ethical divide – which loomed much larger in the reports of officials than ethnic differences. Since ethical standards, mediated and interpreted by scholar-officials and literati were the cornerstone of the Qing political order and anyone could learn these standards, education was supposed to be the key to bring the borderland population into the Chinese orbit with the side-effects of promoting Chinese leadership and discouraging separatist tendencies. The education-

efforts were not supposed to make the frontier elite to change its behavior and value system entirely in line with Chinese principles but rather to build a bridge. It so cemented a cultural-bordering bedrock in favor of the Qing in the area (HERMAN 1997 48; PERDUE 2009, 254; MCMAHON 2002, 74; CHOW 2001, 74).

Like this, the mutual influence of local and Qing identities shifted the attitude of allegiance through ideology, values or rituals towards a new frontier-identity in which the state was present in the form of territorial demarcation through administration, but the practice of statehood often rested embedded in local traditions (NING 2007, 75). This formed a vertical political and cultural integration that in the end remained in the service of the empire by supporting the expansionist agenda exactly through that integration. Despite local variations of exercising statehood, the power the Qing could wield by allocating cultural, administrative and commercial resources in an interdependent relationship increased. Education only sped up this colonization, while commercialization opened avenues for Qing-culture to disseminate in the frontier-region (LIEBERMAN 2008, 289).

In addition to this soft power, the Qing state substantiated territorial claims by broadcasting military power and the universalism of Qing-rule through setting up engraved columns (WALEY-COHEN 2006, 97-98). Such columns also served as markers for territorial mapping like the Jesuit Atlas (皇輿全覽圖), which fed back to the court the claimed extension of the state – regardless of the degree of control. Following Perdue, these maps and columns had a political agenda for which replacing local diversity with a centralized view was a necessity, and a motivation to increase state-penetration of an area, which – through maps and columns – was fixed in place (PERDUE 1998 273-274). Geographic imagery of space so fed back into policies to change this image over time and change the imaginations of the officials and students in the government-sponsored schools on the ground. In essence, they catalysed an imperialist and sometimes nationalist agenda of territorialization, buttressed by the redefinition of identity and bureaucratic incorporation, rationalized by challenges and interactions with non-Qing polities and furthered by a distinct border-consciousness to defend the territorial integrity of the state. The expansive and inclusive view of the Qing required force to keep those within the border that they thought should construct the space as imagined in maps and state-monuments (PERDUE 1998, 284-286; DI COSMO 1998, 288-289; HOSTETLER 2000, 623-624). As HOSTETLER (2000, 653-654) points out, these cartographic exercises were also a harbinger for the Qing to recognize that its imperial assertions will have to be bound by internationally agreed fixed borders.

To keep order, the military presence increased towards the end of the 18th century, yet killing and robberies did not decline, on the contrary, banditry and resistance flared up repeatedly. One example would be the White Lotus sect that metastasized in the border Sichuan and Yunnan and even incited a large uprising in 1746. The response was confiscation and burning of White Lotus artifacts, and massive arrests. Soon after, new border campaigns started, so that attention shifted away from the sect to the acute border-wars (DAI 2009, 222).

In the end, the mix of violence and compromise through fluid relations tipped in favor of Qing-rule. This was forwarded not just by force and administration, but also through intermarriage, which blurred the line between Chinese and local territorial-cultural realms. Attempts to enforce a degree of segregation by outlawing intermarriage and the blurring of identities like in the 1720s and 1770 did not work. Also overtly showing dynastic loyalty by wearing the queue did not catch on in the Southwest, but was used to demarcate areas where friends or foes lived. Over time, locals began wearing the queue, blending it with their own garbs, rejecting imposed uniformity and mixing the identification markers of the locale with those of the empire (GIERSCH 2001 85-86). For the Qing, a whole spectrum of classification helped identifying and thus handling people. The assumption was that the more civilized a people is, the easier it is to rule, while against the uncivilized force might be necessary to turn them toward civilization. Cultural change so was synonymic with political change, however this process was neither smooth nor unilinear (SUTTON 2006 196; GIERSCH 2006, 67-68). The Miao for example experienced a constant back and forth between repressive, pro-Han policies and accommodation. State-penetration and in-migration massively increased, yet Miao-lands were still considered as part of the internal frontier as they successfully fended off attempts to tax or absorb them into the Qing-state. Clashes between settlers, Miao and officials happened often, yet interestingly, officials blamed migrants for disturbing the order and provoking a revolt. Advocates for greater cultural penetration and assimilation and opponents to greater migration attempts fought about how to deal with the Miao, yet all attempts to quarantine the Miao failed as trade networks penetrated ever more strongly the area. In the 1760s, the Miao even called on Qing-troops to settle internal quarrels, which caused a brutal repression campaign against them. Finally, in 1795 the Miao revolted due to land-losses to Han-migrants and the repression of their culture. The result was for the Qing to link up ethnicity with territorial claims, and so attributing specific lifestyles and cultures to individual areas. This sharpened the distinction between indigenous and migrants through the different – separating in character – administrative approaches to their respective lands, dividing the land into degrees of

administrative incorporation. The ensuing colonial-imperialistic policies of assimilation and cultural transformation so just sharpened the divide of different administrative practices, by which the Qing could gradually creep on or violently integrate more and more polities as loyal frontier-states under central administrative control (NING 2007, 80-81; CAFFREY 2009, 190; PERDUE 1998, 278; PERDUE 2009, 265-266; SUTTON 2006, 190-191; cf. PERDUE 2013, 388). Special officials with local knowledge handled Miao-Qing affairs and so turned the Miao-lands as Miao Frontier (苗疆) officially into a part of the Qing-empire albeit with its own set of regulations and statutes that should define the contact between Miao and Han. Many of these regulations have been in the making since the 1730s when the Miao were granted many freedoms, such as an exemption from the land-tax, in exchange for Qing-administration (SUTTON 2006, 193, 198, 203). The Miao are an interesting case as with colonization also the appropriation of Miao-practices by the Qing went along. The Heavenly Kings were part of the Miao cult before the Han adopted it, tying together the Miao families and serving as a source of law. As the Kings – so goes the tale – showed their support for the Ming-troops, the revolt was not only subdued, the Kings were recognized in the Han cosmology with subsequent standardization of the cult and served as a justification for Qing-colonization of Miao-lands (SUTTON 2000, 455, 469). Once the revolt was subdued, the Qing continued to incorporate the territory and mold it into recognizable administrative structures with prefectures and sub-prefectures and an increased military presence, which marginalized the Miao at the remote, poorer and less-fertile areas of their lands (SUTTON 2000, 452-454).

Internal colonization and imperialism and local agency so helped to consolidate Qing power in the area by blending indigenous and Qing-traits and standardization efforts in culture, politics and commerce, so that over time administrative practices adapted to the circumstances on the ground. Conquest was just one step in a strategy spanning over decades to slowly integrate local structures into localized administrative systems, while not alienating locals too much. At the same time, ties between local chiefs and the borderland societies were weakened by imposing cultural markers through education, which again helped increase state supervision and the presence of Qing-institutions in the borders. Success in hardening the border however was limited, as the southwest depended on cross-border-interaction for its prosperity, and the policies envisaging stability increased the preparedness to resort to violence among chieftains to settle their disputes. In the end, abolishing the native-chieftain system was the doctrine to end the violence and put the area under direct administration (GIERSCH 2001, 89; HERMAN 1994, 69-70; PERDUE 2007,

106). Inclusion and segregation went hand-in-hand in this strategy because of concentration on certain areas where the ability to project this soft power and the receptiveness or willingness to reject these advances by the local population allowed finding compromises. Parallel institutions embodied this slow process of incorporation, while intermarriages and other forms of interactions constantly undermined segregation (PERDUE 2009, 257-258). Eventually, a fragmented rag rug emerged with spots of direct control alternating with areas that were beyond direct control, hardening multiple smaller internal frontiers, through which Han and indigenous people were kept segregated. These internal frontiers gradually eroded in the end of the 18th century due to wild, unauthorized migration, a trend that continued well into the 19th century (BELLO 2016, 206).

For now, the work of the Qing-emperors up to Qianlong was complete. Qianlong's war against the Konbaung in the 1760s was a disaster, however one that helped stabilizing the area. As during that war more people died of sickness than on the battlefield due to *zhang* (瘴气), a sickness that befell Chinese citizens in the frontier due to the weather and foreignness in culture and social interactions of the place there was no other solution than a truce which essentially demarcated the Chinese-Burmese border. *Zhang* so became a term to describe an ecological-cultural barrier beyond which a Chinese subject cannot feel at ease anymore. This concept was fostered since the 11th century, but with the greater expansion, it became a staple object in reports under the Qianlong era. As evidenced by the Konbaung-Qing wars, *zhang* also was a warning against over-expansionism, limiting the colonization of the South and putting a natural frontier to the Qing's ambition, sharpening the distinction of the inside and outside world in the Chinese view (YANG 2010, 171-172, 182; BELLO 2016, 198, 200, 202; DAI 2004, 167). This demarcation was so strong that the Qianlong emperor even refrained from a war against Đại Việt in 1789 and rather urged to concentrate efforts to maintain order in the border-region. Like that, *zhang* facilitated bordering, in some cases helped local resistance and reduced the territorial range in which the Qing could operate by limiting the administrative penetration in the south. A compromise had to be found between centralized administration by Han and reliance on locals to look after the border-area so that some chieftains continued to exist. The southwestern provinces were so pacified, many tuis reduced, remaining chieftainships transformed into representatives of the state and a direct administration – with a strong military back-up – established. There were plans to reduce surplus-forces, remnants from the Yongzheng and Ortai-campaigns yet were not followed through due to security concerns. Nepotism to fill local administrative posts was rampant and weakened central control a bit, but did not upset the balance of power in favor of the Qing

(HERMAN 2006, 138; DAI 2009, 123, 153; YANG 2010 185-186). This balance, its limits and by consequence the ensuing myth of a natural, fixed Chinese border shall continue until today to define the territorial reach of China (PERDUE 2007, 114).

Ideological stability and a fixated, administered border however did not directly translated into stability on the ground. Uprisings still happened during and after the Qianlong-era, especially the Lolo-uprisings between 1796 and 1814. Tuis still enjoyed a large autonomy and adopted particular state forms, such as the Kachin gumsa and Shan polities – developed according to their own needs. Tuis under centralized control could spill disruptions during succession struggles. Thus, the border was not a peaceful nor a stable place – rather it was a playground of the back and forth of state-policies progressing according to the trial and error method (BELLO 2016, 187).

2.3.2.3 Maintaining a Lao space

The Lan Na and Lan Xang area underwent major changes at the beginning of the 17th century. Lan Na disintegrated into three parts, Chiang Ria, Chiang Mai and Nan, whereby the former two embarked on a tributary journey with and eventual incorporation by Ayutthaya. Lan Xang at first saw an era of unprecedented consolidation under King Sourigna Vongsa who promoted Buddhism, consolidated his rule, fortified Luang Prabang and established written laws and courts. However, with succession struggles later in the 17th century, the kingdom split into Vientiane, the rival kingdom of Luang Pabang, and later the kingdom of Champasak (EVANS/OSBORNE 2002, 24).

Despite the fragmentation, these states showed a fair degree of consolidation and territorial stabilization. Yet, due to internal fluidity, Laos, despite its consolidation efforts, remained politically ill defined. This fluidity of power-gambits within the Lao-administration was reproduced in the relations among the Lao-states. Factions in and across the courts allied, antagonized each other and reached out to other states for support. Supporters also shifted depending on the geopolitical situation. In the end though, after Taksin chased the Burmese out of Ayutthaya and unified the country, it was him to whom Lao reached out –given the civil war in Đại Việt. This however brought first Champasak into the Siamese mandala in the 1780s and later Vientiane (1782) and Luang Prabang (1792), turning Siam into a major regional power and letting Lan Xang disappear (EVANS/OSBORNE 2002, 25). King Nanthasen, established by Taksin as ruler over Vientiane, was the Siamese conqueror of the Lao space, also bringing muang Phuan and Houaphan into the Siamese mandala (EVANS/OSBORNE 2002, 26).

This however did not stabilize the border or the internal fluidity as the lands were administered still in the traditional way of mandalas and personal allegiance of local lords. Vientiane which under tutelage of Taksin and later the Chakri also maintained loose tributary relations with the Trinh in the 17th and 18th century tried to keep a stable albeit undefined border area, yet continued attacking Luang Prabang and the Phuan county – both also in tributary relations under Đại Việt's tutelage – and so got drawn into the Tay Son uprising. The Tay Son invaded Laos briefly in 1790, yet the principality managed to retain a degree of independence. Emboldened by its power, Vientiane attacked Bangkok, however by doing so it only prepared its own sack by Ayutthaya in 1799 after which all three Lao-parts had to definitely acknowledge the Chakri as their overlords (GUNN 2011, 61-62).

Reasons why state building proved difficult are found in ideology as well as in economy. Relying on corvée labor, comparably small areas of taxable lands due to large donations to the sangha and a subsistence economy did not allow for centralization at the scale and thoroughness that other states experienced. The strong focus on personal relations and alliances did not allow administrative positions to perform their supposed powers but were the result of the network the holder of the position head (EVANS/OSBORNE 2002, 23).

The division into three parts and the weakening because of internal warfare and expeditions against Laos by its tributary overlords undermined efforts for real territorial consolidation, so that the Lao space could only maintain and administer the area it had as a galactic polity, only to be finally enshrined as a state under the French, saving Laos from extinction. The inflow of Sino-Tibetan tribes from southern China such as the Hmong and Yao who had their own governance systems further undermined consolidation and centralization efforts and also increased ethnic tensions, solved through granting them autonomy in return of tributary loyalty to the king and acceptance of the authority of Luang Prabang as the center of the religio-mystical state rituals. This did not mean integration but rather ex post facto acceptance that the new settlers arrived and a compromise to rationalize their presence in the traditional Lao worldview (STUART-FOX 1983, 434-437). Conversely, this proliferated the establishment of small border polities, tied to the different Lao – and other – courts in overlapping mandalas. Former Lan Xang so was not just split between three major Lao states but in addition into small frontier statelets. Tributary relations remained weak as the separation simply let border-muang proliferate between the Lao states and the neighbouring states of Đại Việt, Siam and China. While there were Lao-mandalas within the larger Siamese mandala, and while the inner provinces were ruled by capital-appointed vicars, the

roughly 20 muang governed by local nobility continued to enjoy much autonomy and could challenge territorial claims and the integrity of the mandala by shifting allegiances and going astray as constituting element of the Lao states. It was thus in the interest of any king to increase control over them, none the least for increasing revenues by taxing trade passing through these muangs. Like that, muangs wielded a lot of power themselves as their preferred alliances directly affected the policies of the Lao-state they were bound to. Gradually so, the Lao-states splintered and were drawn into the Siamese mandala with none of the three states, even not Luang Prabang, being able to exert any authority, except maybe symbolic one. Like that, under Siam's tutelage and the continuation of king Nanthasen's and his successors' policies, centralism and the old system of personal allegiance found an uneasy co-existence in the Lao border space (EVANS/OSBORNE 2002 26-27; STUART-FOX 1993, 109). This co-existence however gradually turned into state building when more and more of the border-muang were subjugated to central rule, first within the mandala, later in the advent of colonialism in the name of the colonial state (HOSTETLER 2000, 660).

Tipping the multiple governance of centralized and localized rule in favor of the king had multiple avenues. One was the spread of Theravada-Buddhist lore of statehood and social hierarchy through pagoda schools as King Sourigna Vongsa propagated in Luang Prabang (HALPERN/TINSMAN, 1966 500). Another way – especially employed in Northern Laos but also in Burma among the Wa – was the use of monks or senior novices to bring local histories of civilization and statehood into the narrative of the state-sangha-duality claiming to rule the land by creating imaginary connections of royal lineage that would fit into the mythical foundation of the muangs. Like this, it was possible to increase central authority over the outlying areas (HLAING 2007, 10-11).

Control over trade networks was also a way to increase projection of authority, even more so when new networks from southwestern China entered the Lao state. However the capacity of the Lao statelets and the tensions with their border-mandalas was limited. Chinese trading networks could operate nearly without checks in the northern border, depleting valuable resources such as gold and rhinoceros horn (BANKOFF/BOOMGAARD 2007, 1; TERWIEL 2007, 51). On the other hand, the Lao space as part of the Siamese mandala got connected to the center on its south via waterways along the Mekong and canals, allowing the Siamese rulers to exercise effective control in that area by regularly registering rice fields and agricultural production, collecting tolls and standardizing administrative procedures (TERWIEL 2007, 45-47). A side effect was that ex-

exploitation of the land and especially planting of cash crops led to a gradual settlement and economic valorization of the upland, bringing it – if not under state-control – into transnational merchant networks (BANKOFF/BOOMGAARD 2007, 7).

This imbalance in the ability to oversee and control trade further drew Lao into the Siamese mandala, strengthening Ayutthaya/Bangkok with the natural resources it desired while fizzling out on the northern frontier wherever stronger and better-organized networks penetrated the space. In the end, these economic, political and internal mismatches and the general fragmentation led three smaller Lao-mandalas appear, surrounded by numerous small border polities and included into a large Siamese mandala. This construction did not allow the extraction of resources on the scale necessary to accumulate the capital necessary to maintain powerful administrative centers as either the small border polities and their integration in merchant networks or the Siamese with their far more consolidated administration benefitted from their extraction. The depletion of resources in combination with costly and complex transport from the landlocked inner areas and low degree of territorialized social organization due to the lack of institutions and endowment of capital and means of coercion did not allow replacing the riches of the land in time with more valuable capital (cf. BANKOFF/ BOOMGAARD 2007, 3, 9). So the Lao-area could only through political games attempt to maintain its autonomy within the Siamese world order and as stress-field between Chinese consolidation efforts and Vietnamese expansionist nationalism during the 18th century. In that sense, the former powerful and proud kingdom of Lan Xang became a huge border area and projection field for neighboring powers, reduced to several somewhat solitary truncated states that missed the institutionalization opportunity of the 17th and 18th centuries.

2.3.2.4 Đại Việt: grappling with chieftains

Đại Việt split between warlord families of the Nguyễn and the Trịnh but still nominally ruled by the house of Lê did not show signs of fragmentation but rather overlapping and complementary claims of representing the state as a whole. It became so a multi-state under the single label of a territorial Đại Việt (HENLEY 1995, 303). This, unlike the cases of Burma or Laos, did not lead to a border fragmentation but was largely conducive to territorial consolidation.

In the 17th century, most of the border remained outside the scope of control of the Lê/Trịnh despite tributary ties to border statelets. The still existing Mac polity was a major threat to stability in the border area as it used its ties to local headmen to incite rebellions and defections. Only in 1667 did the Trịnh launch a successful campaign against the Mac and captured Cao Bang. This

was not the end of it though, as Mac Kinh Vu – who also supported Wu Sangui in his Revolt of the Three Feudatories – defected to the Qing and successfully urged them to pressure the Le/Trinh to return Cao Bang to the Mac. The weakened Mac eventually had to surrender to the Trinh in 1677. With the Mac out of the game, the Trinh installed a governor in Cao Bang to integrate it into the Trinh-administration (TAYLOR 1987, 17-18).

Regarding the border, the integration of the Mac and Chua Bau states paved the way for the expansion of the Viet version of the native chieftain system. Since its beginnings the Lê employed natives (*thổ ty*) mirroring the Ming approach to border administration. Bridging this divide were detailed rituals defining the Ming-Viet tributary relations, while Đại Việt adopted Neo-Confucianism as state ideology guiding its civilization and emancipating itself from being a subordinate in the Chinese world order. The *thổ ty* and their *tusi* counterparts maintained and mediated this order at the border. This proved fairly stable as despite some squirmishes at the border, no border war took place until the overthrow of the Lê-dynasty by the Tây Sơn. Despite the advantages and increase in manpower this system had for the Lê, they had to grapple with similar issues as the Qing. The interdependency between state and chieftains as state-representatives gave the latter large powers, up to the point where they could not be replaced any more. Autonomy and lack of oversight in relationship building allowed chieftains for example to back the Mac until their demise in the end of the 17th century. By mediating and channeling resources and power along the border, the Viet as well as the Chinese *thổ ty/tusis* actively shaped state-relations. Integration or at least punishing secessionist tendencies by force not always yielded the wished results, so that over time the court contented itself with a managed, interdependent exchange of power – autonomy against border protection (VU 2016, 48-49; POISSON 2009, 13; FRENCH 2017, 142).

The indirect reach into the border area expanded during the Qing-conquest of the Southwest when many *tusis* asked for Vietnamese suzerainty. Cases included Cen Yinzun of Guishun and Zhao Guoqiao of Guangxi, both of which the Trinh lords gladly accepted as subjects. In addition to the conflicts that were still there, such as over the integration of the Chua Bau/Tuyên Quang province or the six *mường* of Hung Hóa, the constant political maneuvering of the *thổ ty* to maintain their autonomy also led Chinese and Vietnamese territorial ambitions clash and contest each other. The six *mường* of Hung Hóa were such a case, so remote that the government could not take care of them so that Qing customs and practices began to take hold. Hung Hoa paid taxes to the Qing and harbored rebels from prosecution of the Trinh. Hoàng Công

Chát was such a rebel, who through shrewd alliance-building and eventual submission to the Trinh-court became one of the most powerful thổ ty in the border-area in the 1750s. After his death, the Trinh tried to conquer his fiefdom, yet his heirs sought refuge and officially submitted to the Qianlong emperor, transferring the six muong to the Qing – a fact later accepted by the Tay Son as well as the Nguyễn dynasty (VU 2016, 52-54; GOSCHA 2016, 462-463).

This episode shows that not only didn't the Trinh attribute great political importance to the area – even though China was an important factor in their political thinking – , it also accepted and found a modus vivendi with a highly fluid and uncontrolled border with a more powerful state. This was enshrined in the law of fourteen articles, designed to administer the border with details rights and obligations to the local chieftains regarding tax services, border security measures and regulations for social life. So were border-people prohibited from dressing in Qing-style or paying taxes to Chinese authorities. Like this, political ambitions of thổ ty should find some guidance, avoid double-submission and prevent attempts to play off both empires against each other yet it effectively did little to reduce the fluidity. Tho ty/tusi fueled or abated conflicts between Đại Việt and China. Depending on the benefits they could receive, they shifted or multiplied their allegiances and formed unstable coalitions. Like that, they could claim agency by altering power structures in the borderlands and engaging relations between the two empires they separated. The Đèo clan for example spanned from northern Vietnam to Yunnan, threatening entire Vietnamese dynasties and so were factors of either contempt – as under the Lê – or of flattering cooptation through titles and positions as under the Nguyễn (VU 2016, 54-56).

Despite these measures, the loose authority the Trinh-state had over the thổ ty invited them from the beginning to carry out disputes among themselves without state-meddling or appealing to a higher authority. Chieftain interests and disputes could so influence the attitude of the Lê/Trinh-state and the Qing Empire, which due to their tributary ties had to ensure these local conflicts did not turn into state-level conflicts. Most of the time diplomacy and negotiations were sufficient to settle a conflict or to at least avoid military confrontation, even though these sometimes stood at the end of a failed negotiation process. For example, when Vi Đức Thắng intruded Guangxi chieftains, negotiations dragged on for decades. However, as this episode shall also show, stability through the fragile thổ ty/tusi-state relations not always brought the desired results. A Đại Việt official in the end had to abolish the chieftainship of Vi Đức Thắng and reclaim it for the crown. In a last step of escalation, more drastic measures to stabilize the border were necessary including military expeditions. After the Viet court reclaimed the lands of Vi Đức Thắng, the rivaling Chi-

nese chieftain invaded Đại Việt in 1701, which prompted a militarization at the border with native and state troops, setting off an armament race between China and Đại Việt. While they could avoid an all-out war, this episode was a hardening of the border, which eventually produced a border treaty (VU 2016, 57-59).

Another example when negotiations around chieftain-interests ended in militarization in the 1720s centered around the Tụ Long copper mine. Nominally belonging to Đại Việt, the Trinh stationed troops at the border to protect the mine. Unfortunately, near the mine was a 130-kilometer stretch of formerly Ming-loyal chieftainships that submitted to Vietnamese suzerainty during the Ming-Qing-transition and who refused to receive edicts by Ortai during his restructuring campaign. The Qing-court received complaints from loyal chieftains as well as from Ortai regarding these subordinate tuis who submitted to Đại Việt and reasoned that the Vietnamese troop presence in this sensitive place was evidence of an expansionist agenda. As a response, they concentrated troops around this stretch of the border but instead of going to war, both sides tried to settle the dispute with a negotiated boundary along the Duzhou River. The two empires accepted these solutions, yet implementation failed due to the resistance of local chieftains. This pitted Qing and Trinh again against each other, so that both sides began to militarize this part of the border again and resorted to destroying each other's border fortifications. The Qing unilaterally drew their own line with border-steles, yet not in an expansionist fashion but distributing the disputed lands between the two empires – ignoring the interests of the chieftains (WILLS 2012, 460; VU 2016, 59-61). While for Đại Việt this issue was of vital importance, the Qing-court had greater issues with Ortai's pacification campaigns of the Chinese tuis and remained more ambivalent pursuing the paramount goal of avoiding war and having a peaceful and orderly boundary. It simply did not have the strength and internal stability to launch a war against Đại Việt over this strip of land, which in their eyes did not add any benefits to the empire. This mis-alignment of Qing and tuis-interests finally catalyzed a solution of the border quarrel (WILLS 2012, 462).

As of 1727, anti-Qing protests grew in Sipsong Panna and other places, Ortai responded with the use of force and stationing garrisons, which bound his resources to deal with the Đại Việt issue. This prompted the emperor himself to intervene and to grant large parts of the disputed land to the Trinh, who in return followed ritual orthodoxy by expressing gratitude and subordination within the Chinese world order (WILLS 2012, 461). A pragmatic use of the tributary relations framework so could defuse an unstable situation that was spurred by the effects of autonomy and competing interests between and among the empires and their respective border statelets. This

also led to an ever clearer demarcated boundary between the two places, not mediated by fluid tributary relations but solidified by contracts and treaties. Tho tys and especially their autonomy in the pursuit of their self-interest so ironically drove the state into the area with its institutions and means of coercion. Too dangerous was it to have them operate freely as wild-cards when their actions could have had direct implications for the central government. Alignment with chieftain-interests clearly was not an option for the Đại Việt state if it wanted to maintain stable relations with the Qing-court (cf. POISSON 2009, 15).

The settlement of border-disputes, despite instigated by chieftains, remained a state-affair and in some cases drove curious conclusions. The Qing for example attempted a higher degree of institutionalization at the border by introducing Qing-laws and physically demarcating their territory with bamboo-forests and earth walls. Trespassing into Vietnamese territory became a crime, and even the Trinh were ordered to send intruders back to China. This hardening of the border did not prevent the Vietnamese subjects to tamper with it. People from Lộc Bình County opposite of Pingxiang on the Chinese side moved border-constructions several hundred meters into Chinese territory. The result however was just ever tighter regulations, punishments for border-officials who failed their duties and back-and-forth displacements of border walls from both sides (VU 2016, 63; WILLS 2012, 467).

At the same time, the Trinh increased their military and institutional presence at their northern border. At the border both administrative sectors conflated into a system that rested on court-appointments of commanders or family members, who were in charge to collect revenues of their designated areas to maintain their presence and had to swear yearly oaths of loyalty (TAYLOR 1987, 5). The emphasis on military presence in the north was largely due to fact that their southern border was blocked and heftily fortified by the Nguyễn, demarcating a nearly impenetrable stalemate that blocked the flow of goods and resources until the Tay Son rebellion end of the 18th century (MANTIENNE 2003, 521-522). Resources from these borderlands became more important with the monetization of the society and the need for greater tax-revenues. Regarding the latter, a network of toll stations should monitor and tax formerly freely flowing foreign trade and which set boundaries to economic output. Regarding the former, copper-exploitation increased through domestic mining activities or tolerance of the presence of Chinese miners to provide mints with a sufficient raw materials base (WHITMORE 1997, 681). Hardening the border while tolerating a softening where it was convenient for the state went hand in hand.

One needs to avoid confusing this hardening of nominal boundary setting for factual territorial control on the ground. An ethnicity-dimension disrupted the bordering process from time to time, showing the Trinh-government the limits of its authority. Many rebellions between 1739 and 1775 sparked on ethnical grounds along the entire border halted or even set back Trinh-consolidation efforts. Remnants of Chua Bau and Mac-states fueled these uprisings even further. In addition, the border was a prime location for sending officials into internal exile, so that they could use discontent with the Le/Trinh to settle their scores with the center. Many of the uprisings had their root in the wish to submit to the Qing who in the eyes of the *thổ ty* had a more attractive model of ethnical governance than the Trinh. Despite the Le/Trinh response in the middle of the 18th century to deploy the military to suppress separatist tendencies, the strive for autonomy was so strong that adherents of the Mac refused to make any concessions to or even recognition of the Trinh-court. At the same time, the Trinh spared no costs for a huge army for missions against the northern *thổ ty*s and their Nguyễn archenemies in the South. The Qing for their part tried to seal the border but did not find any convincing cause for intervention to gain these territories. Rather, they monitored these incidents to look out for illegal Chinese migrants that they treated as traitors harboring grudges against the Qing Empire and using the rebels for their own agenda. Evidence for such behavior exists, so were the advisors to the rebel Vi Phuc Quan Chinese immigrants. Stopping subjects to join rebelling *thổ ty*s proved impossible, especially when native groups spanned across the border such as the Miao chieftainship under Mac Khang Vu. A side effect of these efforts though was better mapping and clearer demarcation (WILLS 2012, 464-465; TAYLOR 1987, 21).

A similar patterns as in Qing-China emerged so in the Trinh state. The constant back and forth of territorialization efforts and loosening grip over the border-area was driven by competing self-interests of the state and the local chieftains, gradually tying more and more resources to the border for monitoring and eventually hardening the demarcation line. Through the 17th and 18th century, this was not a peaceful process, quite the contrary it constituted cycles of rebellions and countermeasures, diplomacy and threats and the integration and internalization of past threats such as the Mac-influence. The Trinh-state was particular as the Lê-polity of Đại Việt was split in half and the stalemate in the center allowed concentration of resources in the north. However, this internal equilibrium was about to change towards the end of the 18th century with endemic banditry beleaguering the border and the Tay Son brothers conquering Đại Việt.

2.3.3 Structural issues and the onset of decline

The symptoms of inherent instability of border administration, discontent with central authority and lack of means to bring the native chieftains under definite state control increased towards the end of the 18th century and were labor-pains of the issues that let all polities decline during the long 19th century. Crime and banditry were rampant in the borderlands, and neither the Qing nor any of the Southeast Asian states could get a hold of them. The conclusions they draw had often to do with ethnicity, spurring calls for segregation and more oversight, which only increased the problem. In the Qing-empire, centralization of oversight should ensure a comprehensive understanding of the situation on the ground and abate any impulsive thoughts of military adventures across the border, yet this did not prevent an expedition against Đại Việt in 1788 (WILLS 2012, 466-467).

Turmoil among the settled population also became more rampant and difficult to control. While the Qing could cope with revolts in areas it had no major interest in, rebellions in mining areas could have a devastating impact on the Le/Trinh court who was heavily dependent on tax revenue from mining and who welcomed large swathes of miners into its country. Some mines employed even more than 20.000 miners and given the lack of oversight freed them from any state-authority of their actions. Unhappy migrants in the mines all over the border-area so launched revolts in the mid-1770s over competing claims and tax burden, which the Trinh crushed by using force. The Chinese miners – not welcome anymore in Đại Việt and seen as traitors by the Qing – had the choice to face punishment or retreat into the mountains, which many did to support their livelihoods with banditry. An immediate result was the Trinh-edict to cancel passes for traders and miners and drastically limiting border circulation (WILLS 2012, 467-469; WOMACK 2006, 133; WILLS 2012, 467-468). This was a futile attempt to regain the semblance of control insofar as the Qing, for whom the border was not of vital interest, reserved its discretion to violate the boundaries at any time in case its self-interest – uniquely defined around legitimate succession on the Vietnamese throne – was in danger. It therefore used restraint to the utmost degree and let Đại Việt cope with the issue, showing by inaction its power in this tributary relationship (WOMACK 2006, 133-134). However, inaction and mismatch in power eventually invited usurpation and instability in the 1780s when the Tay Son brothers conquered the country and forced the Qing to upset the equilibrium it fostered with so much care.

A mega-drought with monsoon and crop failures, widespread hunger and increasing difficulties to maintain an agricultural base reduced state capacity over Southeast Asia in the second half of the 18th century. With a reduced economic base, which however became more monetarized, social unrest, and land shortages, fear of social decline and lack of trust into the courts in Burma, Siam and Đại Việt increased. (LIEBERMAN/BUCKLEY 2012 1090-1091, 1092-1093). The result of this drought in the Nguyễn-state was the rise of the Tay Son brothers who started their revolt against the Trinh-rival, the Nguyễn in the South, out of anger over taxes and corruption.

After the south was theirs, they started to march north in 1787, taking the capital Thăng Long and re-establishing the Lê – once again – as a puppet dynasty before sending the royal family into exile in China. This action crossed a red line, leading to a full-scale Qing invasion supported by Lê-loyalists. Yet, the power-center was not Thăng Long anymore and as the Lê began to show their lack of competence, the Qing-armies retreated and left it to the Lê to retake the throne, leaving the border alone – and accepting Nguyễn Hue as tributary in his role of king of Đại Việt. Communication channels opened again, embassies were exchanged, yet the Nguyễn brothers for decades to come had a hard time defending their legitimacy in the eyes of the northern border people (WILLS 2012, 471-472). This was not the result though that could buttress Qing-legitimacy as a hegemonial power that could control what happens at its borders and beyond. For Đại Việt, this result was legitimacy of a state that was twenty years in the making since the outbreak of the Tay Son rebellion and so a historical watershed moment. For the border, this event crystallized the consequences of information obstacles and manipulation due to indirect control and limited intelligence. The base of Qing-thinking was the extrapolation of the complex interplay of Lê and Mac interests in the 17th century applied to the situation during the Tay Son uprising. The Lê versus Mac situation – sworn enemies both of whom paid tribute to the Qing and both of whom had a keen interest to control the frontier – showed in the Qing-eyes similarities to the circumstances between Lê and Nguyễn Hue of Tay Son, thus a Lê-restoration campaign was necessary to not upset the order in the south (PERDUE 2007, 118-119). The failure was not due to military setbacks – three armies from all three border provinces attacked – but based on the mismatch of information the Qing believed in and the actual situation on the ground that made the whole intervention unnecessary. The border as an obstacle to information showed the Qing their limits in decision-making within the parameters they set in their own world order.

The effect of the drought in Siam and Burma were different. Especially in Burma with the foundation of the Konbaung dynasty in 1752, statehood abilities improved. Alaungpaya's decision to

rely on ethnical markers as political categories helped re-unifying the country, as draught and famine provided the northern Burmese with a common enemy in the southern Mon-people. Regarding the minorities in the north and northeast of the country as well as for fighters in the Mon-army that were deported from Upper Burma, he had a more lenient approach to tie them to his kingdom. The brutal fight over sovereignty over Burma as well as suffering and destitution drove Shan and others to support Alaungpaya, who could style himself as the lord of karma and universal monarch in the light of his success, propagating the perfect Buddhahood based on personalized relations with all peoples in his realm (LIEBERMAN 1978, 472-474. 481-482). However, structural deficiencies persisted in the form of the crown-service by ahmudans and the factionalism permitted by personalized rule that destabilized the dynasty towards the end of the 18th century.

The Qing-expedition against the Konbaung dynasty for their efforts to gain more control over the Shan states had – despite very different causes and course – similar effects as the later expedition against Đại Việt. Four armies launched and assault against the Burmese core land, yet terrain, climate, *zhang*, and Burmese guerilla-warfare pushed the Qing back. The subsequent agreement reopened trade and a tributary relationship and – as in the case of Đại Việt – hardened an ever better demarcated border (STUART-FOX 2003, 112-113). Still, for the Qing, this adventure was again a major setback in its self-given reputation as hegemon of a China-centered world order. This setback was a first precursor of events, which should make the outer provinces frail during the long 19th century.

Siam strengthened its administration and military power with new means of control, labor services and trade monopolies, increased literacy and vernacular literature as well as measures to increase loyalty to the throne – also in the Lao states. Burma, despite showing signs of instability when ahmudins left the crown service in droves, reducing the state's ability to maintain a strong military, remained intact and even expanded under the Konbaung with enforced control over people and sangha, mobilization capacities and elevated tax-income thanks to a strengthened agrarian base and market integration leading overall to greater cohesion among the Theravada states (LIEBERMAN/BUCKLEY 2012 1093-1094).

For the Qing, a third trajectory has to be drawn, as is decline in the end of the 18th century started with borderland-conflicts between its migrants and locals in Taiwan, Yunnan, Guangxi, Shaanxi and other places, indicating that it could no more effectively project its authority over the empire. Miscalculations in the wars against Burma and the Tay Son were only one dimension of larger

issues that split the realm through internal uprisings, of which the largest was the White Lotus rebellion (MACMAHON 2009, 85-86). As a result of growth and population increase, conflicts over land distribution, taxation and governance broke open. Largely unchecked immigration into the borderlands and mountainous regions increased the pressure on the livelihood of the local population whose lands could not absorb the rising tide of newcomers (McMAHON 2009, 91, 93-94). In 1769 the White Lotus revolt started, consisting of bandits, refugees and sectarians among the Chinese settlers unified by a single-minded cause against the in their eyes morally bankrupt and exploitative state. Reigning into the rebels required the Qing to mobilize forces, destroy large areas of the affected provinces, yet the uprising spread, became more flexible and fluid and drew ever more mountain demographics into its ranks. The war devastated the economy, emptied state coffers and uprooted countless counties. Given that most of the rebels were Han, they could spread their messages easily and gather a greater following among those discontented by the Qing-state. Reforms to the military and the increased use of local militias did not help either, as it was in the interest of both to prolong the war to keep their access to wartime resources (MCMAHON 2009, 96-99).

In addition to this largely Han-based rebellion, native rebellions occurred, such as the Hunan revolt of 1795-1797 of the Miao. The Miao-areas used to be too remote for most of the time, yet Ortai's reforms of the chieftainship and increased population pressure in the 18th century, led to conflicts over resource and wealth distribution. A rebellion started in 1795, unifying Miaos from all over the frontier while the Qing were still fighting the White Lotus revolt. The result of the subsequent pacification campaign was a so-called new-order through segregation, fraying the border-area again by breaking open the multi-ethnic shared space, tying colonists to the valleys and banishing Miao to the mountains (MCMAHON 2002, 55-56).

The Qing could not subdue both conflicts entirely – remnants roamed the mountains as bandits, alliances flared up repeatedly to resist the encroaching Qing administration or fight against abusive officials. Segregation was supposed to reduce the fluidity within the Miao space, but interactions between Miao, Han-migrants and other groups to fathom overlapping interests did not stop – rather they intensified as a way to increase ties among those with an aligned agenda and shut off the area against undue intrusion of the Qing (MCMAHON 2002, 58-59, 66-67). It was this inter-ethnic collective action in combination with the reputation of the Miao to opportunistically follow their self-interest what the Qing regarded as a threat to their rule – a native leader on behalf of the Qing could easily become a native rebel against his former employer. There was a

spiritual layer in refusing the Qing state manifested in Heavenly Kings temples that embodied an authority independent of Chinese – both secular and religious – administration and so served as spiritual rationalization of revolt. Taking into account the wild card of internal traitors neither loyal to natives nor to the Qing, the situation of multiple simultaneous rebellions spurred by different interests exacerbated the legitimacy crisis of the state brought about by its inability to negotiate its orthodoxy in more accommodating terms to the native population at the border (MCMAHON 2002, 68-69, 72).

Despite the apparent weakness of the Qing after two failed campaigns, the international relations with the bordering states seemed to stabilize. Despite the defeat of the Qing, both Dai Viet and Burma relaunched their tributary relations, information and communication channels opened again and the hitherto used system of centralizing reports to check for inconsistencies reduced the likelihood for reckless warfare. Given that order was restored, the Qing believed that there was no need for structural changes in the tributary system. Therefore, deficiencies in the nature of the tributary system, that were largely responsible for the false information base that led to the failed attack on Đại Việt in 1788, prevailed: no permanent residents in the countries, information on politics based on hearsay, potential manipulation on behalf of factions at the courts in Southeast Asia. In the next cycle, these informational deficiencies were the cause why the Qing was caught by surprise regarding the major changes happening in their southern backyard (WILLS 2012, 478; STUART-FOX 2003, 114).

Another trend towards the end of the 18th century was the rise of traders and merchants in political considerations, whose own networks and rules of interactions slipped through the bureaucratic order and authority, propping the power of indigenous rulers as opposed to centralized efforts to bring order through state monopolies. This dichotomy however helped the rise of European powers to gain a foothold in Southeast Asia by exploiting the competition for political powers between merchants, native chieftains and the central elites (HALL 1984, 86). This process started in the border as the interface of these competing interests and was going to be the defining narrative of the states and their control over the 19th century.

Missionaries were a catalyst in this competition. French missionaries were active in Đại Việt already in the 17th century with Apostolic Vicars created in 1659 proselytizing the local population in both the lowlands and the border-region. In China, Christian belief spread especially in the border-regions providing an alternative view to social organization and state relations than the traditional doctrine, which resonated well among the minorities (MCLEOD 1992, 662). Towards

the end of the 18th century, missionaries accelerated their activities, especially in Đại Việt under Father Pigneau de Behaine, who proselytized along the lines of ideological competition over ideas of morality, social order and power relations, confronting two systems of statehood and societal doctrine (MCLEOD 1992, 674-675).

After a series of often-violent consolidation efforts, internally by the states through administrative measures and externally through war and trade policies, the border-area became not only more structured, as in the example of the Qing measures in Yunnan, but also shrank in its territory due to the continued encroachment of the central states. This cycle so witnessed a major change in the size, functioning and role of the borderlands. The Southeast Asian-Chinese borderlands became less an autonomous partner with which central states actively fostered relations, but integrated parts of the expanding empires whom they served. Chains of commands regarding border-issues shortened considerably and native chieftains were integrated in the national administrations. This increased the interdependency between central and peripheral interests so that pursuing agendas of self-interest was an increasingly difficult endeavor for border-statelets.

This also had effects on the management of international relations. Border-chieftains as mediators and intermediaries between centers became increasingly obsolete as autonomous actors in border-management and state-relations. With the reduction of the agency radius of border polities, managing the border and dealing with matters of state across states became the responsibility of imperial communication between centers – a government and court-affair without the necessity of accommodating border-negotiators as intermediaries. Territorialization in state-formation so included a nationalization of the services and activities of the border-polities, altering hitherto defining parameters of the border-space as a whole: fluidity, shifting alliances, and mutual in-check-keeping.

Greater responsibility in direct imperial relations with more immediate communication channels also scaled up the consequences of state-actions. The last time that the self-interest of native chieftains drove decisions of imperial centers ended in unnecessary and costly wars. To avoid such destabilization of the border-region and to reduce the interdependence between centers and their border-statelets, integration and consolidation were key points on the agenda for the next cycle. However, the split interface of competing trade and political interests between centers and border-states already provided enough weaknesses for the European powers to capture the con-

tinuous state-building exercises and so introduce competing systems of statehood and social organization.

2.4 Cycle 4: Solidification of the boundary as a result of stagnation

The fourth and last cycle this thesis looks at starts with the beginning of the long 19th century in China and Southeast Asia. The turmoil of the Sino-Burmese wars, the Tay Son rebellion and the rivalry between Siam, Đại Việt and Burma over the Lao territories settled at roughly the same time, with the result of more territorialized states separated by more clearly demarcated borders than ever before. The consolidation was soon put under strain again with the advent of more assertive European powers, who driven by economic and colonialist ambitions began to use the fringes for making inroads into the central states. The more vigorous presence of European powers led to a clash between different worldviews, attitudes towards the states and ideas how social organization should be managed.

Qing-China was at the height of a legalist and colonial integration of the southern borderlands. It brought different peoples under direct imperial control, finished the incorporation of native chieftains and successfully suppressed the Miao/Hmong uprisings in the 1790s (SUTTON 2003, 41). The Qing actively pursued a consolidation policy with the aim to limit the effects of local autonomy on the power of the state. The military and administrative incorporation set off by Ortai was largely complete by the start of the 19th century, even though the Qing never managed to control the area to the same degree as the core of China leaving enough pockets in which destabilizing elements, such as opium cultivation and trade could become dangerous for the empire (BELLO 2003, 1112). The anti-Qing rebellions in the second half of the 19th century, such as the Taiping rebellion and later the Boxer rebellion showed the weak grip and low loyalty the Qing enjoyed – and put the Mandate of Heaven into question. The Taiping rebellion, which the Qing could only put out with European assistance, lasted for 14 years, destroyed large parts of the country and produced the Haw bandits in the borderlands that harassed the Southeast Asian states for decades. The suppression of the Panthay and Miao/Hmong rebellions put more pressure on the borders, as rebels sought refuge and bounty there, producing power vacuums in which Siamese and European troops entered to chase the Haw away. Other refugees like the Hmong, started large-scale opium production in the borderland the trade of which was one of the causes of the Opium Wars (STUART-FOX 2003, 117-118). The Qing lost their authority over the southwestern border areas as shown by the inability to enforce its edict to restrict opium trade. Han as well as indigenous people ignored it, as the state was simply not equipped with the power reinforce its policies across the entire country (BELLO 2003, 1111).

Burma's consolidation seemed very promising in the beginning of the 19th century. Burma centralized under the Konbaung, managed to annex Monkawng at the end of the 18th century, found a truce and a demarcated border with China and protected itself successfully from Thai-rivals in the Shan states (BLANTON/FARGHER 2008, 57). When Rama I of Siam and King Kawila of Chiang Mai invaded for example the Chiang Hung and Kengtung states to collect manpower to administer Lanna, Burma managed to fend off the intruders and reestablished the former order in 1814 (AUNG 2015, 4). One year later, Burma incorporated Mongyawng state at the Chinese-Laotian border. Annexation of states to the east led to an undefined border with British India. At the same time, the British power in India became more assertive in its dealings with Burma, severing diplomatic ties in 1811, before going to war first in 1824 over this undefined border. Under King Pagan Min in the 1840s, the relations deteriorated further, leading to the second Anglo-Burmese war in 1852 (TAYLOR 2009, 63).

Over the time, it became clear, that Burma's situation became more and more precarious in the mid-19th century. The British to the East but also the Shan states and the Qing dynasty to the north were dangerous to the state. Succession struggles could easily be manipulated against the Konbaung, such as prince Sarawan did after the death of his father King Mahawan of Chiang Hung in 1847. Instead of turning to the Konbaung when he was left out as successor to the throne, he turned to the Qing, who supported him in killing the usurper, prompting a Konbaung military expedition against Chiang Hung and a large Tai Lüe emigration into Lanna. When prince Sarawan finally became king, the Burmese tried to subdue Chiang Hung once again, yet the failure of this expedition led to a tributary tie between the Qing and Chiang Hung kingdom. That relationship should at least nominally keep the state in existence until the 1950s when the People's Republic of China integrated it in the Xishuangbanna Dai autonomous prefecture (HILL 1989, 328-329; STUART-FOX 2008, 198-199).

Meanwhile, in the aftermath of the second Anglo-Burmese war, the Konbaung tried to consolidate their territory with a new system of taxes and salaries based on state-issued currency. The King was the chief executive of a highly centralized administration, but issues remained. He could not make new laws or edicts for the entire state so that the Burmese territory gradually disintegrated. Under the pressure of the British, King Mindon ceded the Karenni states to avoid annexation in 1875. Nevertheless, spurred by fears of consolidation in French Indochina, the British launched the third Anglo-Burmese war, forcing the royal family to abdicate in 1885. The new ruling power could use the centralized structure of the Konbaung to consolidate its rule. Still the

British continued sending tribute to China to keep the border region under control, as the Shan states have not submitted yet to British control. The first state to submit was Hsipaw, becoming a protectorate in 1887, followed by the rest of the Shan states under Konbaung suzerainty. The Shan states became princely states, reflecting at least on paper their autonomy as they were still subject to the British Crown. To that end, the British established the Superintendent of the Northern Shan States and the Commissioner of the Northern Division to control the border to China. The Shan were also a source of trouble as a place of refuge for rebels. Mongmit state for example hosted Saw Yan Naing, a prince opposed to British rule, who used the remote area for attacks against the Hampshire Regiment in the end of the 1880s. Resistance in northern Burma continued until 1890, when the British started to use systematic violence to replace the old structure by appointed officials. The last king, Thibaw, was sent into exile, destroying the very fabric of Burmese statehood as interplay between monarchy and sangha. To integrate the Burmese into the empire Buddhist schools were replaced by secular schools, missionaries intensified their activities, and the policy of “strategic hamlets” foresaw the burning of villages and forced displacement and replacement of unloyal headmen. The new internal structure spurred the establishment of an Anglo-Chinese commission to demarcate the border in 1899. However, centralization and control from a single capital as in the previous dynasties attempted, did not materialize either. In 1922, the consolidation and separation of Burma proper and the Shan states led to the establishment of the Federated Shan States, in which local rulers had to report to a British commissioner (KEYES 2002, 1174; TAYLOR 200, 63-64; TARLING 1999, 301-302; SHARMA 2005, 5125-5126). Later on Shan and Karen states were labelled Frontier Areas and were administered by the Burma Frontier Service headed by British Residents. In 1935, the British furthered the already existing fragmentation of the country by dividing the Frontier Areas into “Part I Areas” and “Part II Areas” depending how much direct control they could exercise over them. Overall, the colonial power could not overcome the century-long tension of central control and local autonomy (TAYLOR 2009, 97-98).

East to Burma, since the 1770s, the kingdom of Chiang Mai slowly emerged as tributary to Siam until in 1802 the local ruler Kawila was official reinstated as king. The territory was modeled after Lanna, which ceased to exist in 1775, when king Taksin of the Thonburi dynasty chased away the Burmese overlords. The borders were not a quiet place. Kawila quickly consolidated his kingdom and invaded Chiang Saen and Luang Prabang in the 1790s and attempted to invade Kengtung in 1803 and Sipsongpanna in 1808 but failed. More successful was his invasion of

Chiang Saen in 1804, which he retook from the Konbaung dynasty. Chiang Mai acted like a conduit to manage and pacify the fringes. The ties between Chiang Mai and Bangkok grew stronger, which also affected the Lao lands: refugees entered Laos due to large corvée requirements to rebuild Siam after Burmese invasions (KATAOKA 2013, 72-73).

As tributary ruler of Vientiane installed by Siam King Nanthasen forced Xieng Khouang to submit to Vientiane, opened tributary relations to Đại Việt, captured Muang Phuan, and led an expedition against Luang Prabang where king Anuruttha was confirmed as ruler by the Qing dynasty in the beginning of the 1790s. Nanthasen and Kawila captured Luang Prabang in 1792 and Muang Phuan in 1793. Đại Việt helped its tributary and led an expedition against Vientiane that resulted in a truce according to which Muang Phuan had to pay equal tribute to Vientiane and Hue (DUTTON 2006, 50; STUART-FOX, 2008, 224-225; EVANS/OSBORNE 2002, 26). The kings in Vientiane continued to see Muang Phuan as a threat, another expedition occurred in 1800. During all that, Nanthasen and Kawila supported Siam against Burmese invasions and captured Sipsong Chau Tai in 1802. It was only in 1826 under king Anouvong, the last king of Vientiane, when the Lao states rebelled united for independence from Siam. The rebellion ended in defeat in 1829 with the sack of Vientiane when the rulers of the border states Chiang Mai, Lamphun, Lamphun, Nan, Phrae and Luang Prabang had to swear allegiance again. Siam enforced stricter control over Luang Phrabang and Muang Phuan, yet the latter tried again to establish a tributary relationship with Đại Việt. As the ruler of Muang Phuan, Chao Noy, turned king Anouvong – also a tributary of Đại Việt and Nanthasen’s brother – over to the Siamese, Emperor Minh Mang had him executed (EVANS/OSBORNE 2002 32; STUART-FOX 2008, XXXIV). The 1830s were a watershed moment. Đại Việt under its new name Viet Nam became increasingly assertive when Minh Mang merged the Central Highlands into Vietnamese territory in 1830 and established an autonomous Montagnard-class to administer the territory on the border to Laos. The increasing rivalry over Lao territory between Siam and Viet Nam led to the Siamese-Vietnamese war of 1831-1834, which allowed Minh Mang to annex Xieng Khouang and occupy swathes of eastern Laos that were not yet captured by Siam. When Muang Phuan became part of Viet Nam in 1832 it was not only renamed Tran Ninh but also subject to Vietnamization with new forms of taxes and assimilationist pressure. Siam invaded, killed Vietnamese officials and continuously agitated rebellions so that Muang Phuan changed hands and came under Siamese suzerainty in 1850 (EVANS/OSBORNE 2002, 33; GOSCHA 2016, 49).

Pressure also came from China who tried to expand military control over its southern border in the 1840s, setting off refugee waves among Hmong and Meo who eventually settled in Xieng Khouang. The Taiping Rebellion in the 1860s caused another wave of population influx, yet this time it was failed rebels who organized in gangs named after their flags and spread terror over northern Laos and Xieng Khouang. Muang Phuan was looted several times. The Siamese tried to get the situation under control in the Haw Wars started in 1860 and should drag on for 35 years, yet the so-called “flag gangs” navigated the border-area so skilled that they continued their terror. In 1872, as the Qing re-conquered Yunnan, more bandits crossed over to Laos and occupied nearly the entire frontier-area. The Red Flags looted Dien Bien Phu in 1873, striped flags controlled Muang Phuan and black flags occupied major trade routes. The Siamese expedition against the Haw of 1875 on the other hand failed and as soon as they withdrew, the Striped Flags started to loot again. A joint army between Luang Prabang and Viet Nam to push the gangs out failed so that the Haw go as far south as Vientiane. Viet Nam’s attempts in pushing out the Yellow Flags were more successful, as they fled westwards and started to terrorize Sipsong Chau Tai, where Đèo Văn Trị banded up with the Black Flags to become leader and found a fully-fledged state in the area (EVANS/OSBORNE 2002, 35-36; DAVIS 2017, 46-48, 119).

Ironically, the war against the bandits did not fortify the border-area, rather it created a vacuum which later the French used to set up colonial bases. The Haw continued their reign of terror in the border-area well into the 1880s. When the Black Flags started an attack against Luang Prabang, the king appealed to the French for protection. Pavie and French forces rescued the royal family and pushed back the Black Flags in 1888, which in turn prompted king Oun Kham to request his kingdom to become a French protectorate. In the same year, Đèo Văn Trị brought his Sipsong Chau Tai under French protection under the condition that his state would remain autonomous. Soon after the French protectorate was extended to Xieng Khouang and Muang Phuan, which were integrated into the Indochinese Union in 1893. France and the United Kingdom demarcated the border between the French Protectorate of Laos and British Burma in 1896, dividing the state of Kengcheng between the two along the Mekong and attributing the Khorat Plateau to the French sphere of influence (KEYES 2002, 1174; DAVIS 2017, 129-130, 138-139; CRIBB/NARANGO 2004, 171). To administer the protectorate, first two, later ten provinces were formed, each administered by a resident under a colonial governor, while the court in Luang Prabang stayed in place – unlike the Burmese court under British rule. By 1898, the French started to integrate the Montagnards and encroached more and more on the autonomy of border-areas

like the Phuan regions. Muang Sing was integrated in 1904, Muang Phuan lost its autonomy at the same time. To exploit northern Laos, the Opium Regie was set up as trade monopoly in 1907 to control production of opium by the Hmong and Mien. Larger revolts occurred among the Hmong and Khmu in the northern highlands of Laos and Vietnam against French assimilation policies and later the French opium monopoly. The largest revolt happened in 1919 when the Hmong revolted against taxation and French discrimination against highland people. This so-called War of the Insane lasted for two years, until the French allowed Hmong autonomy in Xiang Khouang province. The French, like the British, could never really pacify the border-area as indigenous rebellions wrested compromises from the colonial power, which in the end cemented the fragmentation and exemplified the issues native kings faced regarding territorialization (NANKOE et al. 184, 191-192; LEE 2011, 71).

In Đại Việt, the situation towards the end of the 18th century was marked by the Tay Son capture of the entire country under the promise to reinstate the Lê dynasty. The Tay Son brothers showed a remarkable ability to mobilize people and legitimize their authority despite the heavy demands they put on the people for military campaigns, taxes and corvée labor. The key was their message that linked their rise and fate to the grievances of the general population, including ethnic groups in the uplands, which allowed constructing bases for attacks outside the realm of Trinh-control (DUTTON 2006 119-120, 196). After the Trinh and Nguyễn families were executed, the Tay Son sent the Lê into exile to China. The last remnant of the Nguyễn aristocracy in the south, Nguyễn Ánh, fled to Siam, amassed an army and launched several unsuccessful counter-attacks against the Tay Son. He gathered support from the Cambodian King Ang Eng and among the Chinese diaspora in South Vietnam, before turning to Siam for military assistance who were already alerted by the growing Tay Son influence in Cambodia and Laos. This was not enough though, and Nguyễn Ánh turned to the French whose support was enshrined in the never executed Treaty of Versailles of 1787. Instead, French private business funded Nguyễn Ánh's need for weapons and equipment for the second civil war. The power-grab in the meantime divided the three Tay Son brothers over questions of influence and power. For the Qing, this division was an opportunity to restore the Lê as legitimacy of succession continued to be a major concern in the handling of tributary relations. In addition, the pre-text to restore order in the Vietnamese tributary state was a big incentive to reassert Chinese hegemony. The Qing granted assistance to the exiled Lê for their restoration, yet when putting the Lê-emperor back to power the Qing put on strong conditions on his rule, rendering the Vietnamese empire for a very short time to a mere Chinese prov-

ince, in which even the coinage was Chinese. Seeing however the incapacity of the Lê-royalty to rule, the Qing stopped their support and the attack of Nguyễn Huệ ended that episode abruptly (DUTTON 2006, 105-107; WOMACK 2006, 133-134, 136; STUART-FOX 2003 113-114).

Nguyễn Huệ was at the height of his power, proclaiming himself emperor of Đại Việt under the era name Quang Trung, restoring relations to the Qing and legitimizing himself as defender of the Vietnamese empire against the Chinese invaders. Pushing back the invasion from the north made him a national hero, cementing his claim to power and legitimizing the mandate of the Tay Son movement. The Qing-recognition of Nguyễn Huệ as king of Đại Việt was important to pacify the borderlands as conduit for economic and political interaction and provided him with a mandate to restore order to Đại Việt without Chinese interference as long as he observed the tributary order. By accepting Chinese suzerainty, Quang Trung managed to secure independence (DUTTON 2006, 49, 107-108, 114-116).

Nguyễn Huệ's attempts to woo the scholar-officials of the orthodox court in Thăng Long to consolidate his outreach and legitimacy among the broad masses failed. The scholars not only managed the ties of rural areas to the imperial center but also had sufficient knowledge of the border region to effectively administer it, yet most of them decided against serving a Tay Son emperor, leaving Quang Trung's consolidation efforts incomplete (DUTTON 2006, 110-112). Despite restoring relations and trying to bring order, Quang Trung's rule continued to be as belligerent as during the civil wars. He launched invasions against Laos and demanded the return of Guangxi and Guangdong to Đại Việt based on the historical records of the "Hundred Yue" territory. He even started preparations for a war against China towards the end of his life. To fund his campaigns, he conscripted every third man in his territory, using force and coercion to stock his armies (DUTTON 2006, 114, 131-133). In addition, he tied the population to his plans of modeling the state by excessive demands of corvée labor to rebuild infrastructure, which only increased widespread dissatisfaction as it threatened the people's livelihood. Especially around major cities and political centers, Quang Trung ordered all parts of the population into corvée services, even children. The increased displacements and corvée demands, as well as attacks against monasteries as potential cells of resistance further solidified his grip over the country but also increased resistance of the general population who suffered under the systemic corruption and lack of legal redress (DUTTON 2006 137-139, 140, 141, 143. 149, 152). Quang Trung also mandated policies to incentivize people to return to their hometowns to reclaim land and pursue sedentary economic activities, ordered a census and established a system of identity cards to better control them and

to have an overview of the northern tax base. The people hated these cards as the punishment for not wearing it was the draft into the army. Also, people who were not registered were assumed to resist the Tay Son rule and so faced sometimes even harsher punishments. He also set up a school-system covering the entire country, re-installed the imperial examination system and established border-markets. To not only tie people but also resources to the center, Quang Trung slowly institutionalized a new system of tax collection on crops based on the census (DUTTON 2006, 50, 124-126, 146). For the state, the policy was a success. The state could localize the people for military and corvée services, it could monitor internal movements and so had direct control and authority over the people even in remote corners. However, to avoid the wider reach of the state, people fled into the mountains and joined often border principalities such as Sipsong Chau Tai (DUTTON 2006 128-130).

The death of Quang Trung destabilized the relations between the Tay Son brothers further. Despite measures to reverse unpopular policies such as the population cards and introducing stabilizing measures such as a census, and the consolidation or dismantling of Buddhist sects to allow the state to better penetrate the margins, the realm was weakened by infighting (DUTTON 2006, 53). Nguyễn Ánh used the opportunity, began an arduous campaign against the Tay Son in 1793 slowly marching north until he captured Thăng Long in 1802. He proclaimed himself Emperor Gia Long (嘉隆) of the new Nguyễn dynasty that unified Vietnam for the first time in many years. The last Tay Son emperor fled to the borderlands trying to gather the manpower and support for a counter-attack. Yet, Nguyễn Ánh had an easy game as the northern populations despised the Tay Son rule and had no inclination to protect them (DUTTON 2006, 55-56, 166-167; WHEELER 2015, 51). Nguyễn Ánh accepted the border as it was demarcated after the Ming occupation and re-confirmed after the Qing campaign to install the Lê-dynasty. He modeled the schools, administration and court according to Confucian orthodoxy, moved the capital to Hue and received recognition as tributary to China. He expanded the empire well into Laos and Cambodia. In 1832, his successor Minh Mang managed to rename the country to Viet Nam. At the same time clashes with Siam over influence in neighbouring countries increased. From 1860 to 1880, the northern border became more into focus again with the influx of Haw bandits and black flags terrorizing the area. Only with support from the French, the region could be brought back to control, yet also opened a vacuum for colonial bases. French encroachment increased over the time until with the Treaty of Huế Tonkin became a protectorate. As in Laos, worldviews clashed, yet more over tradition and internal organization than the territory of the state itself – Viet Nam already had de-

marcated borders with its neighbors. Yet French rule spurred a revisiting of Viet Nam's nationalism and uniqueness as a cultural and political territory, which eventually led to the Nationalist Rebellion by Phan Dinh Phung in 1885, that lasted for 10 years. The Franco-Qing Convention that also worked on the Chinese-Laotian border also enshrined the limits of Viet Nam in a treaty, stating that most of Lai Chau, Dien Bien and Lao Cai belonged to Tonkin (GOSCHA 2016, 41-42, 46-47, 64-67, 462).

During the 19th century, the interplay of local discontent and rebellion as well as the advent of European powers shook and transformed the border. The rebellions and subsequent refugee waves caused terror and chaos in the border, which invited the lowland states to seek European assistance to push them away. On the other hand, the tributary system began to suffer with the last Southeast Asian mission – from Viet Nam – arriving in 1883 asking for assistance against the French encroachment (STUART-FOX 2003 118-119). Despite all adherence to orthodox norms and conventions in inter- and intra-state relations, the traditional understanding of territoriality was gradually replaced by the Westphalian idea of statehood with demarcated boundaries delimiting states. This part traces the interplay of the states' measures to consolidate their territory and the techniques they employed on the one side and the European demarcation exercise in coordination with the changes at the core of statehood-understanding and legal recognition of borders and territoriality on the other side.

In addition, this transformation of statehood also had a huge impact on the border populace, which found itself as research-subjects within a social order obsessed with classification exercises as means to control the margins while still being a key-actor in mediating economic and political interests of the European colonialists. The anthropological indexing of the border areas proved to be an important tool to expand control via censuses and enlistment of local officials (KEYES 2002, 1174, 1175).

2.4.1 Increased administrative capacities and routinization at the fringes

After all the turmoil at the end of the 18th century, the states managed to routinize their dealings with the Chinese-Southeast Asian border. The tributary model with the Qing at its center proved once again resilient and induced stability in the multi-ethnic and multi-traditional melting pot of different ideas of social and state organization of the borderlands and even beyond. Even Siam regularly asked for imperial recognition from the Qing court, while trade across the border fostered the wealth of the state (MATSUDA 2011, 159-160).

In particular, Ortai's reforms in Qing-China and the backlash to them led to a new arrangement in which the former compromise of several coexisting understandings of statehood, autonomy and legal integration applied on an ad hoc basis was replaced by a strictly bureaucratic policy in favor of Han in-migration to the detriment of the previous accommodation of multiethnicity (PALE 2003, 41, 43). This outcome was the result of multiethnicity as constituting element of the empire and the desire for integration of the different peoples into one single family under the emperor to guarantee peace and order in the borderlands (ZHAO 2006, 19). It routinized and standardized the Qing's border-management to a hitherto unknown degree due to the institutions it required to follow a legalist approach to delimit the margins of the state.

2.4.1.1 Solidification of border-institutions

The Konbaung-Qing wars showed the physical, political and physiological limits of the Chinese empire on its southwestern border due to climate, cultural differences and sicknesses that only befell the non-locals. The state had to compromise in its institution building there to exert regional control. The interpretation of the state limits happened alongside ethnical divides, reinforcing the differences and thus the separation of administrative spaces of autonomous regions and those under central control. The Qing built their institutions along this patchwork, tied locality even closer to ethnicity based on environmental and political conditions and so stabilized as well as fragmented their institutional order at the margins (BELLO 2005, 285). One major driver of this institution building was the state-cult that should tie the legitimacy of the state to a higher order embodied by the emperor as "Son of the Heavens". The rituals he performed, and which were copied all over his territory, were highly standardized norm-setting exercises for moral behavior, submission to the state and acceptance of a greater order, that manifested the state's authority to prescribe codes of conduct to all subjects, also those at the border, and coerce them into an institutional setting within the state itself (KUO 2008, 70-71). Confucianism, which gave state and emperor a paramount role in the social order, and the institutional set-up it promoted, was the main way for the Qing to set up a bureaucratic order encompassing the entire population along a shared set of values into the state (KUO 2008 72-73). As BELLO (2005, 287-288) points out, institutionalization happened along a hierarchy of spaces and attributed ethnicities. The zone of full sovereignty and direct authority, the inner frontier zone of indirect rule and outer frontier outside state authority coincided mostly with the different degrees of civilization the Qing attributed to the borderland population: Han, chieftainship locals and wild barbarians. Another way of classi-

fication was Han, Hui and Yi – the latter group encompassing all peoples that irrespective of their ethnic belonging as long as they were neither Han nor Hui. This marker of degree of civilization was often derogatory, and allowed pitting groups against each other for not letting one of the Yi-people become too strong (ATWILL 2003, 1081). Administering this landscape was thus a complex task in which cultural markers, on the borderline to Sinicization were employed such as shaven heads, Manchu queues and standardization of political behavior and administration.

The Qing expanded their administration by implementing sub-county magistrates and sub-prefects, and so deepened the control over the empire. However, there was a duality to this process as old structures – in particular in the tuisis – continued to prevail with their own rules, enforced independently from the state by local figures of authority (FAURE 1989, 21-22).

Increasing standardization and routinization of interactions however created a vacuum beyond the border. The Guohei for example were surrounded by native chieftainships but considered wild as they did not adhere to any state or were willing to integrate into an existing administrative structure. Outside of the orbits of any of the states, they raided the area, defied state authority, and limited so the reach of the Qing empire. Inner limitations also persisted as often Han naturalized with indigenous peoples and so created new identities that in some cases violently opposed Han ruling practices (BELLO 2005, 289-290).

In the bordering Shan and Kachin states – and later the same concept was applied to Lahu, Lisu and Mang –, two distinct forms of governance emerged along these lines: gumlao and gumsa, the former were autonomous territories without state-character and without any allegiances, the latter formed states (meng, 盟) that under a sawbwa could enter political relations and become civilized by serving as chieftainship. Recognition as chieftain and manipulating the line of succession were the main instruments to maintain loyalty of these gumsa-states and to incorporate them into the inner frontier. The gumlao stayed outside this orbit, pitted against their civilized brothers and sisters who, in the mind of the Qing, defend the empire. As intermixing did not lead to assimilation, the border hardened along the gumsa-gumlao rift (BELLO 2005, 290-292).

Multiple loyalties still remained though in the form of unofficial relationships, especially in the border-area to Burma, whose Konbaung-dynasty actively sought contact to the trans-Salween states. The persistent multiple allegiances of these chieftainships so blurred the borderline while administratively and legally the Qing tried to harden it by focusing on segregation along ethnical lines and degree of assimilation (BELLO 2005, 292). The segregation though increased the importance of the chieftains for exercising imperial control at the border, especially during the trade

embargo after the Myanmar campaigns. During the time of this embargo the frontier-compromise eroded as the native chieftains could not and given their trans-frontier ties would not control the wild influx of tribal people from beyond the frontier anymore, which gradually destabilized the Chinese borderland (BELLO 2005, 306-307).

In the beginning of the 19th century, the Jiaqing emperor began to reform the country after wars, refugee influx and devastation of the White Lotus revolt according to the principles of a bureaucratic state system. To expand his ideas of administration and to improve public morals in the far-flung corners of the empire, Jiaqing started to strengthen the armies at strategic outposts, fortified passes and provided new weapons. He also began to task the armies in the south with repairing the damaged infrastructure, de-weaponizing the civilian population and de-mobilizing local troops, bandits and refugees. Refugees and demobilized militias remained a security threat to the order at the southern border, so that Jiaqing enacted policies to incentivize these groups to settle down in the service of the Qing border-population, aiming at exposing them to civilized practices and transforming them into subjects (划到为民). In that, Jiaqing tried to enlist these mountain people into his defense apparatus and pitch them against rebels. His measures included land donations, licenses for commercial activities or physical displacements to other provinces. Civilians and locals were grouped into *baojia* (保家) to keep each other in check. At the same time, garrisons – despite the costs on the treasury and the fact that state-revenue stagnated after the White Lotus rebellion – remained a stronghold of Qing-power in the south (MCMAHON 2009, 98, 101-103). The regional governments, as for example in southern Shaanxi, supported the state-construction efforts by fostering subsistence agriculture at the border, incentivizing commercial exchanges and creating the road-infrastructure to tie the margins closer to the core and to mitigate the risks of famine (MCMAHON 2009, 103-105).

Despite these efforts, destabilization continued until 1825. The example of Tengyue showed that the influx of wild tribals essentially led to the dissolution of the inner frontier which the local officials were only able to rebuild by deploying a massive military presence of native soldiers – Han could not defend the area due to the *zhang* – modeled after the military colonies that were used against the Miao and the White Lotus sect in Sichuan. Like that, local auxiliaries helped to restore the image of an inner frontier, yet the local chieftains were unable to block the intrusion of wild tribals. They also did not create the sought-after and wished-for civilized tribal identity to consistently transmit the power of the state to the border. Ortai's ideas to replace all chieftains by a civil-military administration flared up again, but there were not sufficient indigenous officials

available to fill such an administrative body in areas where Han would die from sickness. So a compromise was found to civilize the native populations in a more targeted way through education to develop a strategic identity that was allied with the Qing needs to have them guard the border. Garrisons supported this wish of identity-based alignment in executing border-tasks. By creating this space of mixed, different but aligned functional identities, the Qing managed to standardize their interactions with the border communities and put them into their own service at the limit of their administrative space (BELLO 2005, 308-310).

The Konbaung dynasty more and more related its well-being and that of the state to the internal structure of the society in rulers, religious professionals, merchants and commoners – split into an array of more categories and sub-categories –, the division of the general population into those in the service of the crown (*ahmudan*) and those who did not inherit these obligations as well as the geographical division of provinces under local gentry leaders, which formed a class of itself set apart from nobility and ordinary people. Their hereditary positions formed the backbone of an administration tasked to mediate the court's wishes to the people, and so tying the provinces closer to the center. These positions were supported by lesser officials in a strictly hierarchical structure who worked as clerks, officers and supervisors. Their far-ranging tasks included monitoring economic output, collecting tolls and taxes and providing soldiers and corvée from their areas of supervision to royal officers. The interests between the court and the local gentry converged as all income was supposed to be shared between the office-holders and the treasury. Connected by lineage, these gentry families had less incentive to fight each other as opposed to the families of royal ministers and so ensured the cohesion of the state under the Konbaung dynasty (SHORT 1963, 577; MYINT-U 2004, 31-32, 34-36, 37). In the Shan state, the sawbwas were incentivized to keep in line with their tributary obligations not only by intermarriage with the Konbaung family, the education of Shan princes at the court but also by the overt projection of the Konbaung's military power through a military commander based in the Shan states backed by garrisons and the expansion of the *ahmudan*-system. With these routines, the Konbaung could maintain order along the northern border, mobilise manpower and extract resources, mediated through local rulers as well as gentry elites – all tied to the center (MYINT-U 2004, 76-77).

Another important role played the king's women, princesses of royal families, tributary princesses and daughters of the gentry. They formed the "Western Court" in the royal palace, and so their presence constituted a direct connection between the capital and the tributary courts at the margins (MYINT-U 2004, 60-61). This however did not preclude local Shan rulers from exercising

their autonomy where necessary. Even though they had to provide tributes in the form of metals, resources and people, even though they had to deal with the gentry-class and Burmese military garrisons, the strong ties between Shan and Konbaung courts ensured autonomy despite integration in bureaucratic rituals. Trans-Salween states even remained mostly independent as being too barbarian for the Qing and too far away from the Ava-court. The Konbaung-state's means of coercion remained dormant as long as there was no outright rebellion and the stream of riches and slaves did not dry up (MYINT-U 2004, 24-25).

The Konbaung policies towards border polities were heavily influenced by China's behavior at the border. After the Qing lifted the embargo, relations eased up to the degree of economic interdependence: China provided gold and silver for liquidity of Burma's markets and resources for its industry. Any change in that behavior had important repercussion on the Konbaung's ability to refinance their state by exporting cotton and tea. The latter was grown on the Shan plateau, so that informed by the Qing's influence on the Burmese economy, the Konbaung had a strong incentive to maintain good relations with and integrate tea-planting polities in the national economy (MYINT-U 2004, 47-48).

In Đại Việt, the Nguyễn dynasty relied on the one hand on continuity of rule based on tokens of power transmitted from the Lê to the Trinh to the Tay Son and finally to the Nguyễn. These included census records of the Tay Son and a partly centralized administration of Buddhist sects. On the other hand, it relied on the Chinese model of a Confucian bureaucracy to administer their territory, not least, as they hoped by emulation to avoid a military confrontation. The Nguyễn quickly managed to unify the country. It fought back the last Tay Son attacks from the north, incorporated the last rebel pockets along the northern border, such as Mac remnants, and simply superseded the still existing Lê loyalism. This was also due to the Qing-refusal to recognize any separate mountain-kingdoms. Yet despite all consolidation efforts, the dynasty was not as stable as it might have seen. The people despised the Nguyễn, however the dynasty could routinize their control as there was no political alternatives to their rule. Their ideological base – Confucianism – and the bureaucratic institutions and cultural orthodoxy also supported the territorialization of the state (DUTTON 2006, 55-56, 170; PERDUE 2015, 213; WOMACK 2006, 138; HENLEY 1995, 311). The boundary with China was fixed, yet expansionist dreams informed by ideas of historical grandeur sometimes flared up such as Emperor Tu Duc deploring the loss of lands of the Nan Yue kingdom to China in the third century BC (WOMACK 136-137).

In Laos, the Siamese court's project of integrating the area into the Siamese state was well under way. Officials were dispatched to tattoo all inhabitants, marking them as subjects of Siam, classify them along their ethnicities, imprint their social status and tie them physically into a Siamese space, while replacing the local elites and institutions with Thai administrators. The category "Lao" as ethnicity was eradicated in official papers and replaced by "Siamese". Like this, Rama III physically demarcated his territorial reach in an attempt to annex Laos west of the Mekong. The gradual Siamicisation in the territorialization of the Lao-states fueled anti-Siamese resistance in the Lao lands that were just about to break open (NGAOSYVATHN / NGAOSYVATHN 1989, 58-59).

Despite these political-administrative attempts to consolidate the border, it was still not a neatly drawn line but a pluralist patchwork. Evidence exists of isolated pockets of peoples such as the T'Rung at the most outer fringes of the Kachin-territory, whose isolation continued to protect them from incorporation attempts of larger states (KLIEGER 2003, 231-232).

2.4.1.2 Economic spill-over impacts of state-functioning at the border

Integrating the frontier zone was a daunting political task in a time when political systems were still highly decentralized (BUTCHER 1993, 25). Means of coercion were difficult to employ, so it seemed more viable to the states, in particular China, to integrate these areas economically. The transformation of subsistence farming to the extraction of surplus to fund the state was a major driver of this territorial integration. To tie the border-areas economically to the core, three factors were paramount for the state: a functioning tax system and a distribution system to help country-wide markets to emerge as well as a legal system buttressed by a monopoly on the use of force to coerce submission to the state's authority and needs. Outsourcing these tasks to local market agents seemed viable as they could easily be linked to the networks of the national economy while still reducing the autonomy in which they operated. With economic expansion, these agents could push further into the borderlands, tying more people to the state (DICK 1993, 59; PERDUE, 2013 388). In addition, this helped the construction of not just a vaster but also more powerful state. The larger the state, the more revenue it needed for armed forces, administration and infrastructure, costs that were difficult to cover by land taxes and corvée labor extracted by local aristocracies. To increase the tax-base, the state first needed to know how large it actually was through a census or a cadastral survey, set up an administration and centralize collection. While trade taxes helped funding the monitoring of the border, taxes from production of goods that were

not a royal monopoly were more difficult to come by. The collection was often difficult, as the state needed first to collect the resources to set up a collection system for taxes (DICK 1993, 5-6; COPLAND/GODLEY 1993, 55). The emergence of revenue farming was an important part to tie agricultural production to the centers. Given administrative penetration was often weak in the borderlands, the state leased its tax-collection to private contractors such as local merchants, landowners and businesspersons, who were active in and had knowledge of areas where administrative penetration was not strong enough or the local aristocracy too unreliable. Against a fixed rent, these contractors could collect resources and taxes on behalf of the state – a system that was prone to corruption (DICK 1993, 3; COPLAND/GODLEY 1993, 54-55; BUTCHER 1993, 19-20). Through this system, the state could expand local control by bringing the local business elite into its service before taking over their tasks, and so expanding penetration and effectiveness of the bureaucracy. This however was double-edged sword: sourcing out state authority to corrupt merchants could undermine the state's authority in the region and prove very resistant to centralization or become the source of secessions in competing centers of power. This was possible in case the local elites could use their leverage on local production and trade to amass the capital necessary to ignore the state and if the state did not use the revenue for setting up administrative checks and structures that could allow to take up the relinquished authority. Revenue farming and state monopoly so could only work when the state was weak and needed the income for its strengthening. Once a strong state, it had the means to establish control and enforcing its view on territorial integration against the accumulated capital of its former local agents. When the Europeans arrived later during the 19th century, they also first relied on this system to extract resources before setting up modern collection methods (DICK 1993, 6, 7-8, 9-11; COPLAND/GODLEY 1993, 56, 60; BUTCHER 1993, 20).

The Chakri-dynasty promoted this system of extraction and production to generate revenue with the side effect of tying the country together in a merchant network. However, under political pressure of the British and territorial pressure of the French, the king abolished trading monopolies and increased reliance on revenue farms, territorially incorporating especially opium-growing areas closer to the kingdom and hardening the borders in the north (BUTCHER 1993, 21, 29). Revenue farming proved a viable option for border-control and maintenance for pre-colonial and colonial states. The state could outsource these activities to local merchants and farmers as it was in their own interest to protect the lands on which they grew their crops (TROCK 2009, 359).

Especially the Qing started experiments with revenue farming and state monopolies in the beginning of the 19th century. Officials like Yan Rui saw in the large extraction and processing industries of natural resources the potential to become state-institutions themselves, supervising and defending the area on behalf of the state and exercising substantial control over the people. This however only worked well as long as these enterprises remained in business, otherwise they would create masses of disgruntled unemployed workers, who easily joined bandits or outright revolted (MCMAHON 2009, 106). A telling case revolved around illicit trade from salt mines that operated largely outside the officially sanctioned salt-monopoly of the Qing. The Qing taxed salt at the site of production, which given the imports of Tibetan rock salt and Burmese sea-salt was a difficult task, exacerbated by the remoteness of the mines. The illicit trade thus flourished with the effect that attempts to more strictly enforce the salt monopoly only turned producers away from the Qing to increase ties with the neighbouring countries (ATWILL 2005, 20-21; GIERSCH 2006, 46-47).

The Nguyễn dynasty tried a similar pattern. To pacify the outlying regions, make them more accessible and to sedentarize the population, Minh Mang edicted a policy to encourage rice production. The more people were bound to their place of income, the better the court could control the population and profit from taxation, corvée and military service – an idea that persisted in the colonial period and even today under the slogan “fixed cultivation and fixed settlement” (*dinh canh dinh cu*) (SCOTT 2009, 76; cf. POISSON 2009, 17). In a similar development as in China, the Nguyễn-court under Minh Mag set up granaries under central, provincial or communal control to stabilize the rice price and began to play a strong role in the food-supply of the population, thus tying the welfare of the population to the effectiveness of the state’s control over rice-output. Only the French colonial administration dismantled the system as it saw in it a source of corruption and inefficiency (NGUYỄN-MARSHALL 2007, 163-164).

In Burma, the court relied on a more orthodox form of state revenues and trade monopolies, while also drawing people from the border areas to the center to have them work and trade there (SCOTT 2009, 66). Especially regulating the trade in Burmese jade which enjoyed a high degree of popularity at the Chinese courts since the Ming and whose export to the Chinese market had been growing over centuries played a crucial role to navigate the networks of native as well as Chinese miners and traders in the borderlands and to bring them under a central authority. The Qing tried also to navigate these networks by regulating supply and demand, yet by 1850, growth slowed down and interventionism by the state began to lose its effectiveness (CHANG 2011,

463-464; LEE 1982, 742-743). The better the control of these trading networks, the better the state could make itself felt, but also the more dependent it got on the ebb and flow of demand from the main jade market China. Imperial weddings in China rapidly increased demand, leading to an influx of new miners and traders in the area, so that regulating trade became as important as mining the stones. This included adding “jade” to the title of possessions of the king in 1820, recognizing ownership of jade mines in the hands of Kachin chiefs, structured sales of development rights and taxation on excavation and trading activities which allowed ensure order and project central control while drawing these regions into the world economy mediated through the central state. The British colonialists also mediated the connection of this area to the world economy through its centralized policies on jade destined for China and rubies sold to Europe (SUN 2011, 212-213, 215-216). Teak wood was another Burmese commodity whose exports helped centralizing and increasing state control. Shipments from north to the south, where the main users – ship-builders – were, spurred regulations on teak production and trade along the transport routes. The royal monopoly authorized officials to make arrests and impose fines to monitor production and so project state authority in the forests (BRYANT 2007, 145-146). The increased economic penetration of the border was not a self-serving exercise. The Burmese state also needed the borders to be able to project its authority elsewhere. The Shan states provided mountain ponies that were crucial for military campaigns (CHARNEY 2007 233).

In general, it is possible to observe an increase of state-capabilities as states began more and more to restrict revenue farming towards the end of the 19th century. These restrictions furthered state authority once it had collected enough means of coercion. It could now use and concentrate these means as individual monopolies had to cede to competition among merchants reducing the danger of secession or defiance. Revenue farms transformed from being nearly independent political agents to servants of the state under centralized control that these same farms enabled the state to establish (BUTCHER 1993, 32, 34, 42).

Agriculture remained the basis of all these economies, providing food and funds to maintain the bureaucracy. Especially the Qing Empire rested on a stable agricultural sector, more than on industries. Besides taxing the surplus of agricultural production for its own gain, the state had a vested interest in keeping the sector afloat. Measures such as maintaining granaries to keep prices stable, a relief-system against crop failures, but also large-scale irrigation works and land reclamation tied the rural population to the central command of the state with the effect that the ineffectiveness of these measures were a root-cause for revolts against the state (PERDUE 1982, 747).

Especially *corvée* demands to construct or maintain dams and canals tied people over long periods of time to the state, which fostered dissatisfaction with official policies. On the other hand, such large-scale projects tightened the relationship between court, local officials and landowners and so fortified the avenues of state-power and bureaucratic influence to the edges of the provinces (PERDUE 1982, 748-749).

An important factor was the mutual reliance on commodities between the states and the monetization of the economy. While Viet Nam was on the receiving end in the trade of coins with China until the 18th century, this situation reversed in the 19th century, when massive amounts of copper coins were produced in Tonkin. This was not sponsored by the Nguyễn-state, rather Chinese merchants and local rulers engaged in this business around large mining enterprises in the borderlands. They exploited the lack of oversight at the border and began to set up a network outside state control for the benefit of local officials and Nung-chiefs (LI 2011 130-131). For the Vietnamese state, the monetization of the economy facilitated taxation and helped the state to better control trade, however from a strategic point these networks – dominated by Chinese families – made the carefully calibrated border porous (LI 2011, 140, 142). For China, the monetization of the economy with metal coins meant that the state played an ever more important role to convert taxes in whatever form they were paid into currency. The state so could make itself felt also in remote areas to manage and promote the development of natural resources (BANKOFF/BOOMGAARD 2007, 10-12). Monetization in Myanmar opened in the form of money lending another avenue to tie the border polities closer to the center. The appanage holders of the royal family could use their silver to loan it to their tributary Shan chiefs who indebted to the center had to ensure pay back (MYINT-U 2004, 62). Already after the first the Anglo-Burmese war, the British started massive intelligence campaigns to map trading routes, goods and volumes. Ten years after the second war, they managed to conclude a treaty for through-trade between India and China from which the Shan could extort tolls to regain some independence from the center. The advent of the British Empire here was a corollary of commercial interests embodied in treaties in 1862 and 1867. In addition, the British funded an expedition to China in 1868 to explore ways to increase trade through the city of Bhamo and so further weaken the Konbaung control over the border-area. This should have been supported with annual payments and ammunition deliveries to the sawbwas as well as improved transportation links. Like this, the Burmese government lost the last bit control over the economy in the Shan states, which so became more integrated into foreign markets (MYINT-U 2004, 136-137; CROIZIER/CROIZIER 1962, 2). Most

of this trade was directed to Rangoon – cross border trade with China was hampered though due to the Panthay rebellion. Despite promises of the rebels, they were not strong enough to pacify and hold open the places through which the trade routes should pass. The assassination of a member of the expedition sparked the Chefoo Convention forcing China to make reparations for this incident, which further shifted the regulatory framework for trading with China in favor of the British. Despite this setback, the British in turn set off to map the territory to finally find a short cut to the Chinese markets and substantiate their border-claims (CROIZIER/CROZIER 1962, 6-8, 9).

With greater British interference in Burmese politics and the weakening of king Mindon in the 1870s through treaties essentially stripping the monarchy of its monopoly on arms and authority over border-issues, the British set in motion a strategy to install local chiefs with friendly ties to the colonial government in Rangoon in order to facilitate their expansion. The consulate in Bhamo was the key negotiator to convince Kachin, Shan and Chinese warlords to shift their loyalties to British Burma and to divert their exports away from the Burmese crown in Mandalay in favor of Rangoon (MYINT-U 2004, 140-141; TAGLIACOZZO 2004, 371; YI 2015, 296-298). Economically, the Konbaung dynasty so became increasingly isolated, so that it even had to buy rice to feed its population. To cover the costs, Mindon undertook a last attempt to explore new gold and silver mines in the Shan states, yet without avail. Even if they could, there were no other possibilities than buying rice from the British as the Panthay rebellion disrupted all trading along the border (MYINT-U 2004, 142-143). The economy in the British territories thrived at the same time. The treaties provided a stable environment for traders and the re-opening of the Chinese border after the Panthay rebellion in the mid-1870s boosted demand for Burmese products (MYINT-U 2004, 145-146).

With the advance of the British, the northern regions became also ever more important for the economic survival of the Konbaung dynasty. In the 1880s, garrisons sprang up in Lashio, Mongpai, Mongnai and Kengtung to control the sawbwas, enforce taxation on commodities and extract supplies and manpower for the military (JAIYEN 1993, 3). However, this was too late. Trade between Yunnan and the Burmese kingdom slowed down to nearly a standstill during the 1880s, reducing liquidity in Burma, which was dependent on silver imports. Yunnanese traders started to pay their imports with opium, which further deteriorated the living standard of the border population. This cash scarcity in addition with higher levels of taxation and private debt destabilized the remaining parts of Burma during the advent of the third Anglo-Burmese war and

fueled an ongoing revolt in the Shan states that more and more eluded Burmese control. In the end, the British concluded that an informal rule over Burma was not feasible and a final step had to be taken to annex the rest of the country (MYINT-U 2004, 148, 184, 186). After the third war in 1885, the entire country except the Shan states were put under direct British administration as part of British India. In the years to come, the British had to design the direct rule of the colonial state and replace the pre-existing ordering principles of the society in Burma proper with a new system that facilitated the expansion of economic interests and penetration of the state. In contrast, at the border they kept relying on indirect control through sawbwas (MYINT-U 2004, 197).

The commodity that defined the political landscape the most – in terms of state-disintegration at least – was opium, which rose in importance as mining collapsed in the 19th century. Starting from Yunnan, the trade drew in the entire border region, inciting policies that hardened the border such as an ultimately ineffective ban on opium trade under Minh Mang in Viet Nam (BELLO 2003, 1114-1115). The autonomy of the Yunnanese chieftainships and the segregation policy between Han and non-Han people facilitated opium-flows to a scale, that these chieftainships were capable of sustaining themselves, expanding their activities beyond the border and insulating themselves from the wishes and demands of the court. The mixed society under laws restricting cross-cultural contacts led networks sprawl in the shadows of official supervision, along which opium production and trade could be executed smoothly (BELLO 2003, 1116, 1118, 1121). In addition, the administration of these areas, especially the baojia household registration system to track population movements and economic output, was not carried out in such detail that opium-crops were visible to the state (BELLO 2003, 1123). When exact cultivation locations became apparent, measures such as anti-cultivation operations, apprehensions and checkpoints could not veil the fact that these native chieftain polities drifted away from the center, intensifying their autonomy while weakening the state. Countermeasures however showed some success in the Han-areas, which could be seen as evidence that cultivators simply went deeper into the border-areas where the state could not find them (BELLO 2003, 1119-1120, 1125). The implementation of anti-opium provisions so spurred resistance among native chieftains against central authority, yet increased surveillance created a trove of detailed information on the southwestern borderlands and the tightening of checkpoints hardened the limits of the Qing territory. This was later increased by introducing regular crop-searches and capital punishment for opium-consumers in directly controlled areas – not native chieftainships, who further gravitated away from the center by becoming a safe haven for cultivators and a base for smuggler-networks (BELLO 2003, 1127-

1129). Opium production and countermeasures laid open the limitations of the Qing-administration and its security apparatus in the border-area as well as the narrow loyalty of the chieftains to their overlords. Also, it displayed a failed tax-policy that diverted funds away from the province to the center, so that hardly any administrative investments could take place. This vacuum of authority greatly reduced the Qing's ability to prohibit opium trade and to keep its territory together as the chieftainships achieved the means and autonomy to ignore the badly equipped state (BELLO 2003, 1134).

With state expansion and integration of legal trading networks into the national Qing economy, these networks also became more specialized, morphing into distinct firms with branches operating not just in trade but also along the entire value chain of products, employing people throughout the borderlands and forming partnerships across entire countries to cover more ground. Muslim Hui, who often made their living in trade, mining and the military, mostly ran these networks. Modern communication technology such as the telegraph supported these networks later on, helping them to develop the institutions necessary to territorially cover their economic base in the borderlands. This happened in favor of Han-Chinese and Hui trading families or established tuis, not so much local smugglers, who could so tie the border-areas closer to the center. The Hui's success in combination with their specialization, religion, customs and social structure that were all distinctively not-Han however began to draw antagonisms along ethnic lines, which should later end in the Panthay rebellion (GIERSCH 2010, 231-232, 234-235; ATWILL 2003, 1082-1083). The main traders of opium were the Panthays whose trading network encompassed the entire border region at the core of which was their semi-independent state. The rebellion against ever-stricter edicts against opium started in 1857 and was only put out in 1873. Despite their chieftainship incorporated and their rebellion crushed, the Panthays could continue their trade as they settled along their network, especially in the Shan area. Shan and Wa states had an abundant source of income by taxing opium imports from Yunnan to distribute the drug to Siam, Vietnam and other places. Opium smuggling, the wealth it provided and the network of people – smugglers, officials, farmers – it encompassed so pulled these areas away from central state control who proved ineffective to check the massive turnover in legal and illicit goods in the border-area (MAULE 2002, 217).

Trading networks, economic exploitation and territorialization were so were interrelated but still distinct processes affecting the border. The colonial state increased the ability of the state in controlling the development of natural resources, shown in the production increase after 1830 with

the help of the necessary economic and financial infrastructure. It also replaced the ruler as main beneficiary of commercial activities by taking over trading monopolies. State policies and intervention in trading and development practices became the norm, against which resistance and over which conflicts appeared, contesting the state as an actor (BANKOFF/BOOMGAARD 2007 10-12). Thus, territorialization did not always go hand in hand with the economic integration as trading networks had their own dynamics. While the British could streamline many activities in the hand of the state, the production of the borderlands such as gemstones remained out of scope despite territorial adherence. Smuggling was often too lucrative than to follow the rules of state monopolies while the concentration of economic resources in cities and plantations further incentivized illicit trading in natural local resources in the borderlands outside the sight of rural administrations. Tying the borderlands so closer to the center and increasing means of control only slowly reduced the agency of local actors who could resist state-expansion by adapting trading patterns to the political reality (TAGLIACOZZO 2005, 371). The states had to adapt to these realities as well: while the Qing's attempt to regulate illicit opium trade led to the two Opium Wars, the French later allowed opium into northern Laos and fostered its commercial viability in colonial opium farms (GUNN 2011, 150-151).

Thus, commercial interests and their impact on taxes and so the functioning of the state at the border had an impact on the territorialization, though these processes were not always interlinked. Administration could not enforce economic territorialization and vice-versa, yet during the colonial period with the increased use of measures such as monopolies and state-farms, a convergence took place. This convergence remained spotty, as it did not penetrate existing networks who could institutionalize further around smuggling activities, thus keeping the border area to a degree outside of state-control.

2.4.1.3 Routinization of mediating the state to the border

The routinization of making administrative practices and ideas of the state felt in the borderland happened through the provision of government services and the gradual replacement of local institutions.

The Qing adopted a multi-ethnic imperial understanding of Chinese state – yet as pointed out not necessarily of the Chinese civilization – that was mediated by literati, gazettes and state-sponsored schools (ZHAO 2006, 4-6). This was part of a larger campaign in social engineering started by the Jiaqing emperor to bring all people of the empire in line of a state-sanctioned value

system that should enable the population to partake in Chinese civilization, which in turn was a legitimization factor for the state to control the political and cultural foundations of its authority. The aggressive propagation of Confucianism, the dismantling of old temple structures and the replacement of local community schools by state-sponsored institutions increased the state's grip over its territories (KUO 2008, 69). Given the expansion which created a frontier zone that was larger than the Han core, and which militarily subdued peoples with a wide variety of cultural backgrounds, it deemed a necessity to instill a share common understanding of the form of governance and the state as an empire. However, it could not prevent the decline in authority at the frontier, the diversion of resources to subdue to various rebellions in the empire and the imposition of unequal treaties (FRAVEL 2008, 42-43). The reforms of the Jiaqing emperor were an attempt to break this cycle of encroachment and rebellion. His reform to „strengthen the walls and clear the countryside“ (坚壁清野), which he devised during the White Lotus rebellion and on which the credibility of his mandate to rule depended, was all important to avoid an end of the Qing dynasty. Its objective was to recognise the border-people as Qing-subjects and to integrate them without the use of military coercion. Rather they should serve as auxiliary troops in the border-area and round up bandits (MCMAHON 2009, 99-100). For Han in the borderlands, such as the southern Shaanxi-frontier, the idea was to instill Confucian values to bring them back to the civilizational model of the Qing-state. A strict adherence to Confucian values of order and integration with the Qing-core was to be supported with infrastructure, trade and state-control. This also meant more powers for officials who were allowed to deploy the military and edict transformative education. Buddhism was supposed to supersede local superstitions – a tactic already proven with Mongol and Hmong insubordinates. Yet such a division of the population between imperial subjects and deviants was in some contrast to the imperial multi-ethnic understanding of the state and did not help with national consolidation (MCMAHON 2009, 86, 107-108). Enforced adherence to standards also concerned the construction of family relationships. The Yao practice of adoptions to increase their population and survive as a people as response to the marginalization and expulsion into the highlands, so for example was denounced and used as reason for further marginalization (JONSSON 2001, 621-622). Especially the Hui in the borderlands seemed to be very resistant to assimilation attempts, both regarding their own practices as well as in how they managed their relations and the attitudes they assumed towards other peoples of the area (ATWILL 2003, 1084).

The Konbaung in the 19th century set out to streamline and rationalize the structure of the state. The more than 100 different myos were classed in five categories: Myanma, Tayok, Shan, Mon and Kala, according to geographical bounds and ethnical lines of its inhabitants and their local traditions of rule. Despite mapping efforts and descriptions of the reach of the kingdom, the Konbaung yet still kept the limits in the traditional understanding of the kingdom flexible and blurry (MYINT-U 2004, 88, 91-92). Despite all the major changes and streamlining of the administrative structure, the Konbaung state in the 19th century remained at its core a Buddhist monarchy. Kings demarcated their area of control through pagodas and monasteries, but also demonstrated their power, as in the case of king Tharrawaddy with troop-deployments to the borders with British India, which eventually were seen a provocation (POLLACK 1976, 191). In the northern borderlands of Myanmar, the penetration of statehood did not encounter outright rebellions as in China, but rather a multi-centered, flexible monastic network that was resilient enough to avoid a full incorporation of the polities by the center that went beyond elite-cooptation (DAVIS 2003, 183). An example would be the Chiang Khaeng polity, that was centered around the Tai Lüe, tying together smaller polities and hill tribes, that provided metals and labor and managed a compromise between autonomy and territorialization attempts (BADENOCH/SHINSUKE 2013, 31). This was also true for certain Shan states as well as Sipsong Panna and the Five Buddha District, who maintained political – and thanks to smuggling also economic – autonomy, based on the routinization of fluidity of alliances that existed since centuries held together by a shared culture and education administered by monks (DAVIS 2003, 183-184). This resilience was directed against the lowland states, colonial ambitions as well as China. The example of Mangleng, that was split in 1849 into a British-controlled and an independent part, shows that local structures were adaptable and flexible enough that neither of them was totally incorporated into the colonial state or the Chinese empire (FISKESJÖ 2010, 256). Multiple loyalties of Maolong allowed proving to the British that their territory belongs to the Zhenbian sub-prefecture, while they could still refuse tusi-insignia sponsored by the Qing (KATAOKA 2013, 80).

In general, in the Shan states it seemed that the Konbaung could increase their reach of control and could consolidate their power. After the Chinese invasion of the Kengtung-state in the 1760s, the Konbaung sent relief troops, sponsored fortification projects and put the state under royal protection. Because of this alliance, Kengtung became prey to Chiang Mai who invaded in 1807, yet after some back and forth settled for the Konbaung as overlord in 1814 (AUNG 2015, 4, 5). However, Kengtung who turned slavishly loyal to the Konbaung was a special case. Other major

Shan sawbwas still despised the Konbaung and tried to undermine their rule. King Mindon, who came to the throne after the second Anglo-Burmese War (1852-1853) facing an existential threat to his kingdom, first retreated northwards of the annexation line and tried to stabilize the relations with the Shan sawbwas to fortify the country against invasions. At first, the Qing recognized the new king with a mission to install him as tributary, the sawbwas offered their oaths of allegiance, yet this was about to change (MYINT-U 2004, 23, 109-110). The sawbwas – and the Karenni – however saw the weakness of the court, rebelled against Mindon and attempted to break away. The court sent troops, divided the large Hsenwi state into five provinces, but still relied on the manpower in these states to fend off the Siamese attack against Kengtung. However, control already shifted away from the court and traditional elites as most of the Shan states retained enough local agency to oppose any centralizing attempts of the court. San Heik, the leader of the Hsenwi-troops, attempted a coup, which two subsequent sawbwas could not pacify. The Maukme sawbwa attacked Mong Nai, a garrison of the royal army and stronghold in the Shan states, while forging his own alliances with Chiang Mai. Only by mobilizing all resources and leveraging hard relations with other sawbwas could Mindon repulse the attack and install a new sawbwa in Maukme (MAW 2015, 3-4; AUNG 2015, 4-5). By that time, the kingdom has changed dramatically, as the British already occupied Arakan and took the Himalayan kingdoms off Burma. With that, also the nimbus of the dynasty deteriorated and the king could only rely on the loyalty and allegiance of his tributaries rather than on his authority and capacity to use force (MYINT-U 2004, 106).

However, this was not a long-lasting solution, as Thibaw's decision to not take any Shan-wives to solidify the court's relations to the border-principalities in 1878 was the final straw to break with the allegiance to the court. In 1882 the Shan states revolted against the throne in an attempt to externalize personal grievances over king Thibaw's personnel decisions. Thibaw gradually so lost authority over his realm. Tax income from the Shan states fell to zero, while it required constant and costly campaigning to maintain a foothold in the area. The Shan even contacted the British Assistant Resident while France used the chaos to incorporate Shan-tributaries along the Mekong. The center of the rebellion was the Mong Nai garrison, which several sawbwas attacked. Only an intense military campaign could finally re-capture the garrison, however the damage to the integrity of the state was irreversible (MYINT-U 2004, 171). The expedition against the rebellion only drove the Shan leaders further away and increased their resolve to expel the Burmese from the Shan states, including plans to overthrow Thibaw. Other sawbwas decided to simply turn to the British, such as in the case of Hsenwi (MAW 2015, 3-4; AUNG 2015, 4-5; MYINT-U 2004, 162,

171). This time the resentment was deeply rooted as shown in the behavior of Kengtung state, that was deeply connected with and highly loyal the throne and the central administration, with commanders and officers on the ground collecting taxes and reporting back on major events. The sawbwa of Kengtung paid annual tributes in person and had to provide land for the subsistence of the garrison stationed in his state. Yet even Kengtung solidarized with the rebellion, providing refuge to the instigators and supporting the overthrow of Thibaw. This Limbin confederacy, named after the prince who should replace Thibaw, included the major Shan states and boasted 13.000 troops (MAW 2015, 5-6; AUNG 2015, 4-6; MYINT-U 2004, 172).

The Burmese state had totally lost control over the border-area, as the traditional elites did not recognize the authority of the king anymore. Royal orders were ignored and successions dealt without royal approval. The chaos in the borderlands also hosted bandits, millenarian leaders and military adventurers, all of which further undermined any role the Burmese state could play (MYINT-U 2004, 117, 178). In addition to endemic unrest and a slump in state revenue, also people fled in droves from violence to the British territories. This loss of people for conscription and military services showed again the crucial importance of the border for the state. The weakness of the Burmese kingdom and its inability to fund and staff its defense reassured the British in their decision to start the final war against the Konbaung. The border again was a focal point in this development: in 1884, Chinese and Kachin smugglers occupied Bhamo, the second most important town of the country right at the border to China. The Burmese had massive troubles to recapture the town, yet also this area gravitated away from state control. The Kachin continued to wreak havoc in the area, ending all cross-border trade with Yunnan, further weakening the state. As violence became endemic in the entire country and the reactions of Thibaw more irrational, preparations for an attack were under way, both by the British as well as by prince Myingun who was supposed to take over the throne (MYINT-U 2004, 176-177).

After the third Anglo-Burmese war, the main British objective was the pacification of the chaotic situation in the Shan states, defined by rivalries among the Shan chiefs, a belligerent Limbin confederacy, the Karenni rebellion and instability in the Hsipaw and Hsenwi states. The British set up an interim government, but refrained from setting up garrisons and allowed autonomous rule in the Shan states. They grouped the states into five districts, each headed by a superintendent. Their interest to respect Shan demands was threefold: on the one hand, they believed, autonomous rule would quell the ongoing rebellions, on the other hand, they had strong economic interests, which to exploit they needed a friendly alliance with the sawbwas. Third, the presence of a

superintendent would allow a divide-and-rule strategy to not let them grow too strong. They appointed a coordinator of this alliance, refrained from direct interference, and gave large concessions to turn the sawbwas loyal to the British and disincentivize them to turn to other powers (MAW 2015, 6-8; MONG 2007, 258-259; FORMOSO 2006, 99-100).

In the Kachin-states, the British took a different approach and classified it according to their status as gumsa – areas with state character – or gumlao – areas without such a structure. The gumsa were supposed to be an administered area in which every village was an independent political entity under a village head who served as interlocutor. An immediate result of dissolving the Kachin-states was that these former larger gumsa-states lost their authority to extort taxes from Shan states or collect tolls from trade caravans and so lost the base of their economy and power. Like this, gumsa and gumlao – including both Kachin and Shan states – took a very different path and fragmented the border-environment. The former was forbidden everything the latter could do, such as growing opium, raiding for slaves or operating toll stations (NUGENT 1982, 522-523).

As not all Shan states submitted to this new form of loose suzerainty, the British dispatched a military expedition in 1887 to show its strength and to befriend local troops and chiefs, and bring the last pockets of resistance to surrender. The expedition was successful insofar as the British could make clear their intentions to keep the sawbwas in power and would not meddle in their internal affairs as well as removing trade obstacles between the Shan and Burma proper (MAW 2015, 8). Like that, they managed to territorialize their rule, keeping the Shan as a fluid frontier towards China. Yet after the three Anglo-Burmese wars, the governor of Yunnan was concerned about the actual distribution of the borderlands between Burma and the Qing-empire, so that he first wanted to create facts by attempting to incorporate the undefined areas into the Qing territory. He directed a campaign against the Five Buddha District, creating nine tusi and a military county for defense purposes, displacing a large part of the local Lahu-population. Once he achieved the integration of this area into the Qing-empire, it was the border-commission of 1894 that finally demarcated hard territorial boundaries – and thus the reach of two different state-systems – between the Qing and British Burma. However, local concepts of statehood still survived, erupted sometimes in rebellions and undermined the construction of the state in the borderland (KATAOKA 2013, 80; MA 2013, 72-74). The case of the Wa polities is a good example how the division between British Burma and Qing-China was not everywhere well received. They became entangled in the brawl which empire shall control the mines on their territory. The Wa wish that it should be Chinese businesses was largely ignored, the border fortified yet Wa-

agency never destroyed. Pamphlets during the 1911-revolution indicate that there were still strong Wa-ties to China, which the Qing could exploit against an ever more assertive Britain (NORINS 1939, 71, 73, 74).

In the Tai-world, a new assertiveness and exploration of “Tai-ness” took place over the 19th century, transmitted through chronicles and libraries, which eventually brought the inherent discrepancies between larger Tai centers, such as Bangkok, and the peripheries, especially Laos, to the fore. These discrepancies eventually led to a fragmentation of the Tai regional order as they produced a better understanding of what constitutes Lao or Siamese identities, pulling the tributary periphery away from the center and enabling its agency (EVANS/OSBORNE 2002, 37). Nanthasen’s act to capture Luang Prabang and Chao Anou’s (Anouvong’s) grand idea to re-build Lan Xang bear witness to this re-found Lao identity. The attacks, counter-attacks, truces and complex diplomatic efforts ended however first in a fiasco that the French would try to dissolve (EVANS / OSBORNE 2002, 27-28).

This was not a unilinear process. The case of the Daoist Lanten people illustrates how groups living in Sip song Panna simply left and settled in the north of Laos and actually brought this area closer to the center. The Lanten were a main producer and trader of indigo, with very close ties to the Chinese culture and a language heavily influenced by strong contacts with regional Han-centers. Their motivation to leave was not political but rather a matter of available land, resources and self-governance (BADENOCH/TOMITA 2013, 38-39). These two groups formed an economic alliance, which they later on buttressed with networks to upland people and Tai-rulers of the surrounding muangs. They formed synergies and fostered specialization among spinners, cotton-producers and farmers, tying their region into an economic network under decentralized control. Despite being intruders who just settled there and set up their own governance, the chiefs soon became subdistrict chiefs, recognized by both the court in Luang Prabang and later on the French administration (BADENOCH/TOMITA 2013, 40, 41). The remoteness and sparse population allowed the Lanten to carve out their political and economic niche, which they protected by paying tribute to Luang Prabang, Nan and the suzerain in Bangkok and which they strengthened by integrating other people – both refugees like the Tai Dam in 1895 and people looking for opportunities – into their settlement to intensify the productivity of the polity. This however also increased the competition for resources with Tai-polities (BADENOCH/TOMITA 2013, 44). The influx of people was also necessary for the Lanten to exercise authority over their territory, which they achieved under a strictly hierarchical structure and a tight oral communication network

across villages, peoples and languages (BADENOCH/TOMITA 2013 45, 47). The polity-network survived as a buffer until the 1890s, when the Tai became more assertive and the idea of an unpopulated, neutral buffer zone between the British and French possessions failed and Chao Sitthisane of the Nyuan-clan was installed as head of the muang. The Tai Lüe of Sipsong Panna moved border markers into the territory, while Lao administrators were dispatched to oversee the area of Muang Luang Phukha as the administrative district was known by then. The area had its own dynamics with shifting alliances with the Tai Lüe of Muang Sin to keep the Tai Lüe of Sipsong Panna out, with Tai rulers to reign in the Khmu – and also the Lanten who given their roots in Sipsong Panna maintained ties to the Tai Lüe there. The French intensified their territorialization efforts by trying to create a local loyal elite, so the autonomous Lanten were seen with ever-greater suspicion (BADENOCH/TOMITA 2013, 51; SOLOMON 1969, 6-7). Still, the Lanten played an important role in governance as well as in defense of the Lao territory, as it was they who restored the original line of the border thanks to their knowledge of Chinese culture and the state when in 1893 the Chinese moved the border-marker to offend the French colonialists. The Lanten so got under scrutiny but were employed as critical players to defend the Lao territories in times of crisis. They should assume this role again in 1911 and in 1940s when Chinese soldiers, refugees and fugitives ran over the border. The central role of the Lanten in the economics and administration of the area showed how settling across the border of a polity – in this case Luang Prabang – creates ambiguities and a syncretic understanding of their role in the overlapping political tie and networks. The Lanten had strong ties to Chinese culture, yet in their new settlement, their interests for economic and political survival trumped their previous relations. Having carved out a polity of their own, which despite its tributary relationship got under more scrutiny, the Lanten needed to show their loyalty when facing the territorialization efforts of the French and so had to harden the border by themselves (BADENOCH/TOMITA 2013, 52-53).

Đại Việt, ravaged by the wars against the Tay Son dynasty, began to routinize its border-management by invoking a millennia-old continuous civilization distinct from China, embodied even in the attempted name-change to Nam Viet. The new name should refer to the ancient kingdoms of the Viet-people, which did not please the court in Beijing. Viet Nam as a compromise name emerged, and despite being a brainchild of the Qing dynasty, evoked enough associations for designing a nationalist agenda to promote the state (ANDERSON 2006, 157-158; GOSCHA 215, 462). The backwards extrapolation of a millennia-old uninterrupted and territorialized Vietnamese polity became in the context of the border a catalyst to see the margins of the state more

and more as a fixed line around which national myths of invasion and wars evolved. Like that, the border became an integrative and central component of the Vietnamese state itself, rather than just constituting its limit (LARY 2007, 183; cf. KIM 2015, 264. 267-268).

The Nguyễn relied on orthodox Confucian ideology of state making to guide relations with China, to stabilize the internal society, civilize the barbarians at the frontier and to consolidate and increase the reach of the state, as stability was the paramount objective of the court. It also heavily borrowed elements from the Chinese tributary system to subdue smaller polities in its vicinity (WOMACK 2006, 138-139; HENLEY 1995, 307). This so defined state also became more assertive regarding the institutional set-up and the very idea what constitutes the Vietnamese state politically and culturally. The relatively accommodating attitudes towards Catholic missionaries – and generally European foreigners – so changed under the Nguyễn setting off a spiral of persecution and retaliation (WOMACK 2006, 65). The civilization mission against the barbarians was based on education and targeted non-conformist practices of the Hmong, Tai and Nung, which were supposed to adapt to the orthodoxy of the Nguyễn Confucianism. Minorities at the border were also forced to adopt Vietnamese family names to show their loyalty and willingness to integrate into the order and administrative system and submit to the state (WOODSIDE 1998, 212). In addition, Vietnam started to staff the border administration with only temporarily dispatched officials to keep them from getting too engaged into local affairs. These officials oversaw newly established administrative units that imposed direct rule on formerly self-governing communities through censuses and tax system. Chieftains opposed the introduction of this system and launched even the Nông Văn Vân rebellion of 1833–1835 which the Nguyễn could subdue (VU 2016, 64). Despite this strict and orthodox approach to territorialize their rule, the Nguyễn could not exercise full authority over their borders. One reason was the Sipsong Chau Tai principality – a loose confederation of White Tai polities in the Chinese-Vietnamese-Laotian borderland – that became more organized and challenged the Nguyễn authority over their realm. The Đèo clan was not only the informal ruling family of the federation, its members also took high-ranking positions in the Nguyễn frontier administration. In this position, they had to navigate the competing territorial claims of the Nguyễn and the Qing over parts of their lands. This pertained mainly to counties that belonged to Hưng Hóa, an area lost to the Qing who settled Han people there and renamed it Mengsuo state. In the disputed counties, the Đèo officials not only followed their own agenda but also served both Qing and Nguyễn orders. Internal family conflicts could easily turn into inter-state tensions when different parts of the clans sought the backing from either Qing or

Nguyễn. This happened in 1831, when the Qing invaded and abducted a contestant for local power to back their candidate. Qing and Nguyễn so were engaged in a protracted territorial tit-for-tat conflict over border towns the Đèo were supposed to administer. A direct military confrontation did not happen and the conflict petered out as the advancing Qing army was forced to withdraw due to the danger of local diseases (VU 2016, 54-56).

Interventions like these in the context of increased integration of the border-polities in both China and Vietnam became more frequent – a routine in itself as there was no definitive solution to the undefined border. As long as the *tusi/thổ ty* were in place, these conflicts revolved around local issues on local levels, yet with greater integration into the state apparatus – and the attempt to transform local people into loyal subjects – divisions in local communities automatically morphed into affairs of national concern. Direct control of the state through weak administrative infrastructure while accepting continued unofficial autonomy of local power holders served as a catalyst for conflicts in the shadow of which bandits could build their power bases and fugitives find refuge. This mixture turned the borderlands into a zone of constant conflict and violence, especially in the 1860s when Black Flags, Yellow Flags, Taiping fugitives and competing political factions fought each other, while the Nguyễn state had lost most of its authority over the region. It was only the colonial powers who managed to restore order (VU 2016, 64-65).

Structurally, the 19th century exacerbated contradictions that built up with the increased means of coercion and administrative innovation on the side of the state on one side and the autonomy of indigenous rulers on the other. States were more powerful than before with greater administrative capacities and knowledge, which they duly employed to tie the border-areas to their centers, yet at the same time, the continued trajectories of autonomy and indirect rule caused for discrepancies and resistance that eventually led to a decline in the states' grip over their borderlands. The fluidity the state wanted to control only shifted out of administrative sight with continued multiple allegiances, smuggling and decentralized power-bases continuing the autonomy the border polities enjoyed when they were just in service but not part of the state. Thus, the situation was such that with increasing state-power and territorialization, the clandestine agency of the actors in the borderline was also increasing. The carefully calibrated equilibrium so slowly lost its balance within a constant stream of state-sponsored incursions and countermeasures that eventually provoked large-scale rebellions.

2.4.2 Routinization turns into weakening

The more routine the states both in Southeast Asia as well as Qing-China got and the more coercive measures they used in managing their border-areas – and as a matter of fact the general population – , the stronger the wish for autonomy became as a backlash reaction to the consolidation efforts. The states in their path dependency and orthodoxy of ideas about statehood, societal structuring and ruling practices reacted in ways that only exacerbated the discontent of the local population and elites, gradually weakening the acceptance of the state. In addition, orthodox ways of managing the territory had little to offer against issues such as banditry – and in the greater context the encroachment of the European powers.

2.4.2.1 A constant stream of rebellions

The imperial states Burma, Vietnam, Siam and China in the beginning of the 19th century only knew one way forward that is further consolidation. The single-minded obsession with increasing territorialization of their power weakened the states over the course of the 19th century, as the reactions they provoked grew stronger and ended in rebellions. Especially the size, scale and intensity of rebellions in the Qing-state had spillover effects for the border region.

Even after the Jiaqing reforms, the Qing state at the border was seen with suspicion and measures for a benevolent integration caused resistance against the edicted state penetration rather than expected obedience through infrastructure projects and social engineering. Thus, while the pacification showed some results, it also showed the limited control the state could exercise over its margins so that non-compliance with such imperial edicts seemed a viable option in times of crisis or food shortages. Instead of supporting the Qing state's vision of an orderly border with locals and the military supporting each other, people – mostly supporters of the White Lotus insurrection – in many cases chose banditry, drawing the ire of the emperor who directed their eradication. In the end, the Qing-state had to admit the failure of this policy and reduced the military presence so that local officials had to deal with remaining cells of resistance (MCMAHON 2009, 99-101). The White Lotus revolt was only one of the largest of many ongoing local rebellions against the state's expansion of power and authority. Hui-Muslims rebelled all over the border areas during the Qing-era, the Taiping rebellion laid a large part of the country in ruins, warlords started to emerge after the mid-19th century and the opium-wars also had their effects in driving the border-population away from the Qing – sometimes as in the case of the Tai Lüe even physically. In ad-

dition, Chiangmai continued raids in the south for subjects, in Laos Bangkok and Vietnam were competing over influence (GLADNEY 2008, 187; JONSSON 2001, 631; YANG 2008, 6).

In this turmoil some peoples such as the Yao had their “license for crossing the mountains” re-issued, an imperial edict that exempted them from *corvée* and tributary duties and allowed them to roam freely. This only complicated the situation further and reduced the control of the state even more as these wandering peoples and refugees followed their own agenda and laws (JONSSON 2001 631-632).

The Jiangqi reforms so did not solve the problem of weakening state influence at the margins. Banditry continued, the plan to enlist locals in auxiliary troops did not yield the expected results, smuggling was rampant and infrastructure deteriorated more and more. The continued division of the border population according to ethnic affiliation increased tensions between the administration and local population. The impression that settled Han-Chinese only got more sophisticated in their deviant behavior and still did not accept the Qing-morales only increased the suspicions of the court against especially local merchants, who might abuse the expanded powers – granted by the court to achieve state-objectives – for their own benefit (MCMAHON 2009, 111).

Given the Qing-state’s promotion of Confucianism as state ideology, many rebellions were grounded in religious resistance against the state-sponsored weakening of religious institutions, especially sectarian and local ones to bring them into a unified ideological territoriality. The objective to tie the population in religious and political terms to the institutions of the state debased the equilibrium between central rituals and local belief systems, a process, which in each iteration of penetration and resistance showed more violence (YANG 2008, 7, 10, 16-17). This anti-religious sentiment and suspicion for local practices as potential threats against the state set off a wave of crackdowns on cults to promote the state-ideology and orthodoxy and culminated in the Guangxu edict in 1898 that foresaw the conversion of all temples into schools and administrative offices to strengthen the state. This was somehow successful as the Qing-state could redefine itself in modern terms outside of a role in a religious cosmos, yet banning religious movements did not necessarily curb their power vis-à-vis the state (YANG 2008, 16-17; PALMER 2008, 116-117). Instead, they flourished in secret societies where they could foster their opposition out of sight, while disenfranchised border-communities were willing to mobilize people for the cause against the Qing (PALMER 2008, 121).

2.4.2.1.1 Large scale rebellions as root of border destabilization

The largest and most consequential uprising was the Taiping Rebellion. Originating in the border province of Guangxi and soon embroiling the entire country, the area slipped away from the influence and authority of the state. Civilian cross-border trade essentially stopped as armed rebels took over the management of the trading routes and tried to dismantle the traditional trading networks and associations (GIERSCH 2011, 53). This was in stark contrast of the Taiping-ideology as the ideal of Hong Xiuquan, the leader of the Taiping Heavenly Kingdom, was based on a message of salvation that he supposed would work only when all the people regardless of which country are united under the Heaven without borders and boundaries. The remarkable mass-mobilization of this uprising and the shedding of all traditional resources that were supposed to strengthen the empire in the wake of Western encroachment on China, however produced harder borders than ever before. This was in line with the intellectual discussion of how China could modernize by relying on its traditional ideas of statehood and social structuring while merging them with the increasingly competing Western ideas of the nation (GENG 2015, 45). The Taiping drove this thinking to the extreme by mobilizing peasants all over the south and creating a huge network of followers that were eager to replace the traditional ideas of the empire with the millenarian utopia of Hong Xiuquan. The victory over the Taiping did not quell the general mood of rebellion. Repeatedly millenarian movements sprang up whose messages of salvation turned into political calls for action, especially regarding how the Qing should handle foreign encroachments. Issues revolved around border surveys and demarcations, unequal treaties, ceding of territories to the British, Russian and French and drew more and more people into such campaigns that de-territorialized the grip of the state (GENG 2015, 164).

Scale and intensity of the Taiping propelled these effects on the southern border. As the Taiping tied the Qing-forces in the north and cut ties between the imperial center and the margins, southern rebels had a chance to start their own rebellions for autonomy in the territorialization-vacuum that the Taiping created (LARY 1996 16-17; DAVIS 2009, 26). This vacuum allowed regional pride to flourish and to denounce Qing-rule and the unfairness of the imperial apparatus towards the borderlanders. In this climate, large and small southern rebellions could break ground.

Even more destructive for the border-area than the Taiping was the Panthay rebellion that happened roughly at the same time. The large influx of Han-migrants in the first half of the 19th century displaced already settled Han and non-Han peoples in Yunnan, taking lands and mines, and

re-orienting the transregional ties of the border-area more strictly towards the Qing-center. Violent clashes intensified between old Hui residents and new Han settlers in the first half of the 19th century, probably as the former prospered in trade and mining, fields which the latter wanted to occupy for themselves. Qing officials supported Han-migrants up to the point where they tolerated mass killings by private militias and the cleansing of the Hui-population of the city of Baoshan by secret societies. It culminated in a plan of 1856 to wipe out the Hui, which allowed killing Hui without facing any repercussions (ATWILL 2003, 1084-1085; ATWILL 2005, 5, 28). Not only were the Hui blamed for the violence they suffered, they also faced discrimination in the law and double standards when dealing with bureaucracy. They still trusted the Qing-state though and petitioned even directly to the throne – a sign how strong the ideals of the state had penetrated the area already. Still, there was no remedy to their misery (ATWILL 2003, 1087). In this climate, the atmosphere was ripe for retaliation. Starting as a revolt of miners, who murdered their Chinese supervisor, more and more miners joined a protest movement against Han-atrocities and soon the protest turned into a revolt that spread throughout the province. The Qing were occupied with other crises such as the Taiping rebellion and still recovered from the first opium war, and so could dispatch the resources to quell the rebellion which soon also encompassed Shan and Kachin fighters (YEGAR 1966, 75). The Panthay – named after the Burmese term for Hui – grew in strength and systematically looted their way to Kunming, wreaking so much havoc that more and more people ran over to their troops (ATWILL 2005, 175). Soon after, they captured Dali and founded there the independent Pingnan-kingdom under the charismatic leader Du Wenxiu. Having a stable home base and relying on millenarian messages, the rebellion devastated the entire province and stopped all trade in cotton and copper. The way across the border area was essentially cut off from the markets the region served and saw the institutions it helped build destroyed (GIERSCH 2011, 53; ATWILL 2003, 1086).

The Panthay so transformed the border-area, tied principalities into their own tributary network and expanded their state beyond the borders of Yunnan. They could rely on sometimes century-old trade and political ties given their major role in the cross-border caravan trade, which allowed them to forge contacts far beyond the borders of the Qing-empire. As their activity region encompassed a wide array of loosely connected, quasi-autonomous galactic polities in the border-area, the Hui as traders had become very familiar with different political systems and networks. This familiarity and their crucial role in trading widened their zone of influence that went far beyond the imperial borders, across cultural differences and multiple orientations – not just towards

the imperial center. They could so create a counter-model to the imperial state, a model marked by internal fluidity, network-allegiance, and statehood not based on a commonly shared, static ideological basis but one of multiple, co-existing worldviews. Essentially, the base of the Panthay rebellion was an alternative concept to the intolerance, discrimination and anti-Hui campaigns of the Qing-dynasty (ATWILL 2003, 1088-1089; ATWILL 2005, 12-13). The rebellion was thus not a religious one, but motivated by a deep anti-Qing sentiment and the wish for an alternative state-model. It so was one of the last large-scale attempts in the constant back and forth of territorialization to define a borderland-polity that was independent from the centralized empires.

This alternative model required the support of the various ethnicities in Yunnan. The Panthay actively employed other non-Han groups, leveraging their long-standing interaction and pushing their concept of a reversal of the Qing-state (ATWILL 2003, 1092). The Panthay so could convince the rulers of Xishuangbanna, Burmese border polities and Lao principalities to submit to the Dali-regime and support them against the Chinese (ATWILL 2005, 144). Du Wenxiu, as sultan and generalissimo, set up his own state structure with its own symbols of identification in the entire area, and so replacing the previous Qing-state symbolism. The governance of the sultanate was quite accommodating and inclusive towards other ethnicities in its institutional set up and rule, reflecting the multi-ethnicity of the border-area. To break with the attempted re-orientation of Yunnan towards the Qing-center, Dali became the symbolic center of the state. In terms of institutions, the Panthay set up three branches of government – civil, military and religious. Yet to mark the autonomy and uniqueness of the state, the Panthay exercised a symbolic demarcation in language and appearance. Arabic became the main language among the elite and in the administration and diplomacy. To mark their authority, the Panthay also used Chinese symbols – often Ming-symbols to challenge the Qing. They also invented uniforms whose wearers – mostly soldiers and representatives of the administration – embodied the new state everywhere they went. These measures all unified the population in a unique Pingnan-symbolism that was as much directed against the Qing as it was promoting the inclusive, multi-ethnic, fluid set-up of the transnational context in which Yunnan, the border-polities existed, and in which various political, religious and ethnic traditions could continue alongside each other. Like that, they could penetrate the area that they broke off the state-control of the empires (ATWILL 2005, 149; ATWILL 2003, 1089-1091). This was on the one hand a novelty state, on the other hand, it was a manifestation of the century-old cycles alternating between central authority and local autonomy. The Panthay connected so with long-practiced forms of governance in the border-area and used it to repel the

Qing-state, de-territorializing its reach in the area and re-establishing a looser, trans-regional form of governance.

The Qing enlisted mercenaries from China and the Shan states, yet the Panthay, defeating every Qing onslaught, controlled by 1868 more than 30 counties along the border and formed a truly independent kingdom of their own, turning the remoteness, fragmented networks and economic barren economic landscape of the border-area into a strength in state building (ATWILL 2003, 1093; ATWILL 2005, 165; NUGENT 1982, 521). While the Panthay could wrest large territories and polities off the main empires in the border-region, this way of state-construction did not create a sustainable state as it could only survive if it constantly grew and looted new places to expand its economic basis. This can be seen in the fact that the Panthay Sultanate – despite its three-branched government – had no firm administrative grip that fully controlled the affairs of the Sultanate due to the promoted revival of the Yunnanese tradition of inclusiveness based on loose control of networks rather than territorial consolidation. In addition to this inherent weakness, the Qing animated bandits to re-take areas under Panthay control and to sabotage communication lines. Another weakness of their rule was that the Panthay found themselves in an already existing network of states with alliances and tributary relations. No other state could recognize them or normalize commercial and political relations without upsetting this order. This was in particular an issue for Burma whose king Mindon tacitly was in favour of the Panthay ideals and had a great interest in resuming the border-trade – as exchanges under the embargo were not taxed – but still was bound as tributary of China (MYINT-U 2004 147; YEGAR 1966, 76).

The combination of being isolated and more or less confined to the border-area as well as attacks from bandits and mercenaries changed the fate of the Panthay Sultanate as of 1869. Several attacks of regular Qing troops eliminated the isolate state and scattered the remaining forces (YEGAR 1966, 79-80).

The end of the Panthay Rebellion however can be seen as the definitive outcome of the long process of borderland integration in favor of the Qing-state (ATWILL 2005, 190; cf. SIU 1993, 23). After the rebellion ended, the Qing did not adopt a more lenient approach towards the border. On the contrary, the Qing ordered a huge massacre of Hui in Yunnan as punishment and enshrined anti-Hui sentiments in official policies with investigations into the actions of Muslim leaders that mostly ended in death penalties or public assassinations. Given the brutal retaliation measures of the Qing, it is not surprising that many Hui fled to Burma where they often found refuge in the Wa and Shan states and tried to re-establish their networks or turned to banditry along the frontier.

The Burmese king when faced with the bandit gangs in his kingdom, enacted a policy to send back any Panthay-bandits that his officials could capture (ATWILL 2005, 183; CHANG 2015, 251; YEGAR 1966, 80-81; STURGEON 2004, 468). The reasons for this emigration did not concern the Qing, as their paramount goal was to re-establish stability in the province. They achieved that *inter alia* by increasing the quota of people accepted for degrees in the provincial bureaucracy, and so could tie the elites again into the Chinese value system (ATWILL 2005 188; MCKEOWN 2004, 161). However, the new administrative grip did not change the underlying issues why the Hui rebelled in the first place: ethnic relations were strained, violence was rampant, local rebellions broke out repeatedly and even could establish their own zones of control outside the Qing-state (ATWILL 2005, 190).

Taking also the destruction into account it therefore took decades until the commercial and political ties between the border and the administrative centers could be re-established and merchants were able to undertake their professions again. Still, Yunnan never developed the attraction for traders it once had again despite grand infrastructure plans as violence still flared up in the border-region (GIERSCH 2011, 53; NUGENT 1982, 521-522; MYINT-U 2004, 147). The Qing managed to re-establish their authority in Momein at the Burmese border after the Panthay rebellion in 1872 and where acutely aware of the significance of trade for a stable border area. Trade slowly picked up its pace again, also due to the European plans to access China via the Burmese border. However, as the Qing enlisted local warlords and mercenaries to fight the Panthay rebellion, these soldiers after their decommissioning used the fact that the border-area was essentially cut off from the core of the empire for their benefit. To make a living, they operated transit duty stations and so changed trade patterns and were responsible for a continued degree of de-territorialization. The state and the border communities only had limited contact to each other, so that the recovery of the borderland-towns only progressed very slowly. The British attempts to win over Burmese border polities by supplying arms and the continued unrest among the Shan and Karenni further inhibited the restoration of border institutions (GIERSCH 2011, 54-55; MYINT-U 2004, 138-139).

Given the fact the political, ethnical and commercial networks penetrated the entire border area, these large scale rebellions spilled over to the neighboring countries with effects that shaped the fate of the Southeast Asian states. Remnants of the Panthay and Taiping armies marched across the border and organized themselves according to their banner affiliation. Not bound by a central command, these yellow, black or striped banners but commonly known as *Haw* soon began loot-

ing wherever they appeared and setting up their own territorialization project based on terrorizing the local communities (EVANS/OSBORNE 2002, 32). At the same time, the destruction of the regional economy on the Burmese border shattered the economic foundation of the power of Kachin-lords, who saw themselves faced with an economic and political crisis, that the British could easily exploit (NUGENT 1982 522-523). For the Wa on the other hand, the Panthay rebellion was a distraction from the continuous attempts of both the British and the Chinese empire to integrate the Wa territories and gold-resources, although the rebellion seriously disrupted the Wa-trade (FISKESJÖ 2010, 246-247).

With these disintegrative forces at play and the states' influence reduced in the border, already existing local actors saw the opportunity in this vacuum to consolidate their presence. Sipsong Chau Tai's rulers – officially tied to Vietnam as tributary and *thổ ty* border principality – has already adopted many aspects of the Vietnamese mandarin, such as dresses and insignia, and now used the chaos to grow into a more unified principality (EVANS/OSBORNE 2002, 33). To that end, Sipsong Chau Tai also fraternized with the Haw for looting resources and trying to push back the Siamese foothold in northern Laos where Luang Prabang was reduced to the image of a provincial capital after all the pillaging and the tributary subordination to Bangkok. The Haw raids reduced the control of Luang Prabang over smaller polities even further, eventually prompting the king of Luang Prabang to ask to become a French protectorate (EVANS/OSBORNE 2002, 33-34). At the same time, the lowland central states got under pressure from the new idea of statehood introduced by the Europeans, including exclusive sovereignty over territory rather than undefined spaces of influence. These competing worldviews and the necessity for Bangkok and Hue to act upon them in combination with the intrusion in the aftermath of the rebellions turned the border-principalities to match-balls in the great game between Siam and Vietnam – especially over Muang Phuan (EVANS/OSBORNE 2002, 33).

The third large rebellion that helped reversing the trend of greater territorialization and centralization was the Miao (Hmong) rebellion of 1854. It was preceded by regularly occurring Miao uprisings starting at the end of the 17th century, yet this revolt – happening simultaneously with the Taiping Rebellion – surpassed its predecessors in scale, violence and impact. Even after its defeat, Miao rebels controlled large parts of Guizhou-province, who later moved into the borderlands as bandits (SCOTT 2009, 285). The rebels included a plethora of peoples, but it consisted to a large part of Han who revolted for different objectives: taxation, millenarian beliefs, opposition to immigration of new settlers as well as the enforced segregation policies of the Qing administration

that classified indigenous people as not reliable subjects. This in turn increased the antagonism between the Qing and the locals, so that the latter did not want to be recruited into the service of the former – which only confirmed the Qing in their attitude. The increased territorialization did not take the ethnic composition and particularities of the border-region into account, so that officials enacted policies that fueled conflicts. Essentially, these reasons were the same that sparked a Miao revolt 60 years earlier in 1795. The Qing-state had learned nothing out of that revolt, which with the benefit of hindsight was already an omen for the disintegration and de-territorialization of the empire (PERDUE 2009, 266-267; SUTTON 2006, 190).

2.4.2.1.2 Local rebellions

In addition to these large-scale rebellions, a myriad of smaller-scale uprisings shook up the border area in the 19th century. These events, such as the fights between Hui and Han around the Xiyi silver mine in 1800, the Lin'an/Woni Uprising of 1818, the Lisu Rebellion of 1821 or Dao Shengwu Affair of 1833 to name just a few had various reasons, ranging from dissatisfaction with infrastructure, corruption and very often hostilities between locals and immigrating Han settlers to rivalries between chieftains. The stability of the border area was thus on quite shaky grounds and the Qing state had to engage with these uprisings given their danger to spill over and create a larger movement that deterritorialized the border-provinces (ATWILL 2005, 54-55, 64). Smaller in scale, these rebellions could still engage thousands of troops as in the case of Dao Shengwu who as an officially recognized chief turned into a bandit when facing the continuous encroachment of the Qing-state and formed a gang of locals and Han-migrants, robbing caravans and attacking neighbouring tusis. Several thousand mercenaries were in his service to fight for political and economic autonomy – and for the power of Dao Shengwu who was supposed to be replaced. The Qing in this case relied on a two-pronged approach of military coercion to fight Dao's troops but also understood that maintaining the hereditary chieftainship system was paramount in order to avoid future rebellions. They therefore showed restraint to keep the equilibrium between local and imperial authority intact and maintain strategic order but refrained from increasing actual territorial control (ATWILL 2005, 60, 62).

From the way the Qing treated these rebellions it is becoming clear that after the Jiaqing-reforms, the Qing adopted a more integrative, less ethnicity-based view of the borderland population, as the court saw non-Han as well as Han as the same traitors of the empire, and thus the same kind of subjects. In the eyes of the Qing-state, indigenous people became more and more subjects of

the empire, the borderland population was supposed also to follow Qing-regulations such as taxes and household registration system – and so further the reach of the state into the border regions in strategic, yet not necessarily in territorial terms (ATWILL 2005, 62). Given however the resistance the Qing faced and the many rebellions that broke out against their policies, the effect was the opposite as the more the Qing tried to pacify, the more the rebellious tuis slipped away from state authority.

In both, regions under central control and tuis, secret societies started to grow, who slowly undermined state-efforts to integrate the area. The Gowned Brothers society in Sichuan discussed their anti-Qing ideas in an invented language, that formed a sub-culture directed against the Qing-state in dress, ideological orientation – and in cultural and linguistic codes and signs. Using a secret language was not new or uncommon for secret societies to set themselves apart. New in this rebellious climate was the political meaning it became as a sign of anti-Qing resistance, linguistically underlining the ideological divide and so demarcating a border towards the empire (WANG 2008, 79, 81). The Brotherhood became very influential in the area, bringing together people from all walks of life and all echelons of society, bound by a shared anti-Qing sentiment, and singled out by the imperial center as thieves and criminals – which only increased the divide between them and eventually spurred rebellions (WANG 2008, 80, 81-82). The Gowned Brotherhood – despite largely an affair of Han people romanticizing the Ming-dynasty – also provided indigenous people with an alternative to voice their interests as well as with a network that recognized the role of the indigenous people in the border communities (WANG 2008, 84, 87). The secret societies so undermined the grip of the state from within by manipulating and using the collective mindset of the communities in which they operated – sometimes inciting or supporting physical rebellions but constantly wresting the state out of the ideological sphere of influence of the region.

Also on the Southeast Asian side, rebellions broke out such as the Anouvong rebellion of 1827 against Siamese suzerainty in Laos and its predecessor – which provided enough pretext for the Siamese for slaughtering the minority populations in Laos. Anouvong sent diplomatic missions to the Qing and Nguyễn courts to support him to avoid the former kingdom of Lan Xang to become in its entirety an attachment to Siam, yet both turned him down, warning him to not upset the local order (NGAOSYVATHN/NGAOSYVATHN 1989, 59-60, 63). On his own, Chao Anou first turned against the tattooing officials and opposed the practice of Siam to sell Lao people off to slavery by ordering a repatriation of all the Lao population that was forced to migrate. He could

reverse the territorialization of the Lao-space by Siamese institutions to some degree and restore some of the prestige and authority of the Vientiane dynasty. This authority had suffered as the Siamese systematically promoted Xieng Mai and Luang Prabang to eclipse Vientiane (NGAOSYVATHN/NGAOSYVATHN 1989, 61, 63). When the court of Siam began to block the border for imports into Laos, Anou turned to China to purchase horses and elephants for his rebellion. In a next step, Chao Anou tried to achieve independence and restore the kingdom of Lan Xang, yet this endeavor – despite unifying all parts of Laos against Siam – ended in a crushing defeat that left Laos in ruins (STUART-FOX 2008, LVIII; NGAOSYVATHN/NGAOSYVATHN 1989, 63-64). The revolt had two effects: the attempt to emancipate the Lao-space from Siam only increased the coercion and administrative means with which Bangkok exercised control over the area. Massive coerced depopulation of western Laos and large-scale draining of resources went hand in hand. Secondly, it united the Lao-polities in their despise for Siamese suzerainty, who were now actively trying to find new overlords. Given the harsh treatment and agenda to depopulate Laos east of the Mekong, elites of local polities, such as Muang Phuan saw their power base weakened and turned to Vietnam for tribute and protection. The Vietnamese installed their own officials in this part of Laos, which fueled the competition of influence over this area between Vietnam and Siam (STUART-FOX 2008, 12-13, 54, 153, 80, 365; EVANS/OSBORNE 2002, 35; NGAOSYVATHN/NGAOSYVATHN 1989, 63).

The instability of the region was also due to the increased influx of Haw-bandits after the large rebellions against the Qing in the middle of the 19th century and the chaos they wreaked in northern Laos. Haw-attacks against Luang Prabang let the Siamese dispatch troops to establish order. These ended in failure and only fueled more anti-Siamese and anti-Haw sentiments leading to rebellions whose leaders more and more intermixed Haw-aggression and Siamese policies. One of the rebellions was for example the Kha uprising of 1875, directed against both Haw for their looting and Siam for the forced relocation policies in the Phuan areas (STUART-FOX 2009, 298; EVANS/OSBORNE 2002 35-36). Siam's influence however grew larger and the Phuan-area got back under Siamese control towards the end of the 19th century (STUART-FOX 2008, 387-388). Given the unrest and French claims to Vietnamese tributaries in Laos, a Committee of Princes drafted new border policies, dispatched a mapping tour under James McCarthy and claimed the entire watershed region of the Mekong – including Muang Phuan and Sipsong Chau Tai. The variability of the border-region grew even more as both Siam and Vietnam issued titles to local chiefs so that Siam relied more and more on coercion to convince local elites of submitting to

Bangkok. This might have worked under circumstances that are more orthodox but in a rebellion-prone environment infiltrated by bandit Haw-gangs, it only led to confrontation. This happened 1887 when Đèo Văn Tri, leader of Sipsong Chau Tai sacked Luang Prabang together with his Haw allies routing the Siamese officials and the French vice-consul Auguste Pavie. This prompted retaliation measures against the Haw and provoked the plea of King Oun Kham of Luang Prabang to become a French protectorate. The end-result was included a shaky alliance with Đèo Văn Tri and the French and a coerced Franco-Siamese border treaty, that ceded all lands east of the Mekong to the French (EVANS/OSBORNE 2002, 35-36). In this way, the weakening of the state due to rebellions and the agency of local power-holders and allied bandits led to very different results. Despite the seemingly increased agency, these events eventually propelled the weakness of the Southeast Asian states and opened avenues for the implementation of Western ideas of statehood and bordering.

With increased state-penetration, counterforces got stronger too and needed to find a new equilibrium at the border, which towards the end of the 19th century weakened the Qing state for incursions and a redefinition of bordering. The rebellions against the Qing state caused massive population displacements that had long lasting effects on cross-border trading networks and markets for borderland communities as well as brought forward disbanded rebel groups seeking refuge in the border areas. The size and scale of these effects – indirect or direct – shook up the stability of the border governance, and let new actors emerge with a different source for legitimizing their agency, that was not tied to the states anymore.

Small-scale rebellions and the fall-out of the larger ones so showed in both China and Southeast Asia a similar trajectory. They weakened the states as they disrupted trade, diminished the livelihood of local people, and bound resources of the state in the fight to quell them. Essentially, the combination of simultaneous large and small rebellions was the manifestation of the counter-trend of the 18th century, reversing the territorialization and administrative consolidation that found its apex in the Ortaï-reforms. The pendulum swung in the other direction, disrupting the trend of integration as border polities gravitated away from the grip of the state, due to disappointment, animosity or simply the chaos the rebellions and their fallout produced. This de-territorialization however did not always go hand in hand with increased agency. On the Chinese side, new warlords emerged, in Vietnam Sipsong Chau Tai managed to establish itself, the Lao states however saw themselves so weakened that they fell for the colonial advances of the French.

What this episode shows is the crucial role events at the border played in this era and their repercussions for the state as a whole. Laos was about to be swallowed by Siam had not the Haws in the border-area weakened the Siamese more and more so that the French could easily step in, saving a Lao space. Vietnam's territorial integrity was jeopardized not just by the French but also by the emergence of the borderland polity of Sipsong Chau Tai. The demise of the Qing-dynasty was sealed – among other factors – by the rebellions in the border-areas whose spiraling out of control more and more showed the internal weakness.

2.4.2.2 Endemic banditry in the border-region

A direct effect of the violence, rebellions and the retreat of the state from the border-area was banditry, which turned endemic and furthered the de-territorialization processes the rebellions set in motion.

Large-scale banditry was not new to that area. For centuries already, the border-area was a safe-haven for all kinds of criminals and refugees, who could build a livelihood around the hardly controlled area full of trading routes (ZINOMAN 2000, 75-76). Crossing the border back and forth was a proven strategy to escape authorities, while tuis often were sympathetic towards the rebels' cause. Authorities were often enough satisfied when bandits simply were out of their view, so that the banditry in the region was never eradicated but only pushed around between different jurisdictions (LAFHEY 1976, 70).

During the Tay Son rebellion for example, large numbers of people left their homes, roamed the mountains for opportunities, sometimes formed in groups to start rebellions and generally created instability and laid open the inability of the state to manage the crisis. Vagabondage was the antithesis to the desires of the center of an agrarian state with a settled population, whose reach was more and more limited in the border area (DUTTON 2006, 212-213). Rebellion leaders as well as states made use of these bandits for their cause by enrolling them in their armies and co-opting their elites when suppressing them proved to be too difficult. The Tay Son so oscillated between cooptation and suppression of banditry and piracy depending on their strategic needs and their wish for an orderly functioning state (DUTTON 2006, 214, 216-217; WHEELER 2015, 38).

In the Qing borderlands, economic hardship, migratory pressure and a discriminating administration incentivized banditry throughout the 19th century. People could move relatively freely on both sides of the border, administration was weak to non-existent and the Taiping-Rebellion left a power-vacuum, which allowed banditry to proliferate and to further push out state control. Most

of the gangs remained small, locally confined and in constant competition among each other with no clear overarching goal, yet there was always a danger of them coalescing into larger, trans-regional groups (LAFHEY 1975, 44). The problem was so persistent, that there were even different categories of bandits, depending whether they were local, roving, Han or non-Han. The state's response by seeing Han acting together with non-Han to become bandits as treason against the Qing continuously widened the gap between the center and local people, many of whom admired the bandits (ATWILL 2005, 53).

The crushing of the rebellions and the increased attention the Qing paid to smaller bandit gangs only let the influx of Chinese outlaws into the borderlands grow steadily, so that they could increase scale and intensity of their raids. In Vietnam, the incoming rebels and refugees were in fierce competition for survival among each other as well as with the indigenous population and gradually re-grouped in two large groups: the Black Flags and Yellow Flags. These groups bitterly fought each other for control over territory and trade, while the Nguyễn court only could watch from the sidelines (ZINOMAN 2000, 76; LAFHEY 1975, 39, 45). This was partly due to the relocation of the capital further away from the northern border, weakened state-structures after the rebellion in Tonkin of 1861 and the fact that China disintegrated more and more and hardly exercised control over its southern provinces. In addition, relations between Vietnamese officials and indigenous elites were strained, so that they hardly cooperated even in localizing Flag strongholds. The border was so a useful support for the Flag-gangs, as they worked like membranes which hindered officials from chasing the bandits, while the gangs could traverse them without any problems (LAFHEY 1976, 70-71; DAVIS 2009, 29). The Yellow Flags so could maraud without any resistance of the state as far south as Thai Nguyễn. Both sides so tried to coopt the Flag-gangs by allowing them to loot if they helped suppressing smaller bandit gangs and providing forces against the French. However, even the French after the annexation of Tonkin could not get the area under control and so had to enter an agreement with the gangs. For enforcing order at the border, the gangs gained tax-collecting powers (ZINOMAN 2000, 77-78; LAFHEY 1975, 45). Having the Vietnamese tolerate an organized power that essentially wrested large territories off the state was a major condition for the Flag-gangs to survive. This was only possible as there were larger internal issues than bandits, whom the state could co-opt, a game that the Black Flags played better than their Yellow counterparts. The Yellow Flags allied with the Miao people, supported their rebellion, were at war with both the Chinese and the Nguyễn court and sparked fear on both sides of the border that they either supported the French or planned to re-ignite the Pan-

thay Rebellion. When facing the Miao-rebellion, the Nguyễn turned to the Black Flags to suppress them. Having proven their usefulness, the Black Flags gained the tacit-support of the Nguyễn court to fight the Yellow flags. Finally, the Black Flags assembled other bandit gangs to fight the Chinese armies in 1870, when they wanted to re-patriate the bandits. The Black Flags – despite being outlaws – so found a place in the Nguyễn-hierarchy, even supporting the established order and fighting on behalf of the court against the French (LAFHEY 1976 72-73, 74, 78). The different gangs were thus not comparable in their animosity to state structures. The Black Flags managed to set up their own network and interdependencies between official institutions, bandits, indigenous people and local elites. By navigating this network, they survived until the Sino-French war, after which China was obligated to repatriate their rebels. The Yellow Flags were in constant opposition to the state, and were eradicated by their competing rebel groups (LAFHEY 1976, 67).

It was Black Flags who after the French seized Hanoi in 1882 attacked the French garrison and killed their commander. They merged their forces with the Vietnamese, trying in vain to push the French out of Tonkin – all the while, the Qing insisted that Vietnam continued to be a tributary state (STUART-FOX 2003, 120-121). This evident denial of the actual situation only showed how the principles of order, the line between the ideals of statehood and chaos, became increasingly blurred, when bandits had to help the state against the colonial onslaught. For the colonial powers however, the issue was less one about ideals and principles but a matter dealt with according to equipment, firepower and effectiveness of weaponry (HACK/RETTIG 2006b, 44).

In Burma, the role of banditry in the state was equally ambivalent. The suppression of the rebellions washed rebels and bandits into the Sino-Burmese border area, wreaking havoc. The British conquered the last part of the country in 1885, but it took another five years to eradicate most of the banditry. In their battles in the Shan states, the British relied on Panthay fugitives while fighting other Panthay rebels. They needed Panthay expertise to organize their supply-lines, which they did so well, that there were even suggestions to settle more Panthays from Yunnan in Northern Burma (YEGAR 1966, 81-82).

The impact of the fall-out of the rebellions in Qing-China – which were one of the last attempts to reverse the equilibrium of territorial control in favor of local powers – changed the equilibrium of control on the Southeast Asian side of the border to a similar degree: large territories were wrested off the states and a distinct set of networks, dependencies and loyalties developed around the various gangs outside the immediate reach of the courts. However, unlike the Chinese exam-

ple, the courts did not see the bandits automatically as traitors but tried to engage with them to further the strategic goals of the state. Achieving stability by blurring the principles of order – principles that especially the orthodox Confucianism of the Nguyễn-court should have promoted – indicates how the fraying and unraveling of the states at the margins destabilized the core-ideals of the courts regarding territorial integrity and cohesion.

The gradual destabilization of the margins also opened avenues for the European ideas of statehood, autonomy and territoriality to seep into Southeast Asia, offering a counter-model to the traditional ways of ensuring the cohesion of the state. The European influence pitted Southeast Asian and Westphalian ideas of statehood against each other, which amplified dissatisfaction with the states, and their administration that eventually ended in massive transformations of the character and functioning of the border.

2.4.3 European influence in state reform

Europeans entered Southeast Asia first by smaller settlements, which later tried to subdue the areas in which they were located. The pattern of settlement, subsequent armament and final territorial control was one repeated all over Southeast Asia (HACK/RETTIG 2006a, 2). With the colonists also came new concepts of statehood, societal functioning, geography, mapping and a sense of modernity, which supplanted traditional forms of rule and polity-management such as the galactic polity model. The Westphalian state entered the scene and with it a new worldview that shook up the hitherto existing principles of inter-state relations, replacing the unsteady reach of royal domination and coercion and personal ties between centers and tributaries with concepts of sovereignty and abstract control over bounded territories. In this understanding, the state was a permanent monolith, that in order to survive could not allow any fluidity at its margins. New institutional structures and administrative practices in politics and commerce needed to reflect this new understanding (DAY/REYNOLDS 2000, 10; KAUR 2006, 23-24; BEESON 2002, 550). Modernity also included the understanding of the state as congruent with a nation, which – with the advent of fixed boundaries and sovereign rule – produced a nationalist sentiments tied to the territory of the state. This territorial fixation allowed an extrapolation of the nation-state into the past, merging concepts of modernity with local historical events that could justify consolidation, expansion and centralization as state-ideologies (DAY/REYNOLDS 2000, 11, 14; LEE 2011, 70).

The clash of these concepts of modernity and the tension that a centralized consolidated ideology created in the formation of the nation was also an important factor in the perception and management of the border areas, both by colonists and advocates for independence.

With the opening of the Suez Canal in 1869 these ideas could be easier promoted with the use of force, so that slowly borders became increasingly well defined as the frame of competition between colonial powers, which introduced the idea of nation-states, an ideology that eventually should also accelerate the downfall of the colonial powers (SUTHERLAND 2003, 7).

Particularly at the fringes of the Southeast Asian state, pockets of foreign powers could settle first on their way inland. In Burma, it started with garrisons that sprung up in the new boundaries of the colony of British India on Burmese territory, that later transformed into the cores of permanent British presence. At the frontier to China – the last place that actually got under British control – the model employed was purely Indian with a Burma Frontier Force patched together from Indians, Gurkhas and locals, now in the service of British overlords (HACK 2006, 230; TAYLOR 2009, 71). After each of the three wars, the British marked their territory with garrisons until a civil administration could take over. Throughout the colonial period, they relied on troops from British India to police their borders while experiments to integrate local groups were only partly successful with the Shan people. The British Indian Army ensured internal security and external defense to maintain the cohesion of the territory (TAYLOR 2006, 185-186). Burmese attempts to modernize the state failed as the treaties imposed on the monarchy limited its authority in economic affairs, which already was under strain due to the Panthay Rebellion and the depression of the 1870s and so just accelerated the Konbaung disintegration (MYINT-U 2004, 10). Once the means of coercion were implemented, the old systems of education, bureaucracy and communication were woven into centralized, colonial systems, connecting people stronger than before and also instilling a new feeling of a nation and a European sense of modernity (HACK 2006, 238). Tightening the rule over the borders in British Burma also alienated local and core-populations from each other as the latter were excluded from the task to control the borders of the country they belonged to (HACK 2006, 239; WALTON 2008, 893-894).

In French Indochina, the situation was different, as the colonial power first conquered the core and lowlands, and only later gained a foothold in the periphery, which was defined by meticulous mapping exercises already in the 1870s. Despite sending several delegations to Burma for support against France's encroachment, Northern Vietnam – Tonkin – was turned into a protectorate in 1885, and in 1887, the Union of Indochina was born, encompassing Vietnam and Cambodia

with present-day Laos added in 1893. The focus of French power-projection were metropolitan and political centers, so they could not rely as much on indigenous minorities as the British did, but had to rely on the majority lowland population, the Kinh. With each step in the incorporation of Vietnam under French rule or protection, the French had to use more Kinh collaborators to police their territories and defend the borders. Local Kinh-forces were vital for French power projection, and while first set up on an ad-hoc basis, with different troops each with their own funding and under different regulation pursuing an identical purpose, this system became more integrated and streamlined under two headings: colonial infantrymen and civil guards (HACK/RETTIG 2006b, 54-55; ECKERT 2006, 119, 121; SCHWARTZBERG 1994, 125). The civil guards were responsible for maintaining order in newly conquered regions and to promote new administrative principles. They so brought not only the French colonial mission into the border but also penetrated it with their Kinh-ethnicity. To staff the ranks, the French used a conscription model that required village chiefs to provide forces for the military service. In Tonkin, there were 4150 of these guards deployed in 1886 and 8800 in 1891, given the complicated task to eradicate banditry and quell revolts in the northern border-provinces. The provinces were grouped into *Territoires Militaires* in 1891, essentially fiefs in which the military had wide-ranging competence and authority, including conscripting local people, influence local politics and managing partisan forces. Given the strong resistance, the task to pacify Tonkin was only concluded in 1897. This system of Kinh civilian and military forces, local police and Kinh-co guards – Vietnamese guards assisting local Mandarins – firmly tied the country together in territorial terms, spreading not only French ideas of statehood, but also Kinh ideas of culture, using both as markers for bordering exercises (HACK/RETTIG 2006b, 56-57).

A particular watershed moment was the Sino-French war of 1884-5, when Chinese forces entered Lang Son and was forced to sign the Treaty of Tianjin. This treaty ended Vietnam's role as tributary to China, as it recognized France as overlord of the territory, responsible for all foreign relations of Vietnam (STUART-FOX 2003, 121). Seeing how the British and French gradually occupied the northern borders of their colonies, swallowing tributaries of China and becoming aware of the European resolve to open China for trade, China saw the need for a clearly demarcated border over territories where its power was more hearsay than factual. The Sino-French war ended with an agreement over location and governance of the border, for Burma and Laos, such agreements came into force roughly ten years later after shared border-commissions submitted

their results on the definition of the border (STUART-FOX 2003 121-122; CLAD 2011, 4; WANG 2005b, 260-261).

Once the border was settled, it was the hour of the missionaries to fulfill their role to scale up French colonization efforts across the less populated border areas of Vietnam and Laos. With the accomplishment of the pacification of Tonkin and the takeover of Laos, a vicariate sprung up in the border-area to administer a vast region including the entire western parts of Tonkin (MICHAUD 2004, 289, 300). Where it was easy to reach people, missionaries proselytized growing numbers of the indigenous population to Catholicism and incorporated them in the ecclesiastic administration that was centered in Hanoi and so could tie them to the colonial administrative core (MICHAUD 2004 292). It was these missionaries who urged the colonial administration to increase control over border areas and to win over hearts and minds of the borderland population to protect the colony from China (MICHAUD 2004, 298).

A mix of Catholic and military agents of France tried to impose a worldly and celestial order in the borderlands since the official administration along the Chinese border was in the hands of the army which oversaw Military Territories in lieu of regular provinces (MICHAUD 2004, 301). Over time, the calls for greater control over the border areas were realized to the detriment of the missionary presence there. While their knowledge of the region was very useful, the missionaries had outlived their political purpose as the border between China and Vietnam was settled and the strategic alliance with indigenous border people was no longer needed. The colonial administration thus prioritized internal control and the fight against national radicalism over evangelization. The freedom of remoteness the vicariate and the military territories enjoyed gave way to a stricter and denser civilian administration. Missionary activities, while still present, faded to a mere continuation of the status quo of spiritual life and eventually lost its strategic importance to the colonial project (MICHAUD 2004, 305-306).

The integration of Laos into the French colonial empire followed along different parameters than Vietnam and was – due the fact that Laos was an integrated tributary state of Siam – less of a local matter but mediated via the indirect channels of rule of the Siamese suzerain. The greater the Siamese acculturation pressure made itself felt, the stronger the idea of a Lao identity distinct of the Siamese became. However, Siam was the suzerain and tied Laos ever closer to its center in Bangkok. The request for French protection against the Haw bandits of 1888 was the starting point of a new polity, carved out under a Franco-Siamese agreement. Laos not only entered the Westphalian modernity with this event – it was created as polity on the territory that was in the

Siamese political understanding more of a geographic indication than a separate political entity. This happened not on Laos' own accord and neither by a hostile conquest but as a playball in the competition between two different understandings of spatial conceptualization of statehood and polity organization. The French so did not invade Laos with its army but were asked for protection in 1888 by Luang Prabang and sent gunboats to Bangkok to force the concession of the rest of the lands that should become Laos in 1893. This not only cemented French claims but also stabilized the expansionist interests of the British and French empires, inducing a degree of stability in the shifting borders of the colonial states by accepting that Siam should remain a buffer (IVARSSON 2008, 1, 25, 40, 48; EVANS/OSBORNE 2002, 40; TARLING 2006, 40; REID 2009, 42-43).

Laos so was the result of an exercise to eradicate overlapping, loosely connected, semi-autonomous border areas for the benefit of the Westphalian model of an absolute but bounded authority of the state (IVARSSON 2008, 35). The spiritual dimension of the Siamese state integrity based on rituals, periodic renewal of oaths of allegiance, tributary submission and the distribution of royal symbols and imagery as indicators of scope, range and territoriality of the state, diminished over time the more the French alternatives for administrative penetration and exclusive spatial sovereignty increased their presence. Expeditions, garrisons and commercial development supported this. In line with the understanding of the nation-state and a shared history within a bounded territory, the French also looked for a precedence of Vietnamese tributary overlordship of the area to support their territorial claims within the local historical context that the French were altering, inventing and adapting to their own understanding of statehood and history (IVARSSON 2008, 36, 37-38). Laos as polity was so a creation of the colonial state based on the French understanding of cultural identity and history, which traced a continuous unified Lao polity back to the 14th century to the foundation of Lan Xang and within which the period of Siamese suzerainty seemed a short aberration of the historical norm that stipulates – a somehow strained – synonymy of the Lan Xang Kingdom with Laos. The propagation of a distinct Lao identity turned the Lao space from a cartographic chimera into a real coherent idea of a province as it was also a catalyst for bordering efforts of Lao territory, both defined in historical, ethnical and cultural terms, in line with the modernist French understanding of statehood (IVARSSON 2008, 40, 49, 68; PHOLSANE 2004, 242; EVANS/OSBORNE 2002 70).

From the Chinese perspective, these events in Vietnam and Laos changed an entire world order: for the first time, Vietnam faced a greater menace than the threat of Chinese dominance, for the

first time China faced a real challenge to its centrality, both faced a new understanding of modernity and both experienced a crisis of statehood, territoriality and organization, leading the traditional systems of power and control to collapse (WOMACK 2006, 142). The fairly swift colonial conquest of Viet Nam starting in 1858 with the occupation of Danang and the consolidation of French Indochina of 1897 marks a contrast to the long and dragged out weakening of the Qing-empire including two opium wars, the need for Western help to subdue the Taiping rebellion, the defeat in the Sino-Japanese war in 1895 and the Boxer Rebellion of 1900, after which a much delayed modernization effort began (WOMACK 2006, 145). The Western superiority in external military power projection defeated the inward-focused dynasties who were more concerned with keeping their territories together than preparing for an attack from outside. The traditional forms of rule and power-projection lost their legitimacy when mobilization efforts failed to counter pressure from the European powers, while the courts saw their military priorities elsewhere – such as the Nguyễn who rather tried defeating peasant rebellions than dealing with the French. As missions civilisatrices, the colonial conquests offered an alternative of structure and power projection, which proved its efficacy in territorial control by opening access to resources and the Chinese market (WOMACK 2006, 145-147; FRENCH 2017, 148). Though many traditional state representatives opposed these missions, not everyone rejected the colonial power grab. Faced with the European idea of modernity, some Vietnamese intellectuals saw a blessing in French colonization to modernize the country through collaboration and concession. In addition, the entire colonial project could not have worked out without Vietnamese collaboration to staff institutions such as the police, military and administration (WOMACK 2006, 147-148).

In administrative terms, the colonization until the end of the 19th century was not that territorialized as the capital-to-capital relations embodied in border-commissions and the Sino-French war may suggest. Strongholds were confined to strategic points, yet the administrative capacity for an areal coverage of the will of the state still had to be established. Taxation was a particularly sore point, as capacities to assess, collect and account the state's income still had to develop to cover the entire territory. The colonial powers had to recruit, train and integrate local officials and set up a communication infrastructure that connected also remote places. Until the end of the 19th century, the precariousness of the colonial states in terms of administrative penetration outside strongholds and centers – in contrast to its ability to project authority and coercion by force – was similar to the indigenous states they replaced (BROWN 1993, 81-82). Laos was a particularly difficult place for state-penetration due to its terrain and low population densities. The French

needed to transfer Vietnamese officials to further the colonial state across the country, whose margins often remained out of the state's reach (HALPERN/TINSMAN 1966, 499-500).

It was only around the turn of the century when the necessary administrative capacity became firmly established and lines of communication really began to span to the remote places of the colonial states to allow a centralized management of the states' affairs, which were primarily driven by economic and commercial interests. The stability of the administrative design allowed expansion of activities, while the intensification of production generated the revenue to further increase the states' grip on their territories (BROWN 1993, 82).

To fund the political penetration with the Westphalian models, the colonial powers set up very distinct economic models to extract revenue for their budgets and tie the population to the territory – while integrating the productivity and resources of these territories into the global economy (KAUR 2006, 23). With the hardening of the border and the consolidation of French rule in Vietnam rule, also trade networks had to adapt to the new boundaries. Physically, the trend towards colonial centralization and territorialization was supported by new infrastructure to transport commodities and control the area: roads, railway lines led up to the border with crossings at Lao Cai and Dong Da or ending in recreational places such as Sa Pa (CARTER 2008, 40; STUART-FOX 2003, 122). With continued expansion of the coercive and administrative system of the French and the consolidation and domination of internal networks regarding taxes, defense and law, the design became increasingly centered around France, the uncontested imperialist power in Vietnam, Laos and Cambodia (HACK/RETTIG 2006a, 4-5). This was supported by an economic model that extracted resources and raw materials for the benefit of France, leaving relatively little surplus or investment opportunities to the Vietnamese economy as a whole. It was based on land grants, for which the French leased land, bundled it in concessions that were allocated to French citizens or assimilated Vietnamese as incentive to settle. The French could so increase the extraction of commodities, in particular rice, rubber, coffee and timber, and tie economic activities and capital to the colonial centers, while fragmenting the Vietnamese power relations (CARTER 2008, 38-40; BOOTH 2007, 36-38; WOMACK 2006, 160).

In Laos, the French tried to turn the idea of a continuous Lao polity into a practicable administrative model that reflected both the colonial Westphalian understanding of territorial statehood and the traditions of the invented Lao state. Systematically, the French turned its Lao area into a unified territorial entity. First by establishing local commissioners to liaise with local leaders, the merging of these commissionerships into two Upper and Lower Laos under two Commandant

Supérieurs, before in 1899 the area became a single administrative unit under a Résident-Supérieur. The administrative and political structure was distinctly French and supposed to merge this space into the Indochinese Union without an indigenous underpinning to unify the area. Symbolically, the French rebuilt Vientiane as the center of the Lao space, yet only the royal family of Luang Phrabang was recognized as a distinctly Lao administrative entity. The other royal houses of Xieng Khouang and Champasak had to cede as their territories were turned into direct colonies or military territories (IVARSSON 2008, 94-95; LEE 2011, 69-70, 71). There are two reasons why it was just this small piece territory – a rump state in comparison to the much larger Lan Xang – that was created as Laos. The French only saw Laos as a geopolitical extension of Vietnam, while the cultural distinction served as a tool to untie the territory from Siam. The Mekong served as the natural border after 1893 while only minor extensions in 1904 and 1907 were wrested from Siam (STUART-FOX 1995, 111, 120-121; EVANS/OSBORNE 2002, 41). In the beginning of the 20th century, the French speeded up their penetration of the Lao state by employing existing indigenous networks for education for their own purpose. The training college for monks of 1909 in Vientiane and later Luang Prabang should centralize the training of teachers of pagoda schools in the spirit of the French modernity. Its establishment tied in with the tradition of Vientiane as a religious center – a role lost after the Siamese destruction of 1828. Monks of these schools should learn and propagate the teachings of a tradition that was purged of all Siamese influences to further instill and resurrect a Lao identity in this Lao space. These monks then should provide secular knowledge to the wider population in addition to government schools (IVARSSON 2008, 120,124).

Apart from creating a space that was supposed to be the logical continuation of Lan Xang, the symbolic resurrection of Vientiane, the reliance of myths and the attempts to disrupt cultural ties for the benefit of a colonial interpretation of Lao statehood, a final factor in the territorialization was the standardization of the Lao script. The work was done by French linguists in commissions that sprang up in the beginning of the 20th century. Their findings spread through schoolbooks throughout the country, further elevating the role of France and French ideas of modernity in the consolidation of a Lao state (IVARSSON 2008, 131; PROSCHAN 2001, 1002-1003, 1005).

From the beginning, the French did not attribute a major importance to Laos, also due to the economic terrain. The *mise en valeur*, the attempt to create an economic surplus from colonial value chains, proved difficult given the rugged territory, sparse population and difficult access to resources. Economic extraction never covered the costs of administration – a major concern for

France, who after all, saw Laos as a support to the much more profitable economy in Vietnam. Laos in itself did not seem to matter beyond the use of the territory for strategic goals – vis-à-vis Siam or China (STUART-FOX 1995 111-112). Thus, despite creating a Lao state, French policies to foster a distinct Lao identity and to build an infrastructure that tied the space together were just a corollary of French ambitions elsewhere. Consolidation did not stem from a genuine French interest in the territory, but was rather a side effect of a grander colonial objective.

The pattern of consolidation and territorialization in Burma was also supported by intensifying the exploitation of commodities. Unlike the French, this economic expansion of the colonial state was not so much a state-driven settlement project of British citizens as it was a response of the local population to the removal of internal barriers to migration and access to markets (BOOTH 2007, 46; CROIZIER/CROZIER 1962, 5). However, the British still held strong vested economic interests, especially around teak wood, that mainly grew in the Shan areas. Starting with negotiating timber leases even before the third Anglo-Burmese War, the British began with large deforestation campaigns at the border while clearing lower Burma for permanent agriculture. Tying resources and the people who extracted them to the British business hubs in the south, they could firmly integrate the area into the British commercial network (BRYANT 2007, 148-149). The privatization of natural resources after 1900 gave this trend another boost, so that large British companies could take over the lucrative gem, metals and teak trade, while reducing the agency of regional actors and so shaping the area in line with British political interests. Most of the income went to the United Kingdom, the colonial state funded itself with a 30% royalty on the profits, which was not only used to sustain the Burmese colonial administration but to bolster the overall budget of British India, while infrastructure was put in service of the needs of the extractive industry (BRYANT 2007, 146-147).

While the main purpose was to extract capital to deploy control over the colonies, the focus on intensifying the extraction of cash crops increased population densities, as these activities were more labor intensive (KONINCK/ DERY 1997 24). Agricultural expansion with the set-up of a dense network of taxation officials so helped with the consolidation of the state, as the concentration of population facilitated control and the newly emerged landed peasantry developed a vested interest in the functioning of the state that guaranteed its social status. Like that, the state could create economic incentives or coerce the opening of local markets to sedentarize minorities, integrate them into the national economy and consolidate their activities in easy to control plantations.

With this interplay of economic coercion and incentivization, the state could further its penetration into the borderlands (KONINCK/DERY 1997, 10, 24-25).

In the beginning of the 20th century, the colonial state continuously deepened to support its claim to rule with more and more infrastructure. In the early 1900s, infrastructure expenditure in Burma accounted for 24%, in Indochina 20% of government spending. With better communication infrastructure, the states could better penetrate their territories for economic exploitation and administrative control, a pattern that only intensified until the onset of the Great Depression (BOOTH 2007, 70-71, 78-79). To fund these projects, the taxation of commodities – a great burden for farmers and miners – shifted to higher tax levels for salaried employees, corporations and rent-seeking landowners, import duties on luxury goods and fees for electricity and the use of the communication networks. British and French colonial administrators also increased the use of government monopolies up to the 1920s to bolster their budget (BOOTH 2007, 81-82).

A side effect of these policies was an uneven demographic upsurge between 1870 and 1910, which prompted large-scale labor migration schemes to even out regional imbalances in workforce availability. These population transfers increased the density of personal ties between different regions and so increased the spatial understanding among the people of their colonial states (KAUR 2006, 23-24; HACK/RETTIG 2006b, 46). Chinese labor migrants made up a large part of the workforce that extracted resources for the Southeast Asian colonial states. These labourers fled from poverty, exploitation and rebellions at home and saw opportunities in the industrialization of the colonies and the opening up of the hinterlands, becoming helpers of the powers that shattered the Qing-understanding of the centrality of their state. Within the colonial states, migration from populated towns to rural areas, industrial zones and state-farms helped territorializing the state-administration in more remote places and propagating the ideological underpinnings of the new states (KAUR 2006, 25; MCKEOWN 2004, 174, 182; CHOW 2001, 50).

These events and the colonial re-design of the Southeast Asian states, together with the effect of the promotion of a Westphalian modernity and territorialization had two important impact on the function, form and role of the Chinese-Southeast Asian border. The decrease of autonomy of the borderlands and their integration into the colonial states, as well as the new role of the state as actor of its own within a territory over which it could wield absolute authority meant that – first – the borderlands lost their role as intermediaries and buffers of the regional tributary order, and – second – the borderlands became less of a grey area but agents of a Westphalian state and promoters of the hardness of its boundaries.

2.4.3.1 Upending the regional balance of tributary systems

The political culmination of the onslaught on the Sino-centric regional order in the Chinese southwest was the Qing renunciation of suzerainty claims in 1885, an event, that erased the century-long order in the Sino-Southeast Asian relations based on the tributary model, and enforced the demarcation of this new, Westphalian border at which the Mandate of Heaven ended where the applicability of colonial laws started. The ensuing internal crisis of morale eventually led the domestic order and sense of civilizational superiority implode, finally ending in the collapse of the Qing dynasty in 1911 (WOMACK 2006, 25).

The process of establishing a system of interstate-relations that reduced the role of tributary relations to cover unclear territorial delimitations in favor of managed and professional norms of interactions between clear-cut places did not have uniform effects along the border. Chiefs were responsible of their tributary relations that were embedded in a network of personal relations between other rulers or in the case of China and Vietnam with agents of the bureaucracy. With the advent of the colonial state, these relations were replaced with a direct link between the state and the local households, superseding the personal relationship embodied in titles and insignia that chiefs received from lowland-rulers. Yet, as the states were not monoliths, this integration on a household-basis had two different effects: on the one hand, a steady and firm integration of already tax-paying farming communities into the state, on the other hand, a separation of indigenous chieftain communities from the state, who – when faced with a decrease in responsibilities and administrative marginalization – moved further away from state-agents. As a parallel structure, these communities funded themselves through opium cultivation, which was a connecting point with the state and a way to play a relevant role in the economic and political life of the state (JONSSON 2001, 614-615, 627).

In Laos, as the French wrested the muangs east of the Mekong off Siam. This project was driven by strategic concerns to strengthen defensibility of the Vietnamese colony by enlarging the territorial reach of the colonial state as well as impeding British advances towards Siam and using Laos as a communication hub towards China (STUART-FOX 1995, 114-115). There was also a geostrategic imperative as the Siamese with their “Forward Movement” of 1883 and their attempts to intrude into the Sipsong Chau Tai area tried to take advantage of Vietnam that was weakened by both Black Flag bandits and a new colonial administration in the making. Ironically, the French relied on old imperial records to establish Vietnamese suzerainty over parts of Laos to

justify their intervention in the area to undo Siamese suzerainty claims and to territorialize their colonial grip (STUART-FOX 1995, 116). To achieve that in practical terms, their idea was to modernize the territorial control by reorganizing its social structure and power relations along the parameters of the colonial state in Laos. It privileged a national majority – Lao – that was supposed to integrate into the administrative and commercial hierarchies set up by the French and so supersede the muang-structure of power-projection through personal relationships and tributary dependencies between lowland and upland groups. The network of muangs with multiple allegiances, complicated ritual-based hierarchies in personal relations and obligations to provide taxes and corvée, was replaced by a system based on territorial control. Three missions defined the reach of control, mapping the territory and identifying commercial projects worth exploiting. The French were the agents of this new territoriality which did not need to rest on tributary loyalties in order to project power but relied on a sense of authority within a bounded territory, within which it tried to instill a form of Lao nationalism. This nationalism allowed the construction of a perceived Lao majority whose members were supposed to use French tools of territorialization, binding the territory together and increasing their importance for the state in its modernization process to shed off tributary networks as a means of territorial control (SAFMAN 2007, 39-40; STUART-FOX 1995, 117-118). The new set-up was therefore direct French administration of the muangs of Laos, while the king of Luang Prabang had his own jurisdiction as French protectorate (STUART-FOX 1995, 119). To consolidate their territorial rule, the French incorporated so the traditional administrative patron-client system to their own needs. Lao officials or aristocracy were coopted to administer the country by adhering to traditional practices of this system regarding taxation and corvée in the name of the French colonial power. Symbolically, the French spatially separated traditional authority – as embodied by the king – and administrative power by moving the colonial center to Vientiane. Like that, they undid the importance and sacred character of rituals to legitimize royal authority and provided an attractive counter-model to the younger generation of the dynasties, who began to see the advantages in the economic benefits and political privileges the French colonial state provided. In this way, the French dissolved the mythical and religious orthodoxy as source of political authority, elevated themselves above the king, who was only allowed to rule because he was granted that right not by virtue but by French political calculations. With a king without orthodox, intrinsic legitimacy, also the Sangha lost its authority as second pillar of the traditional structure. The Sangha could not administer the education network anymore in the centers, faced increased pushes for the secularization of power structures

and an imported laicism that shook up core-ideas of power, hierarchy and societal functioning in a combined political and religious order (STUART-FOX 1983 434-436). While these ideas took roots more or less exclusively in the centers, the French expanded this system of hijacking and transforming traditional administrative practices when it tried to impose its reach beyond the areas it actually controlled through coopting local elites and installing Lao tax officials in areas outside of Lao settlements (EVANS/OSBORNE 2002, 51).

The Mien are an illustrating case. Settling in northern Laos in the territory of the king of Nan who – as tradition commands – bestowed titles, they so got allied to a nobility who was already an agent of the state and who could not demand service and tribute anymore. Still, the Mien submitted to him – and thus to the state - so that their opium production was for the benefit of the Royal Opium Monopoly. While they retreated further to the mountains, and tried to maintain their role, they became part of the state through the allegiance to the king of Nan and their economic activities that Lao officials assessed and taxed (JONSSON 2001, 633). The Mien could still prosper and over time became semi-feudal princes, with direct connections to the French authorities, for whom they settled disputes among upland societies that were tributaries to the Mien. They fulfilled a dual role: helping the colonial state to ensure their own survival – such as when the Mien defeated the Akha on behalf of their colonial overlords – but also trying to ensure a degree of well-being to the other highland societies for whom they spoke (JONSSON 2001 627-628). The Mien so navigated the dichotomy between old tributary relationships and loyalties on the one hand and the exigencies of modernization of statehood that the French brought along on the other. Among the Lao uplanders, the only group who had the weight to counter the state-building efforts and the elevation of the Lao-people to main agents of the new order were the Hmong, whose massive opium production was an important source of income for the colony. Their armed resistance against integration into the new state-norms and the threat they posed to the territorial integrity forced the French to directly negotiate with them, cutting out the layer of Lao officials and granting them *de facto* autonomy. Neither had they to pay taxes nor were Lao officials allowed to check their activities (SAFMAN 2007, 41).

By 1899, Laos was a fully-fledged colony under a *Résident Supérieur*, who took over the administration and strategic development of the colony with the king of Luang Prabang in charge of daily business through the traditional internal structure (EVANS/OSBORNE 2002, 46). The symbolism of the monarchy, including a new palace in Luang Prabang, however was just a means to an end to consolidate French rule and territorialize the reach of the colonial state while not cre-

ating too much opposition. In the daily life, there were not many disruptions, yet in the larger picture, the country was tied into a new system within which the king's extractive rights were gradually restricted and the territory delineated (EVANS/OSBORNE 2002, 46-47). This flexibility of the colonial state to employ symbolism and hijack traditional structures and loyalties in its efforts to set up a new state order and management system of territorial control helped maintaining the integrity of the new form of boundary.

Economically, the French pursued a policy to "unblock Laos" – as they called it – which essentially meant to systematically untangle its tributary ties and restore a Lao demography that would allow for industrial scale exploitation (STUART-FOX 1995, 128). This unblocking happened on two fronts. First, the French had to realize their idea of a colonial space – similarly as in Vietnam – with establishing a communication infrastructure, which was put in service to better manage the expansion of the agents of the state while also territorializing its reach through integrated institutions that bind the space together. These lines of communications – mainly roads and telegraphs, a railway never materialized – were also a form of bordering as they de-linked regional centers from their transnational ties, focused their administrative existence on Vientiane, and channeled their economic activities towards the Vietnamese coast (IVARSSON 2008, 95-96, 97; STUART-FOX 1995, 123, 128). The large-scale infrastructure projects and the road-network further solidified the grip of the French and pulled Laos out of its old tributary ties and dependencies (STUART-FOX 1995, 124-125).

Second, the economization of the space through the disruption of the subsistence model through taxes and market integration should help increasing the territorialization of the colonial state (STUART-FOX 1995, 126). The French believed that Laos' natural resources would make the colony a worthwhile part of their empire, yet the available labor force and infrastructure were not conducive for this endeavor. To turn the territory self-sufficient and make it serve as a buffer for Vietnam, the French tried to incentivize Vietnamese migration to Laos. These Vietnamese shall colonize Laos along French ideas of statehood and so untie the economic setting of the state based on patron-client relations even further. For the French a Vietnamese presence could have helped to divide and rule the country, integrating and linking the territory closer to the colony. However, these plans to prop up the population with Vietnamese subjects who already understood the French notion of modernity and so alter the entire economic set-up of the state as hinterland of Vietnam did not materialize, as not many Vietnamese were ready to move to Laos. Instead of a wide border-area, the French constructed a new state. To still attain their objective of

Lao self-reliance, taxes were increased over time so that discontent grew against the French (STUART –FOX 1995 121-122, 123, 131-133). The idea that once Laos was untangled from its previous ties and dependencies, the French could exploit the resources of Laos for the profit of the empire and the colonial administration however never fulfilled. French investments were concentrated in coffee plantations and some mines, the profits these made were not re-invested, the industrial labor-force remained Vietnamese and local development and growth depended more on Vietnamese presence than capacity building for the Lao population (STUART-FOX 1995 134-135, 136).

It shouldn't come as a surprise that due to this complex multi-layered web of administrative and economic stakeholders – French, Lao, Vietnamese and indigenous people – as well as an unfinished territorialization given that the king of Luang Prabang wielded authority over his own protectorate, Laos did not become a fully-fledged entity of its own – colonial or otherwise. Even when the French Conseil de Legislation turned it into a united entity by decree in 1930, the king could negotiate continued autonomy until 1941, when Xieng Khouang and Vientiane were integrated into Luang Prabang under Japanese supervision (STUART-FOX 1995, 137). Since the fall of Lan Xang, there has not been a unitary or unified Lao state. The French occupied a rump-state, saw in it a hinterland for Vietnam and pandered to myths, the logic of a continuation of Lan Xang and the recourse to a distinct Lao culture to fend off advances of Thailand. While from the outside, these measures created an independent entity with its own fixed borders and territories, and an administration and means to convey authority, yet these were just the embodiment of a state-level project, whose reality did not penetrate to the ground. The previous system of personalized rule and tributary relations among muang was largely abolished, yet internally it remained a polity that was rather cobbled together – reflected in the internal frictions and fault lines, none the least in the multiple different fashions of administrative practices, internal structuring and sometimes contradictory attempts to make this colonial project worthwhile.

After the third Anglo-Burmese War, the British ended the previous tributary relations by dethroning the king and with him the entire nobility of Burma. Without their abolition, the British needed a new intermediary class to establish control, which was not uniform over the entire territory. In the Irrawaddy valley, they imposed direct control down to the village level. In the Shan states, the British had a multi-pronged approach, both directly engaging with the sawbwas as well as backing their efforts by initiating international negotiations with China. The Shan states first enjoyed nominal autonomy in exchange for loyalty to the British occupants. Yet, they were included into

two administrative divisions – the Northern and Southern Shan States, while the trans-Salween states in the east were left more autonomy given their strategic location bordering China, Siam and the French possessions in Laos. The rationale was that the Shan states should submit to the British in the same way as they submitted to the Burmese king – continuing a tributary tradition, just with a new and exclusive suzerain that promised to not interfere in internal affairs as long as they stayed loyal to their colonial overlords. However, dissatisfied with measures such as the thathamada-tax and increased centralization efforts, the Shan sawbwas backed prince Limbin as new king, instigating the Limbin-rebellion against British overlordship of 1887. The British dispatched an expedition to convince the sawbwas of their good intention, yet the sawbwa of Lawksawk attacked this expedition and refused to receive British officials, the Mongpaw and Mongnai states were in revolt hosting Prince Limbin and Kengtung state offered safe haven to the insurgents. Only the gradual submission of the sawbwas, the replacement of anti-British with pro-British local rulers and the extradition of prince Limbin eased the tensions and allowed the British to coopt the rulers and their principalities (MAW 2015, 6, 9; MYINT-U 2004, 4, 206; TAYLOR 2009, 92-94).

In the far north, the British faced even more resistance from remnants of the royal family who gained a followership and created confusion over their allegiance. The British penetration was met with violence, which was crushed in 1886, yet still the areas of Hsenwi, Manse and Mainglon remained in uproar and even civil war as multiple interests – British territorial claims, intra-Shan rivalries and claims of the Burmese royalty – tried to establish a stronghold there. A key figure was prince Saw Yan Naing, a descendant of king Mindon, who like Limbin aspired to the Burmese throne. It was the pro-British sawbwa of Thibaw, who drove the anti-British forces out of the Burmese Shan states and helped the Superintendent of the Northern Shan states to establish order (MAW 2015, 10).

In the trans-Salween Shan states to the east – Kengtung, Wa, Kenghung and Monglem as well as several smaller ones with allegiance to Siam – the British dispatched an expedition in 1887 with the intention to restore their authority over these areas. To win them over, they offered again autonomy and a fixed tribute payment, which eventually was accepted (MAW 2015, 11). To end the multiple tributary relations in the Trans-Salween states that still remained in the end of the 1880s despite several efforts to convince them of non-interference of British rule, the British initiated a campaign to annex Kengtung state in 1889, leading to the submission under British rule of the last remaining sawbwa as a subordinate ally. The Kengtung sawbwa had full ownership

over his territory, yet was not allowed to engage with other nations to ensure the integrity of the Burmese border. The sawbwa was tied to the British by leaving a representative with the Superintendent, while at the sawbwa-court a Political Officer was installed (MAW 2015, 13).

These submissions – especially of the large and powerful Kengtung state – opened the area for a stricter British control, also in the trans-Salween states whose rulers in some cases were related to the Kengtung sawbwa (AUNG 2015, 6). In the end, it was a patchwork of sawbwas under direct control and taxation and certain Trans-Salween sawbwas such as the one of Kengtung, who was more seen as an ally, exempt from taxes but obligated to pay gifts. Intra-Shan rivalries continued though, often ending in violent clashes, which the British used for their divide-and-rule agenda, replacing unruly sawbwas with loyal ones. Those in favor of British overlordship and who accepted rules and responsibilities imposed by the British, received titles and honors, tying them to the colonial center. Eventually, the sawbwas had to bow to the Shan State Act of 1888, which limited their power regarding taxation, resource extraction and foreign policy, centralizing and regularizing these core-powers of a state with the British Superintendent and so ending any tributary ties or allegiances other than those to Rangoon. As the British had established their suzerainty over the northern and southern Shan states, most of the remaining independent sawbwas accepted colonial overlordship in 1890 (AUNG 2015, 7; MAW 2015, 12. 13-14; MYINT-U 2004, 216-217).

The British could so territorialize their claims by integrating the sawbwas in their colonial design. They accompanied and safeguarded these efforts by maintaining the logic of the tributary relations with China, signing a convention in 1886 that stipulates continued tributary missions in exchange for Chinese acknowledgement of British rule over Burma. Subsequent conventions and the facts established on the ground by transferring allegiance-management and ties from the autonomous sawbwas to a centralized British colonial bureaucracy however rendered the tributary system obsolete and propelled Burma into the Westphalian order of international relations. These included the Delimitation Commission of 1894, which should define the Mekong River as a boundary between the French and British Empire, and the Frontier Trade Convention, which bound both the British and Qing Empire to rules instead of tributary rituals. The work of these Commissions cemented the nominal allegiance of border-tributaries in a binary pattern to either Burma or China, eliminating grey areas of overlapping control and multiple allegiance and so also reducing the agency of the local actors that were at least nominally the rulers of their territories. By tying these statelets into the respective empires, and managing their external relations central-

ly between capitals, the tributary balance in border-management was superseded by a professional and impersonal administration between major states (WHYTE 2013, 191-192; SCOTT 2009, 62; AUNG 2015, 8).

The border-area was so taken out of tributary autonomy and embedded in the logic of state building. The rules agreed upon between China and the British included that roads should be open for travelers, commerce and administration, both British and Chinese agreed to not cede Kenghung state to any other nation – especially not to the encroaching French – while both refrained from setting up military camps within ten miles of the border, which turned into a boundary. Trade was supposed to continue uninhibited at two border-crossings except for items such as weaponry, opium, liquor as well as salt from China and rice and grain from Burma. To mark the administrative limits, the British issued passports and required the Chinese to do the same – a method of bordering which should become a global standard after the First World War (WHYTE 2013 192-193; MORRIS-SUZUKI 2011, 14). Like this, the entire loose tributary system at its interface of a galactic polity system turned into a controlled space with strict, rules-based management techniques that delimited the hitherto rather independent space.

With the increased administrative consolidation of their colony into directly controlled parts in the core of Burma and managed autonomy under British sanctioned hereditary sawbwas in the ever more integrated border statelets, as well as vested economic interests in commodities from the northern border like teak, gems and metals, the British gradually defined the territory of Burma also in economic terms. Like this, Burma appeared as a spatially confined and politically delimited entity, whose new borders marked the reach of the British commercial interests, replacing the previous zones of influence – disrupting trading and extraction patterns and overturning pre-existing political relations that managed the border (BRYANT 2007, 148-150). This was accompanied by a changed role of the borderland population whose bordering-activities were now in the service of British interests: they used Kachin people for surveilling the border, provided arms and money to the Shan states, and deployed a shrewd divide and rule tactic to elevate or demote the importance of chiefs and their statelets to upset power relations further (NUGENT 1982, 515). With coercive and extractive systems in place to control the forests and the economic activities of their inhabitants – political control remained nominally in the hands of the sawbwas – a systematic re-orientation of the commercial and political foci of the Shan-states towards Rangoon took place, which drove China out of the picture. Consolidation of extraction of resources so went hand in hand with political activities of territorialization such as mapping, improved

transportation and communication infrastructure, the eradication of grey-zones in the borderlands and the undoing of tributary relations in favor of a centralized British command over the saw-bwas (BRYANT 2007, 143, 145-146; MYINT-U 2004, 113).

In Vietnam, the French push towards Tonkin was based on strategic considerations as Siam seemed too difficult to conquer (STUART-FOX 1995, 114). In the course of this conquest, a similar territorialization took place as in Myanmar, which made the tributary ties redundant. Using resource extraction and land reforms as a way to control people, the French uprooted transregional ties, re-focused them to the colonial center in Hanoi, opened avenues of state-penetration to subdue rebellions and to enforce the acceptance of a new state-concept that could not allow for grey areas (KLEINEN 2011, 466). In the economy, this development to greater coercive consolidation of the margins was accompanied by a concentration of capital for the production of raw materials and disincentivization for diversification. This forced the agricultural economy to intensify in the hands of French owners, who created a large rural working class among the Vietnamese (WOMACK 2006, 66-67). The consolidation of a new, more stringent order was in stark contrast to the chaos that emerged in China. Wang Zhichun, governor of Yunnan, even asked for French help to subdue rebellions. As reward, the French received railway and mining rights, which in turn weakened the Chinese influence over and strengthened the French state in the border-region, embodying a new equilibrium (GENG 2015, 100, 109). The Vietnamese met this with a lot of resistance, such as in the *Cần Vương* movement of 1885-1889 led by imperial loyalist in the north and northwest – supported by Black Flag forces. It became clear to the French that to secure their claims, they needed to bolster them with a military presence and full-blown territorialization to draw this area under central control (STUART-FOX 1995, 115). Their appeal to China to support their resistance against French domination eventually led to the Sino-French war, which exemplified the danger of China's insistence on centrality when facing a larger military power, imbued with a very different mindset and worldview. It was the key-event that showed that suzerainty had outlived its purpose by then. The Qing could not rely anymore on the idea that the remoteness of the southwestern border and the many small buffer states would protect their core after the French even invaded Guangxi in 1885. The Qing also had to come to terms with the fact they were not the only actors in the area, as irregulars and bandits of the Black Flag that were left over from the Taiping rebellion and roamed freely in the vacuum that was the southern part of the Qing Empire pushed the French back. Thus, the Qing could not even negotiate over their territory as it was largely in the hands of Black Flags who did not care much about the ritualistic

orthodoxy of tributary relationships. Still, in 1894 the Sino-French Border Treaty came into force, turning the Guangxi frontier-land into a discrete and hard boundary, protected with forts and watchtowers that maintained an uneasy peace. The border did not seal off both states, as it had no significance for marauding bandits and refugees from the Boxer uprising and the Xinhai-revolution in 1911 still crossed over (LARY 2007, 184-185; STUART-FOX 1995, 114). From the Indochinese side, the French maintained missionaries active in Guangxi, with the purpose to proselytize but also to maintain a foothold in the Chinese province. Otherwise, there was not much direct interaction with Guangxi: the railway ended at the border, trade was virtually non-existent. Compared to Yunnan, the development of trade and cross-border communication with Guangxi was rather limited. French lack of interest in Guangxi demarcated their territory in firm terms, without much leeway or grey zones (LARY 2007, 187). The focus remained on the border to Yunnan as it was more remote from the Chinese perspective and the French could easier exercise their influence across the border once the Hanoi- Kunming Railway was finished in 1910. The construction was a bet on the future, in which French influence over southern China would yield economic benefits by having market access; however, this never materialized (LARY 2007, 185; STUART-FOX 1995, 126).

The territorialization of the colonial rule and the reliance on Vietnamese however reaffirmed a national identity in Vietnam, whose defining trait as opposition to China shifted towards opposition to France, replacing submission in a tributary relationship with subordination to the colonial empire (WOMACK 2006, 152). In ideological terms, the establishment of a physical border was a huge disruption in the course of Sino-Vietnamese relations, as it replaced a common cultural framework with a clash between Chinese and Western ideas of statehood and interstate relations. Not only that China had to give up its two millennia old suzerainty claims over Vietnam – the Treaty of Tianjin was the start of a development that eliminated the external dimension of the Chinese state-model and the Sino-centric world order (WOMACK 2006, 143, 148). The external dimension of the Chinese order was replaced by the territorial ideas of the colonial state, fortified with a military apparatus, civil servants, missionaries and new administrative structures that tied all official capacities to the colonial center (WOMACK 2006, 72-73).

This step in defining a discrete territoriality of states and their integration in an international system of empires and nations did not require anymore a tributary suzerain, as state-capacity grew and centralization helped to control and manage directly transnational contacts. Power became a function over space and not over ties and relationships to individual statelets anymore, so that the

more discrete the territories of the colonial states became, the more the border area was reduced to a linear boundary, the smaller the role of tributary relations became. Losing its tributary states, China seemed helpless to deal with this new form of an international order that was not defined by attractiveness of civilization and ritualistic orthodoxy but by hard treaties, enforced over norms and military power (FLYNN 2006, 56; HOROWITZ 2004, 475).

The replacement of the tributary system shook up China's politico-religious landscape for managing the territory, its ideological core and its external relations. It was an internal crisis that required a new order based on a rational administration and new forms of legitimacy of central authority that could deal with the modernity of nation-states and hard boundaries rather than the existing civilizational and ritual-based ideas that revolved around an imperial state cult (PALMER 2008, 113-114, 115; DUARA 2008, 46). This cult constructed the state by replicating sacrifices performed by the emperor on the local level. Like that, bureaucrats could ascribe a territorial dimension to the cult and so tie it to the imperial center and ensure the cohesion of the state through its integration into a greater cosmology that legitimized the rule of the dynasty. The integration of local religions into the state-cult was supposed to draw people into a politico-religio-celestial hierarchy. Apart from these were cults and sects that operated outside the officially sanctioned or tolerated religious and cultic life, out of control of the state and the root cause or at least the legitimizing factor of several rebellions, like the Taiping. Given the interlocking between political stability, social hierarchy and religious practices, it is not surprising that the last two factors were identified at the core of the weakening and the disintegration of the state fabric (DUARA 2008, 47-48; PENNY 2008, 143-144). The Qing continued to maintain the semblance of tributary relations, even though the colonial statecraft with its territorial ideas of statehood and regime changes made it obsolete. It was not just a piece of land that had to find a new equilibrium at its margins – it was an entire cosmic order with the emperor in its center that was put into question. Dealing with the new forces at the border was as much a question of procedural rules of diplomacy as it was of legitimacy of the monarchy in a new world-order in which not civilizational aspects and rituals counted but the hard power fostered within distinct sovereign states (STUART-FOX 2003, 128). This was not just a crisis of a system but also a shattering of a worldview that existed for centuries: China lost its assumption of centrality and faced an idea of modernity in statehood that was at odds with the previous multi-ethnic and multi-national empire. Divisions between Han and minorities broke open, questioning the indivisibility of the territory given the new boundaries established under foreign pressure and the exposure to Sinicization attempts at the border (ATTA-

NÉ/COURBAGE 2000, 258-259, 267). The impact on trade relations also put China into a dire position, at the colonial powers diverted trade away from the border-crossings, and so took away income from taxes and tariffs. Border-trade was re-oriented to the respective coasts of the colonial states, and so could not support the border-provinces in their attempt to recover from the many rebellions that ravaged the country (GIERSCH 2011, 55). Entire networks that formed around commodity production and trading had to adapt, institutions declined and border-activity of states to control this flow in goods changed to activities to police the border. The close relations that build around these trading activities were disrupted and replaced by agents and institutions in new trading centers such as Hong Kong (GIERSCH 2011, 55-56).

Like that not only the external centrality China attributed itself, but also the internal centrality with the throne at the core of the empire was reversed, and the borders became the central loci where the fate of the empire was decided (WOMACK 2006, 153).

2.4.3.2 Hardening of boundaries

With the dismantling of the tributary order, the dissolution of indigenous systems of power and the introduction of the colonial state, also boundaries hardened. This process was not only due to treaties and border-commissions but also due to practices of bordering on the ground, supported by infrastructure and generally a new – Westphalian – view on statehood.

In this view, the state expanded its territorial control with means of violence and coercion that supplanted local means of coercion and control. The state's coercion could penetrate the area so quickly as before there were hardly any state-like structures. To reach their goal to control resources and land, the colonists relied often on forced settlements in the border-areas and so propagated more violence at the end of which the state could fully penetrate and control the area (MAZOWER 2002, 1164-1165).

French Indochina – and later the Indochinese Union – was a patchwork of different areas with their own characteristic internal structure that faced this penetration with means of coercions like no other colony. The 1880s were still the start of several years of uprisings that the French had difficulties to subdue. Bandit gangs, disbanded soldiers or mobilized indigenous communities made turmoil in the northern borderland – partly as anti-French protest, partly to make a living. The French tried to use this chaos to offer their services to the Vietnamese emperor, who however preferred to rely on local leaders, allied bandits or even Chinese rebels who joined forces in the anti-French cause. The French had nothing to offer that was of benefit for the Vietnamese as their

idea of a protectorate include control over customs and trade (MUNHOLLAND 1979, 89-90). The Vietnamese court relied on support from the Black Flags and Chinese military aid to push back French attempts to put Tonkin under their protection. The border so became a showdown over two worldviews and virtually disintegrated during that time as more and more Chinese troops settled in the northern mountains and mingled with irregular bandit gangs and Vietnamese troops (MUNHOLLAND 1979, 96). Proposals to use Tonkin or parts of it as a neutral buffer zone were dismissed, as it was the French gateway into China so that its strategic importance outstripped its lack of economic potential and problems around bandit gangs. Thus for the French the paramount goal was to secure all of Tonkin, for which it required troops, intelligence and knowledge of the terrain (MUNHOLLAND 1979, 99, 101).

The situation of stalemate changed in 1883, after the assassination of Henri Rivière, the French commander in Tonkin, as the French intensified their presence and conquest attempts, which eventually resulted in the treaty of Hué in the same year. This treaty established a protectorate over Annam and Tonkin and spurred Vietnamese counter-attacks together with forces of the Black Flags. In this situation, the French army could increase its dominance over the civilian French administration. The Patenôtre Treaty of 1884 replaced the overtly harsh Treaty of Hué and cemented the structure of French rule by putting Tonkin under direct French administration while Annam retained a degree of administrative autonomy as a protectorate (ECKERT 2006, 121-122, 130; ANDERSON 2005, 6). The war against China in 1884-1885 put Tonkin under control of the War Ministry, which expanded the recruitment of Vietnamese and native soldiers, lured by promises of looting. The military could so also expand its prominence over its civilian counterparts in the administration, and was largely responsible for pacifying the border-region. It relied mostly on the use of Vietnamese forces to bring the ideals of the French state into the remote corners that border China and to police the peripheries of the colony (ECKERT 2006, 122-123; HACK/RETTIG 2006a, 15). Among these ideals was also the inviolability of sovereignty, which the French put down in the Patenôtre Treaty and which the colonial power promised to defend. It did so by integrating the Vietnamese forces with the French troops under a French command and nominal authority of the king (ECKERT 2006, 123-124). To eradicate anti-French forces in the mountains, the French, one granted the powers over the military forces, coopted pro-French Tay, Nung and Tai people – a fairly easy task given their disdain for the Vietnamese Kinh population – and used them as cordon sanitaire against rebels to prevent them from returning to the lowlands and to cut them off from supplies and refuge across the border in China. These up-

risings continued until 1893 when the French entered the highlands at the border and with the help of pro-French indigenous people took the last rebels out (MCLEAD 1999 361).

Dissolving the regular Vietnamese army and the guards of provincial mandarins (*linh co*), integrating them in new auxiliary troops, raising new conscripts for and including the Vietnamese forces in Tonkin under French command and installing militias down to village level under French officers should bring the pacification campaign to an end. Like that, all militias and military guards were put under French authority, who started to dismiss Vietnamese garrisons from provinces in which revolts were going on (ECKERT 2006, 126-127, 131). The armies in Tonkin and Annam became increasingly fashioned after a French model so that they did not embody any aspects of a sovereign indigenous force anymore. Rather the different troops in Cochinchina, Annam and Tonkin were reflections of a divide and rule approach to not let local Vietnamese forces become too strong. The individual strengthening of these forces happened around an ad-hoc need to fight anti-French rebellions (ECKERT 2006, 129, 130).

Still, the infighting between civilian and military administration in Tonkin undermined a streamlined effort to consolidate French territorial rule over the border area. In the end, it was the militias – that were outside this struggle between the two wings of the administration – who were sent to subdue bandits, seize weapons and gather intelligence – a job that was in the remit of the Vietnamese civil servants and mandarins, who often were conspiring with rebels, as they felt too unprotected by locally stationed garrisons. The militias were those who could offer this protection that allowed local mandarins to cooperate with the French and who could quickly intervene when there were rebellions (ECKERT 2006 133, 135; MUNHOLLAND 1981, 634). Only a later compromise brought the three actors – militias, civil servants and the regular military – together to step up pacification efforts and stop infighting. The aim of several reforms was to bring the militias into the military structure and establish clear responsibilities and tasks (ECKERT 2006 137-138). When the anti-French rebellion reached its peak in the beginning of the 1890s, the Gouverneur Général amassed ever more powers so that he alone was the supreme commander of all troops in Tonkin. The more however, the pacification attempts continued without clear results even under the new structure, the more political actions were considered as opposed to military interventions. The dispatch of columns of mandarins and civil servants to troublesome provinces in addition to the continued fighting operations should bring gang-leaders and bandits to submit to French control. This policy of mandarins in combination with armed forces proved highly effective to subdue anti-French rebellions and counter Black Flag ambushes. The apex of this poli-

cy was the proclamation of King Than Thai ordering his mandarins and the population to ally with the French and refrain from rebelling further (ECKERT 2006, 139-140).

With that support, another round of reforms took place to institutionalize administrative divisions with different roles to military and civil servants to better control the country – distinguished by their territorial location. The creation of the *Territoires Militaires* in 1891 solidified a French foothold – both military and civilian – in the border area. Local officers could keep their forces, but the *linh co*, intelligence gathering services and partisans were supposed to work with the French. The military had to protect the border-regions while Civil Guards supported order in the lowlands. This territorial separation of institutions and responsibilities made control over the border more efficient and streamlined all activities and information back to the Gouverneur General as highest commander of the forces in Indochina (ECKERT 2006, 141-142). The Gouverneur General of the hour, de Lanessan, ordered the restructuring of the state in Tonkin – to bring a unified code of law, remove tax disparities, started a census and initiated public work projects. This was supposed to help Tonkin to recover from the turmoil and conquests as well as to show the reach of French power in the north by re-constructing and re-populating border towns (MUNHOLLAND 1981, 646).

Border control was a particularly important objective of the pacification campaign, as the French viewed in China a safe harbor for bandits and anti-French elements. Hardening the border to keep them out while improving relations with Chinese officials to cooperate in fighting these irregular forces was meant to keep the danger away. The Chinese promised to close the border for rebels, the French paid them a subsidy for their efforts while a mixed Sino-French force should patrol the boundary. This more accommodating and cooperative stance was successful: the Chinese executed several pirate and gang leaders (MUNHOLLAND 1981, 647). This process of internal consolidation of the colonial powers, means of coercion and administrative techniques while reaching out to the Chinese authorities stabilized the borders between China, Vietnam and Laos out of which emanated new territorial body – the Indochinese Union of 1897, consisting of the five singular main parts of the colony, each split from the other to avoid the formation of strong indigenous forces. In this Union, not only a new worldview was propagated through the cooptation of the pre-existing administrative system, also the entire area – and especially in Vietnam – was exposed to French influence. Replacing Chinese characters with a Latin alphabet was as much a symbol of French domination as it was a bordering tool to sever unofficial and cultural ties with the large neighbor to the north by turning the *quoc ngu* into the main medium of cultural

belonging and to disrupt the Vietnamese from their past cultural legacy. This process found its apex in the abolition of the imperial examinations in Tonkin in 1915 and Annam in 1918 (THEE 1980, 226; ANDERSON 2005, 3, 6; ANDERSON 2006, 125-126, 128).

The French also implemented a new economic system, which commodified land and everything to source from it. Land became marketable as well as taxable, drawing the base of livelihood of indigenous people under the control of the colonial government, which altered the social relations around land ownership to imitations of French property culture. Taxation of all transactions increased the knowledge of the administrative body and the ability to territorially execute the will of the state to generate more revenues. *Corvée* was a second pillar of the colonial extraction of state-levies to build roads, railways and waterways. Taxation and *corvée* increased the ability of the state to later extract the lands it taxed by supplying the necessary infrastructure. Apart from private enterprises that ventured in mining and rubber production, state monopolies on alcohol, salt and opium that allowed to directly taxing the inhabitants of the colony were the largest revenue source of the colonial state. In addition the expansion of opium production under the monopoly allowed the French to control the business class and tie it into their administration by bringing their activities under French law, requiring them to have French shareholders and regulating their sales (NANKOE et al. 1993, 182-183, 187). To curb illicit practices even more and to expand French business interests, the French wrested a state-controlled *Regie* in 1889 off the Nguyễn court and so retained the exclusive right to import opium and to appoint selling agents in order to cut out Chinese merchants, curb smuggling from Yunnan and increase the use of French products and commodities. The new French merchant class was at the forefront of French penetration of the commercial space in Indochina but still had to rely on Chinese merchants who had greater influence over commercial networks than the French did. Chinese merchants so could participate in the monopoly if the exclusively sold to French entrepreneurs and subjected their import-export activities under French supervision (NANKOE et al. 1993, 190, 193-194). Using trusted merchants and tie them into state-controlled monopolies was a general practice along the Sino-Southeast Asian border to gain territorial control (TAGLIACOZO 2005, 298).

The direct impact on the livelihood was rather a deterioration, as farmers turned wage laborers for investors that had rights on their land. Yet this transformation in the flows of capital and status of people in a less subsistence and more export-oriented economy increased the power of the state-agents even more by tying them to a common and enforceable rulebook that was for the benefit of the integrity and prosperity of the colonial state (BOOTH 2007, 7, 8-9).

Laos showed a slightly different trajectory. The territory was after its inclusion in 1893 divided into Upper and Lower Laos with Luang Prabang as a protectorate under its own king. Laos became a territorial entity within the French empire under the *Gouvernement Générale de l'Indochine française*, yet not a polity in its own right. As such, its existence was to serve the cause of the French colonial ambitions – such as a pathway to China, control post of the Mekong, but not as an independent state in its own right (STUART-FOX 1993, 110). While France pandered to a Lao uniqueness to wrest it off Siam, it reduced the territory to a territorial extension of its core-colony of Vietnam, and by doing so orienting all political, economic and cultural ties of Laos to Hanoi – and away from Siam or China. The fact that the Lao-area was economically not viable on its own and has ever been a patchwork of different ethnic and cultural affiliations of Lao, Hmong, Khmer, Khmu or the Tai-inhabitants of Sipsong Chau Tai only increased the dependence from the French colonial state who managed in its impersonal form to supersede these differences and force these different groups into a mold conducive to French expansionism (STUART-FOX 1993, 111, 112-113). This reorientation away from its old overlords and partners was embodied too in the road-network that spatially determined the reach of the French state – in their functionality to bring French goods, thoughts, people and practices into remote areas as well as in their labor-intensive construction, which tied a large workforce as *corvée* laborers to a national project. With these projects, the French could until the 1930s sever previous local ties and re-orient an entire territory in what it named the “unblocking of Laos” – an exercise in territorialization, bordering and re-centralization towards the colonial center (STUART-FOX 1995, 124-126). To link this territorial consolidation with the practices in managing its international relations as regards to bordering, the Sino-French Treaty of 1895 stipulated a new order based on uncontested sovereignty, and so gave French bordering practices an official character on the ground in the framework of the *L'Union d'Indochine*. This Union was the concept of a French-led polity, to be formed in civilizing missions, exploited through French investments, and standardized by incentivizing internal migration. This internal migration from Vietnam to Laos should level out differences in population densities and exploit underutilized agricultural lands. Vietnamese administrators should lift administrative practices and ideas to the same level in Laos as they existed in Vietnam, and so create an Indochinese unity, that could be clearly demarcated. To give that unity a territorial reach, the Sino-French treaty of 1895 however did not – and given that the colonial project was also meant to be one of social engineering did not need to – follow pre-existing boundaries but was largely based on watersheds and other natural markers. This border was a

sharp line that remained stable until the independence of the country (TOWNSEND-GAULT 2013, 144-147; BOOTH 2007, 5-6; PRESCOTT/TRIGGS 2008, 332).

The Burmese case was again slightly different. While it was not considered to be a hinterland of the far larger British-Indian colony, the territory was still seen and fashioned as an entrance gate for overland trade with China – which was also a motivation for the annexation of all of Burma in 1885 to increase the boundaries and spheres of influence of the empire (MYINT-U 2004, 2-3; CROIZIER/CROZIER 1962 10). The British efforts to establish borders, map the territory, set up impersonal stable administrative structures and demarcate political and economic interests, the British so created the modern Burmese state that should remain a province of British India until 1937. The British fixed Burma as political entity, shedding waxing and waning borders of the Konbaung, and essentially negotiating what Burma shall be with its neighbors – shuffling around former tributary states and border polities, including remote places that were never claimed by the Burmese kingdom, such as the Rawang and Lisu. The borders reflected commercial and imperial British interests, rebuking Chinese or Siamese claims in the north and east of the country (TAYLOR 2007, 72-73; MYINT-U 2004, 220-221; HACK/RETTIG 2006a, 22; cf. CLAD 2011, 9).

To determine the geographic location of the borderline, the British focused more on the Irrawaddy watershed and less on the social structures on the ground. The main goal as to where the border is was to define a fixed boundary – the main goal as what bordering should achieve was control over trading routes to Yunnan and getting control over illicit and official trade in the highly prized goods of the border-areas. The geographic and ethnic diversity made a clear border even more necessary to integrate these trade flows into the imperialist economy, while this integration was a necessity to create a border in the first place to control the people in the area (TAGLIACOZZO 2004, 375-376). Opening an inland trade-corridor as a confluence of political and commercial interests was such a paramount goal, that it was the driver behind territorialization, infrastructure projects, mapping, intelligence gathering and bordering, especially in the context of the British-French rivalry in which both empires were keen on drawing sharp lines between their possessions while opening their borders for trade – the British through roads, and the French via the Hanoi-Kunming railway – and neutralize each other's ambitions. As with the French possessions, the territorialization and bordering of Burma was a byproduct of the strategic development of commercial interests that affected administration, the law, labor migration and nationalist

movements (TAGLIACOZZO 2004, 370; CROIZIER/CROZIER 1962, 12; HALL 1984, 72-73; SHARMA 2005, 5126).

To determine the reach of British power, Burma was soon after its conquest clustered in administrative areas, of which the uplands were classified as “Frontier Burma” or “Excluded Areas”. The British idea was to create a Burmese core and use the statelets as satellites, whose boundaries used to fluctuate but now had to be solidified. The incorporation of these tributary states under the British as new monarchs promoted first local autonomy yet eventually was a result of a negotiation between sawbwas and British administrators over resources, concessions and a contractual loyalty in favor of the British and against the French that replaced personalized relations. In this sense, the British continued certain elements of the pre-colonial pattern of statehood, into which they sought to bring order by classification, building on the national-state model when categorizing upland populations, and dividing “Frontier Burma” into ethnic states (SAFMAN 2007, 54-55; MYINT-U 2004, 9; TAYLOR 2007, 75). The sawbwas received synods which symbolized their political and administrative power in exchange for British dominance. In more secluded areas, the army held “flag marches” to introduce the symbolism of the new controlling force, while missionaries converted indigenous peoples and recruited people into the British Indian army to neutralize the potential threat of local militias to British control (TAYLOR 2007, 75). Next to the regular army, the British maintained a Military Police that was tasked with punitive expeditions against insubordinate villages and maintaining order at the border. These troops were mainly Indian, with hardly any Burmese or local soldiers in their ranks, a mismatch addressed only when the Japanese war threatened to sweep over to Burma (TAYLOR 2006, 187-188). In addition, the colonial state backed its power in the Shan states with a garrison of 3000 British and 4000 Indian troops and a military police numbering in the 10,000 – mostly Indian and some Karens – and a 7000 strong civil police mostly staffed with Burmese and some Karen (MYINT-U 2004, 208). However, still no Shan were recruited into the colonial armies, as the British feared conscription would make them lose support from the sawbwas. Karens remained a minority in the forces of Burma, while Chin and Kachin proved easier to recruit (TAYLOR 2006 187-189).

This mismatch of local representation in armed forces was made by design, as it was line with the British attempts to use division and classification to control the country and open it for commercial opportunities – a trend that only intensified after the Sino-Japanese war, which ended China at the brink of collapse and caused a large influx of people due to the internal instability, which in turn required more troops at the border. Censuses in 1891, 1901 and 1911 were supposed to help

taking stock of the new subjects, yet in the border-region it became increasingly difficult to find the right taxonomy (MYINT-U 2004 220; SCOTT 2009 238; CROIZIER/CROZIER 1962, 13). Also in this context, the British never lost eye of the development of their commercial interests in the area. In the year of the Chinese defeat in the Sino-Japanese war in 1895, the French forced China to cede a part of the Kenghung-state as part of the first boundary convention. Britain retaliated by negotiating adjustments to its border with China in favor of British interests by obtaining leases as in the case of the Namwan river tract stipulating that while a disputed area may belong to China, the Qing could not exercise any authority over it. Boundary commissions so demarcated systematically mutually exclusive areas of territorial control, while also using their knowledge of the terrain to devise trading routes to divert trade volume away from French Indochina to British Burma. Even when it became clear that the northern and eastern Burmese areas only had low productivity levels and rather posed a liability for the state, the British elevated their strategic importance in the colonial race between France and Britain to increase control – especially after the opening of the Hanoi-Kunming railway in 1910. As both, the British and French empires put ever harder borders in place they competed with each other in lowering their tariffs and devising ever greater plans for linking China to Vietnam or Burma and tying the border-areas to the colonial centers by road and railway. This was a side-effect of all activities around exploration, mapping and surveying the terrain for increasing the trade potential, which helped consolidating control over the Shan states. In addition, the boundary with Tibet was a result of a commission, which concluded its work in 1914. It created the McMahon line which included Burma as part of British India and was connected to the Burmese-Chinese boundary through a Chinese-claimed area in Hpimaw state that the British already occupied in 1910 (TAYLOR 2007, 75; CROIZIER/CROZIER 1962, 13-14; MYINT-U 2004, 223; WHYTE 2013, 193-194; MURAYAMA 2006, 1352).

By determining the reach, the British also delineated their economic interests in the frontier-area for timber and gems. They started to draft workers from India and lower Burma to complete infrastructure projects and develop the exploitation of resources and so to draw these areas towards the colonial center. Missionary preaching and teaching should lay the foundation for improved communication and links between British and local people. While the territorialization efforts were successful in terms of delineating the reach of British authority – and also incentivizing settlement in border-towns, evidenced by the case of Bhamo whose population was the only in the north of Burma that increased –, internal disparities between upper and lower Burma and between

ethnicities became larger, with loyalties fracturing along nationalist, pro-British or ethnicist lines. While the boundary was determined, the belongings and internal status of those within these boundaries in relation to each other remained unclear given the abolition of the monarchy and the destruction of knowledge regarding the management and hierarchy of the kingdom. As the king was also the protector of the sangha, the monastic hierarchies were leaderless and disintegrated into sects or directly engaged in nationalist politics, undermining British control of the country (TAYLOR 2007, 74, 75; MYINT-U 2004, 221). This situation of disintegration due to a lack of agency of indigenous elites was later exacerbated during the Japanese occupation and the installation of the Pinyin Prince and the subsequent decolonization process (SAFMAN 2007, 55-56; MYINT-U 2004, 5).

The colonies however were not hermetically closed areas: 122 000 Chinese merchants in Burma organized overland trade with Yunnan, while the French also encouraged Chinese to settle in their colony for the same purpose – a trend that continued until the 1930s (STUART-FOX 2003 126). In this competition to unlock the Chinese markets, both empires tried to mutually undercut the other's sphere of influence in Yunnan, which resulted in ever-clearer boundaries, but only partial hardening regarding matters that did not increase trade with China.

Though the borders took the shape of sharp boundaries, there were still disputed areas along their entire stretch as no one really knew where the border was supposed to be. The Karen State had nominal tributary ties with the Konbaung, yet due to its timber and tin reserves the British wanted to put it under more direct control. The western Karenni used the turmoil to cut themselves loose of tributary obligations, trying to balance British, Burmese and Chinese interests in the region, and aligning themselves opportunistically where interests matched up. As they pursued similar trading interests as the British, they later were successively drawn into their orbit until they too had to submit (TALGIACOZO 2004, 372-373). The Wa-states at the Burmese-Chinese border provide a similar example. They were left out from the boundary commissions due to their remoteness and dangerous terrain. At the same time, this area was rich in gems and minerals, which allowed it to navigate increasing pressures from the British and the Qing Empire by entering multiple allegiances, granting mining concessions and accepting an influx of workers until the Panthay Rebellion. In the aftermath, the Wa made profits from granting mining concessions, and gravitated more and more away from the Chinese suzerainty given that cross-border trade did not reach the same level as before (FISKESJÖ 2010, 252; WHYTE 2013, 194). The Wa polities spanned both sides of the Sino-Burmese frontier with one part drifting towards Britain, the other

one into the Chinese state system. Mangleng on the Burmese side faced the issue of exhausting mines towards the end of the 19th century. The British encroached, trying to find a sawbwa to install indirect rule, yet to no avail. On the other side of the frontier, Wa mining was still profitable, attracting Chinese miners and getting more and more integrated into Yunnanese economy and politics (FISKESJÖ 2010 257). Banhong – a Wa-polity near the border with Burma – for example helped China to subdue a conflict among the Outer Shans in 1891 for which their leader received a *tusi*-title. The Wa on the Chinese side remained in control of mining operations and benefited from the Muslim refugees in the aftermath of the Panthay Rebellion. They could maintain so their territorial control until the Wa-Panthay-War of 1926 shook up the tributary relations between Wa and refugees. Despite the shift in power from Wa to the Muslim refugees, a full integration of the territory on either the British or Chinese side was still not possible until the 1930s (FISKESJÖ 2010, 253; MYINT-U 2004, 207; NORINS 1939, 76).

Along the Sino-Lao-border, the Tai Lüe-areas of Sipsong Panna were a dent in the otherwise strict territorial demarcation. The revolt of the Tai Lüe leader Ong Kham in 1914 and three French military expeditions to quell it only weakened that stretch of the border further, which should only be settled in the 21st century (TOWNSEND-GAULT 2013, 147).

For China, the picture the new situation presented turned more and more threatening. The increasing presence of the colonial powers at the border especially after the Sino-French war opened Yunnan for trade and industrialization as well as increased penetration by the colonial powers. After the 1895-defeat in the Sino-Japanese war though, the colonial powers stepped up their penetration efforts by forcing mining concessions and developing railroads (METZGAR 1976, 185-186). However, it did not stop there. British and French began to exploit Yunnan in the same way as if it was a colony – by using violence and coopting local elites and officials with loans in exchange for their subservience. Especially the French pursued a geopolitical strategy to create propped-up buffer states to protect their colonies from China. It was only due to the increased prioritization of the French Africa-policy that the buffer-state strategy could not fully materialize (METZGAR 1976, 186; cf. POISSON 2009, 21). The effect of this strategy resulted in an increased sense of urgency in Beijing to act and a renewed anti-imperialist nationalism in Yunnan, fueled by secret societies. These societies not only included mandarins or elites but also miners who used them as vehicle to transport their political interests. Anti-imperialist agitation grew among the Han population because of a loss of economic opportunities as mining became more and more controlled by French and British entrepreneurs. The Qing first suppressed secret

society activities but had to cave in to their demands and confront the colonial powers (METZGAR 1976, 187; REID 2009, 58).

Adopting the principle of state sovereignty over its borderlands, it followed a two-pronged approach. For once, the Qing tried to reduce the influence of the colonial powers and strengthening defense capacities, establishing claims over border-areas that were disputed. Secondly, it continued to cooperate in the border-demarcation commission to find an amicable solution to disputes (METZGAR 1976, 188-189). Like that the Qing could harden the border in bilateral terms, backed up by local anti-imperialist agitation that was put into the service of Qing-interests by aligning policies with the interest of the local gentry (METZGAR 1976, 191). The pulling of both colonial powers and the Qing on the border-area to integrate it in their area of sovereignty was supported by the cautiousness to escalate the conflict to an all-out war. The advent of the Boxer Rebellion helped the case of the Qing once it turned it to an anti-imperialist movement, confirming and legitimizing the actions of the secret societies as well as anti-imperialist bandit gangs in Yunnan. A first success of this policy was the evacuation of French residents in Yunnan (METZGAR 1976, 192, 194).

This drastically changed the dynamics of anti-imperialist policies in Yunnan. The announcement of evacuation and the condoning of rebel, bandit and secret society activities by the court emboldened the militants, so that the situation in Yunnan got out of the regional government's control. To re-introduce order so that the evacuation could take place and was not under threat of violent disruptions by the militants, the local governors tried to subdue any flare-ups of rebellion. At the same time, the existence of the now hardened border was acknowledged – or at least practically not contested anymore – by establishing orderly modes of communication, such as the telegraph line to Tonkin (METZGAR 1976, 194-195). In addition, fortification efforts and troop stationing on all sides of the border manifested a new status quo. The stationing of troops happened hand in hand with the restoration of the local bureaucracy in Yunnan and attempts to reign in the rampant banditry (TAGLIACOZZO 2004, 365; METZGAR 1976, 196-197).

Given the mortal danger the court faced from the colonial adventures at the border, the Qing-state had to modernize in all aspects, including the basic principles of its statehood, worldview, organization and parameters of interaction (METZGAR 1976, 198). In the wake of potential invasion, the imperial state adopted a nationalist narrative to define a border-policy that was in line with the Western view. The traditional Qing-civilizational paradigm of trans-boundary interaction had to make way for concepts of national sovereignty in the context of modernization and self-

strengthening to face effectively the colonial encroachment. The border disputes drove the reform of Yunnan to not content itself anymore as being a buffer-like border-area but an agent of the empire with a clear demarcation and task to service the interests of the empire (METZGAR 1976, 199-200).

The border-area was a critical factor for this endeavor as the colonial powers wanted to transform it into a buffer zone. For the exchange of certain parts to France, the territory of Sipsong Panna could stay inside China's borders. The British in Burma tried to assert their claims over the boundary by invoking tributary ties of the Konbaung dynasty, yet there too, the border-polities remained within the Chinese orbit. Indirect rule proved highly resilient with the last tuisi officially abolished only in 1949. During the colonial territory-grab, the Qing increased the armament of the tuisi to keep the foreign influence out, the assertiveness of which only increased the clash of territorialized and rationalized administration on the one side and indirect rule of hereditary chieftains on the other (HILL 1989, 328-329).

This clash of worldviews forced the entire Qing-state to undertake a reform of its very foundations. The Xinzheng policies (新政) of 1902 were meant to introduce new knowledge and technology to protect the essence of the traditional state in line with the dictum to learn from the West how to apply knowledge, but the essence of it shall remain Chinese (中学为体, 西学为用). This program, starting in 1902, revamped the foundations of the state, turning it into a constitutional monarchy. This was not the only institutional import for a new form of statecraft – with a constitutional monarchy the entire power-basis shifted towards one of authority and territorial integrity based on the reach of a legal system and political technologies to uniformly exercise state-power (KUO 2008, 65-66). One defining part of this new form of statecraft was the introduction of nationalism, which as a corollary brought with it bordering practices in territorial, practical and cultural terms. The transformation of the state from an empire to a nation while upholding the dynastic institutions required new forms of legitimacy, a new symbolism and new rituals to instill the imperial territory with a shared sense of nationhood (KUO 2008, 66-67). The idea was that to hold the state together, it should be modeled to be a multi-ethnic entity instilled with an idea of Chinese national identity and patriotism that was to fill the territory of China through new curricula promoting the idea of A Greater China, in which all ethnicities could find a place under the overlordship of the monarchy. Kang Youwei, a main propagator of this idea, advocated for this new form of nationalism in which identification with the state and its territory was not centered on Han-bias or ethnic affiliation (ZHAO 2006, 16, 21). This view included also a transformation

or even shedding of the cosmology around the emperor, an update of knowledge and a new source of the state's authority that went beyond ritualistic concepts but had to focus on productivity, independence, self-reliance and a shared sense of belonging to a nation and patriotism as metrics of control (KUO 2008, 68, 74-75).

The spiritual basis was still not gone, but just adapted to the rationalism Western modernity brought to China: Confucius became a grand sacrifice together with the Heaven, Earth and Land sacrifices (KUO 2008, 76). The state cult and its infrastructure, like the Board of Rites, continued to exist to ensure the right performance of rituals in the entire country and so link the throne to the far-flung corners of the empire. In addition, the Board was responsible for the tributary links to other countries and the imperial examinations. It was thus a cornerstone to keep the empire together and maintain proxies of territorialization. This role came under attack with the increased modernization and secularization of the legitimacy basis of the Qing state: in 1905 the civil examinations were abolished, local cults got increasingly incorporated into the state cult and new governmental institutions with competing responsibilities such as education and diplomacy sprang up. Rituals lost their importance in defining the state, the state itself as embodiment of the nation grew in importance for maintaining its integrity on a rational basis (KUO 2008, 78-79).

As the state used to be defined by the reach of the state cult, marking by ritual exercised by state officials the points until which it could extend, the reduced importance of rituals opened the statecraft for territoriality in terms of hard borders surrounding the nation. In this nation, each individual could have a rapport with this greater idea, instead of a mediation of this rapport through official rituals to the emperor. This new way of ritual practice to make the state present was premised on a unified code of conduct that shaped a national space and its borders as the execution of rituals was congruent with the reach of the state (KUO 2008, 81, 83; ZARROW, 2001, 151).

As the contradictions between the nationhood envisaged under colonial pressure and the claim to the empire in the reformation of the Qing-state became stronger, popular movements to accelerate and radicalize the modernization sprang up. The Xinhai revolution of 1911 finally brought down the moribund dynasty, replacing it with a republic that immediately began to introduce an anti-superstition and pro-modernization ideology based on nationalist statecraft. The nationalist party, the Guomindang, even carried a reference to the nation as opposed to the empire in its name (YANG M. 2008, 20).

The result of the revolution and the establishment of the republic however were somehow contradictory. At first, Chinese influence increased at the borders so that ideas to create a neutral buffer around Sipsong Panna disappeared. This was partly achieved by an intact political center that assumed responsibilities to bring the margins into the national narrative by imposing a central administration and a monopoly on mapping to solidify the Chinese space. Chinese ability to project military power also subdued local conflicts between border polities. However, the new republic descended into warlordism and stationed troops engaged in all sorts of brutalities (KOMLOSY 2004, 354; WOODSIDE 2007, 24).

The split between the central power under the first president of the republic Yuan Shikai and the various revolutionaries and democratic forces in the south happened the when new president started pogroms and assassinations to cement his power. He directed his intimidation efforts against the Guomindang and advocates for democracy, causing anti-Yuan forces to organize themselves. When president Yuan Shikai became more and more authoritarian and crowned himself emperor, the southern provinces and border polities rebelled, revolutionaries against the monarchy turned into warlords with their own armies and in 1915 Yunnan even declared its independence under Cai E (蔡锷), a veteran revolutionary of 1911. Yuan's death left the country split in a northern and southern faction. The war of the Guomindang to retake China – which it eventually achieved in 1926 – fractioned the state-territory further into competing camps of warlords, yet it did not put in doubt the adherence of the border-regions to the Chinese state as these – except for the brief Yunnan independence declaration – saw themselves as alternatives for the entire country (GESCHER 2017, 529; WOMACK 2006, 40; GENG 2015, 191-192).

The modernization efforts incorporated not just millennia-old institutions like the monarchy but also religious groups to bring their teachings into the discourse of Chinese modernity. Different streams of thought emerged in the early Republican era how to fashion this modernity. The Guomindang abolished Confucian classics in the curriculum, Kang Youwei tried to turn Confucian lore into a national religion – both did that in the faith to instill a new form of modern nationalism into the Chinese state and its people so as to create a unified nation under central control (DUARA 2008, 50; GOOSSAERT 2008, 210). Many religious groups emerged just after the proclamation of the republic and adopted sectarian and millenarian views, promoting teachings of universalism, spiritual regeneration and disregarded very often the nationalist ideas and concepts such as boundaries (YANG M. 2008, 29-30). The emergence of these concepts as a new form of statecraft required the incumbent religious and ritualistic currents – Buddhism and Daoism – to

adapt and redefine. Unlike Confucianism, which was an integral part of the state-architecture as well as under control of the state, Buddhist and Daoist administrative structures were weak on national scale and deeply interlocked with local cults. The secularization agenda forced them to become institutionalized in national associations that were separate from the lay society and free from superstition to be vehicles of the new nationalism and promoters of borders and nationhood backed by official agents that mimicked the bureaucratic state penetrating the areas in which these religious groups were active. National associations were supposed to institutionalize the ideas of modern statecraft in the sense of the Western model (GOOSSAERT 2008, 215, 224; YANG M. 2008, 12). As a consequence of this development, the state could supplant the tradition of China as an empire consisting of multiple autonomous communities with the unitary political ideology of the nation that tied local traditions into a centralized political agenda under a bureaucratic control (GOOSSAERT 2008, 225-226, 229).

With the colonial integration of the Southeast Asian territories and the drastic ideological cataclysms of the Xinhai revolution, the fluidity and amorphia of the border-area had finally hardened out. As TALGLIACOZZO (2004, 362, 375) points out, the two years of 1885 when Burma and Vietnam were conquered in their entirety as well as 1911 when the Sino-centric order was replaced with a Westphalian statecraft agenda were watershed years that put an end to the border-area as it was reduced to a line which apart from minor variations stayed the same until today.

The interplay of commercial desires, power and domination interests came to a conclusion with a new state-system, new administrative practices and an entirely new worldview in which the commercial interests aligned with political objectives to such a degree that penetration and territorialization were an inevitable outcome. New commercial practices in combination with new institutions and forms of governance that focused on territorial exploitation and control instead of personalized or ritualistic parameters of legitimacy drew, maintained and enforced a borderline that abolished grey zones of fluctuations or multiple allegiances (TAGLIACOZZO 2004, 375; BOOTH 2007, 10-11).

With the conclusion of the territorialization process and the effective – not only nominal – control over the far-flung regions of the border-area, also the remit of this thesis comes to an end. Any later developments were not part or result of the agency of a fluid border region with multiple allegiances anymore but the result of the interaction of these areas as being fixed parts of dominant states, that had already drawn in and territorialized the area in question into a fixed construct

within a hard boundary. To use the analogy from the model under investigation: the states did not need to use different factors to pull this region in, as it was already incorporated, a fact which change the premise of agency and parameters of action of the borderland societies on such scale that the transregional interactions between local people, local elites and state centers on both sides were reduced to largely interstate-interactions when it came to the mediation of bordering principles and state-led territorialization.

After this dissolution and re-ordering of the spatial realities of the state, for the first time ever, the entire border-area was neatly demarcated and tied to distinct centers, whose territorial reach enjoyed the Westphalian privilege of sovereignty. This does not mean that the border was absolutely fixed but the circumstances under which – mostly minor – changes occurred were different. It was the territorial state that managed changes while the agency on the local level was largely transferred and tied to the center of the state. The mechanisms that pulled on the border area became established ties to maintain state-penetration and not a dynamic interaction along the lines of waxing and waning powers of the national and local actors involved. Territorialization, state penetration and central control relegated the authority over bordering techniques to the state, while the local actors became agents of this state. Their transboundary ties functioned through the prism of the state and its authority and so reduced the dimensions of their own agency to shape a hard, state-sponsored border.

2.5 Epilog: outlook into a territorialized 20th century

By the beginning of the 20th century, the Europeans managed to impose their ideas of territoriality of authority and sovereignty and virtually replaced the pre-existing model of statecraft based on personal relations. The focus on the territorial locality of people to interact with also produced new forms of borders, eradicated most of the grey zones of fluidity and multiple loyalties and drew boundaries for the purpose of avoiding clashes between the colonial empires. Old tributary ties were only a tool for the colonial powers to buttress claims over disputed areas but in their essence became void of meaning, while effective control reached even the most remote corners of the hinterland (BOOTH 2007, 114; TARLING 1994, 6-8; CLAD 2011, 11). The exploitation of the borderlands required a new infrastructure built by a new workforce that the colonialists imported from India and China as essentially rightless labor-migrants that were easy to control. The new centralization and bureaucratization of border-management was staffed with local elites, but there was no framework of accountability as all efforts of governance served the mercantilist interests of the colonizers. Since then, territorial claims turned into territorial realities and boundaries became a matter of inter-state negotiations, bringing the autonomy of border polities into the framework of the state and eclipsing many of their prerogatives as trans-regional mediators. Actions of border communities did not happen in conjunction with the lowland states anymore but as actors within and under the control of these states. As a consequence, anti-imperial nationalism was on the rise and demands for self-rule were institutionalized and later catalyzed by the Japanese occupation (DAYLEY/NEHER 2013, 4-5; cf. REID 2009, 12). It should not come as a surprise that the border-areas so were not yet a settled affair, however their existence became an accepted fact.

In Indochina for example French administrative structure and its inherently discriminatory practices of for example different levels of taxation based on ethnicity fostered discontent and induced a sense of nationalism among the main ethnicities of Indochina, especially after the successful 1911 revolution in China (STUART-FOX 2003, 135-136). Rebellions also swept over the border from China into the colonies with distinct trans-regional characteristics. In 1914 for example, Haw-bandits entered Laos, attacking French outposts for money and weapons while hoisting the flag of the Chinese Republic and fighting alongside Lao nobles in their ranks whom the French had demoted. The reason for the raid was opposition to the French opium monopoly, which was supposed to curtail Haw-smuggling and revenue sources of local leaders. Another

trans-regional rebellion was the Tai Lüe rebellion under Ong Kham, who after his demotion led several attacks from Sipsong Panna against the French. The overall result was not destabilization but a pattern of gradually militarized French control in form of Military Regions over the outlying areas each time a new cross-border rebellion or raid occurred (EVANS/OSBORNE 2002, 54-55).

The Hmong were the most proliferating rebels against the French. In 1911, 1917–18, 1918-1921, 1925, 1936, and 1943, they stood up against the French rule (SCOTT 2009, 285). The largest revolt was the one of 1918-1921, the so-called *guerre de fou*, during which the Hmong, attached to the French colonial state since 1896 through a French representative that was stationed with the Moua clan, formed a powerful clan-confederation to fight against Tai-domination of their settlements. Guided by messianic messages, the Hmong retreated to the mountains of Laos and Vietnam, attacked Tai muangs, pushed back French troops and formed constantly shifting alliances to build their kingdom. Eventually, support fragmented and different clans made peace directly with the French. The interesting aspect of this rebellion was that it was not bound by territory: fighting occurred in Yunnan, Laos and Vietnam, not between polities but with clans against major polities to form their own kingdom. Not only did it challenge the French claims of sovereignty, but also the power of the powerful Sipsong Chau Tai federation. The crushing of the rebellion led to a redistribution of powers, which left mainly the Tai weakened. The French had initially vested in them powers to generate taxes and manage an opium monopoly, which they now had to share with the Hmong who asked for direct links to the French administration (EVANS/OSBORNE 2002, 55-59). Such rebellions were not only confined to French Indochina, also Karen and Lahu rebelled against the British and millenarian movements used the border-areas as base to expand (SCOTT 2009, 285).

Apart from rebellions of indigenous people, the border-area also became a focal point of nationalist movements. Anti-French movements had often their base in the border-region away from too strict French control. From 1908 onwards attempts to sabotage or attack French rule were rampant, while Chinese forces, especially after 1911 supported the Vietnamese insurgents (HACK/RETTIG 2006b 55). Reduced agency of the local population, poverty, and weakening autonomy only increased tensions that found their release in an anti-colonial nationalism that should revive the country's self-determination and lift it out of economic misery and cultural stagnation. The dynamic of Vietnamese nationalist forces and their ideas and methods of statecraft could fill another volume, but a general characteristic most of them shared was their orienta-

tion towards Japan's Meiji restoration and China's Xinhai rebellion of 1911, which should find an admirer in Phan Boi Chau and his movement Vietnam Quang Phuc Hoi. While Vietnamese revolutionaries like Phan Boi Chau fostered strong ties with their counterparts in Yunnan, Guangdong and Guangxi and encouraged cooperation, they were also aware of the issues of being too entangled in Chinese affairs. They for example opposed the construction of the Hanoi-Kunming railway as a potentially dangerous to the integrity of the Vietnamese state while at the same time they established organizations for revolutionary cross-border cooperation to carry out uprisings along the border. The Chinese revolution of 1911 later inspired unsuccessful emulations in several rebellions of which the largest was the Yen Bay mutiny of 1930. Despite this failure, Vietnamese nationalism became an ever-stronger force, instituted in the Vietnam Nationalist Party (Việt Nam Quốc Dân Đảng, VNQDD) founded in 1927 as a sister party of the Guomindang after their reunification of China and three groups that called themselves communist and which later should be consolidated under the leadership of Ho Chi Minh. Numerous uprisings in the aftermath of Yen Bay were attributed to these nationalist forces. This constant stream of uprisings spurred troop concentrations in rebellious hotspots and at the border, intensification of surveillance and intelligence gathering, recruiting indigenous troops and so increasing the territoriality of the French colonial state (HACK/RETTIG 2006a 13-14; HACK/RETTIG 2006b, 55-56; ANDERSON 2005, 7; BROCHEUX/HENERY 2009, 299-300,309-311; WOMACK 2006, 152-153; DUIKER 1971, 82-83). The French also used this situation to increase the protection of their colonial and metropolitan markets: Indochina became a protected outlet for French goods. French landholders in Indochina gained protected access for their crops to the French market in 1928, while imports from other parts of Asia to both the colony and France faced high tariff barriers at an increasingly hard border to ensure a maximum of profits for the colonizers and a near-prohibition of potentially enabling economic institutions from which locals could have benefited (BOOTH 2007, 94, 102; CARTER 2008, 44).

The Vietnamese nationalist movements, whether republican, communist or royalist continued to use the border as a contact point with their Chinese counterparts, as especially the Guomindang used it as a safe haven, lending mutual support against Japanese and French occupiers. The first United Front between Guomindang and Communists in China behind Sun Yatsen allowed for increased contacts across the border as there were Vietnamese students at the Whampoa Academy in Guangzhou and communist cadres received training in China before founding the Indochinese Communist Party in 1930 (WOMACK 2006, 157-158; FRENCH 2017, 151). As the war

dragged on and the Japanese after their invasion granted continued French governance over Indochina, the nationalist cause and facing common enemies forged closer cross-border ties and support networks among the rebels and Chinese nationalists to promote continued separation of Indochina from China – and so a hardening of the precedence of the French-drawn boundary (STUART-FOX 2003, 137).

The Chinese response to the Western incursions led to a radical cultural and political change on how to manage and construct a state to preserve its unity and territorial integrity. A conservative pro-monarchy school of thought propagated by Kang Youwei, Tan Situng and Liang Qichao attempted to reform the traditional cosmology to bring it in line with the modern ideas of free will, rationality and individualism, but to no avail. Shedding major traditional institutions and modernizing the statescape according to the Westphalian model as in the May 4th Movement destroyed traditional markers of power and authority in favor of modern education and a new form of authority that liberated the individual and at the same time established the interest of the nation-state. However, the autocratic rule of Yuan Shikai and the Republican government in Beijing spread so much discontent and chaos that within the borders multiple centers of powers vied for authority over the state in its entirety – all within the boundaries as set in the treaties (WOMACK 2006, 150; STUART-FOX 2003, 130; YANG 2008, 3-5, 15-16; ZARROW 2001, 168). The republic as proclaimed 1911 was from the beginning dependent on local conditions to make its impact felt while warlordism altered the importance attributed the border. The weak institutions and lack of mobilization capabilities that resulted from a patchwork of pro- and anti-Yuan Shikai factions put the new Chinese state into a constant crisis with continuous incursions onto its territory. While the British could help warlords in the Guangxi and Guangdong area, the French became the major foreign power in Yunnan, providing their own infrastructure, missionary work and troops, even though they had abandoned their initial idea to use Vietnam as an entrance gate into China – and so also fostered a continued hardness of the Sino-Vietnamese boundary (WOMACK, 2006 151; LARY 2007, 188). During the warlord era, there were more than 30 mutinies and 20 revolts all over China, including the border provinces due to tax policies, land grabs and abuse from authorities, while at the same time the imperialist powers saw a chance in the chaos to make further incursions into China. The British tried to wrest Tibet off Chinese control, while France tried to invade Yunnan again, stationing troops in Laos (GENG 2015 192-193). The commander in Yunnan Cai E declared his province independent from the Yuan-state in 1915 and instigated a rebellion which many other provinces followed suit. Sun Yat-sen launched anti-Yuan campaigns,

and the entire country succumbed to warlordism (GENG 2015, 200). In this era of China, millenarism flourished and underpinned with political demands and mobilization capacities supported warlordism with an ideological underpinning pitted against Yuan Shikai as person or his state as a whole (DUARA 2008, 52-53).

After 1911, Guangxi province under control of Lu Rongting turned away from its connections to Indochina to focus on its internal rivalries and towards the north. Warlordism weakened cross-border ties even more as all resources were concentrated to win over competing factions for which French support did not bring any benefits. The British had more to offer to the warlords like Lu Rongting – not because of its possessions in Burma, but because of Hong Kong, which offered benefits to warlords ranging from firearms, access to finance to refuge in the colony if they lost their war (LARY 2007, 187-188). The border between Guangxi and French Indochina so hardened out and only served as escape route for warlords after defeats on their way to Hong Kong or later in the 1930s as entrance gate for Guomintang forces to fight Communists in the province. Guomintang, warlords and communists vied for control over the province, so that due to this back and forth between different powerholders, Guangxi remained more or less independent from the center as neither of them could establish full control until 1936. For the border to Indochina, this did not have much of an impact as most of the time, its existence was taken for granted if it even sparked any interest. (LARY 2007, 188-189).

Faced with these developments, Guomintang forces tried to coopt local rulers and so changed social dynamics especially in the border regions to overcome the rampant factionalism when they reconquered the country after Yuan Shikai's death. To bridge the split between north and south, and the factionalism between pro-Yuan Shikai groups and those seeking independence from the center, local warlords, like Lu Rongting, became heads of provinces to keep the space intact even after the Guomintang reunification of China in 1927 (LARY 1996, 190; WOMACK 2006, 38-39). The march against the warlords started from the border-area when Sun Yat-sen first coopted the Yunnan army in 1922 to use their strength and the province as a launchpad to re-unify China. This relationship was far from being stable, so he relied on the Whampoa forces to subdue first the Yunnan and Guangxi armies to start an all-out campaign, which eventually ended with a victory of the Guomintang. However, still local warlords with their own armies were present all over China – also in the border-provinces Guangdong and Yunnan – and the new state heavily relied on them to protect the integrity of the Chinese territory (VAN DE VEN 2003, 79, 85). In Guangdong, the Guomintang managed to make inroads, brought local armies and the nationalist

troops under a single command of the Military Affairs Council and so integrated the province into the new state (VAN DE VEN 2003, 87-88). However, other powerful warlords had to be co-opted. Among these were Liu Xiang who navigated the borderlands of Sichuan and Tibet and Long Yun (龙云) in Yunnan, both of which wrested large parts of the territory off the hands of the Republicans. Long Yun even issued his own currency, dealt with his own taxes and controlled the provincial trade of Yunnan. Both were co-opted to some degree by the Guomindang who used them to fight Tibetan banditry and later even equipped them with weapons to fight the communists (WELLENS 2010, 44-45, 47; KOSINGER 1942, 22). The collaboration between warlords and Guomindang however was not very stable: in 1930, Long Yun, the Yunnan-warlord, defeated the army of the Guomindang whose counter-attack nearly destroyed Long Yun's troops. The warlord could however still maintain his control over Yunnan until 1945, when Chiang Kai Shek ordered a coup against him (WELLENS 2010, 43). To stabilize a hybrid system of central oversight of local control, the Guomindang established a household registration system, which was the basis for conscription into the military service. In the end, this system was meant to gradually morph into a national military service that should make private warlord-armies obsolete, instill loyalty to the republic under the leadership of the Guomindang and increase defense capabilities – a plan that was at least to a large part successful where the Guomindang had direct control and local warlords cooperated (VAN DE VEN 2003, 143). Once the Guomindang could get Yunnan under control in 1937, the Guomindang tried to turn it into a frontline for its defense. It moved an airplane factory there, opened a steel mill and fostering the growth of the mining sectors – all measures to establish a military-industrial tie between the government and this outlying province (KOSINGER 1942, 19-21).

Keenly aware of the weakness of their ties with the borderlands, the Guomindang under Sun Yat-sen embarked on measures to create a national body of people that integrates all the different peoples of China in this new nation-state, to ensure the unity of the country. They promoted a common language, a secular understanding of statehood and state-sponsored rites that should bring the five main people of China together in the framework of the state. Chiang Kai-shek propelled this idea even further by claiming that the different people were only variations of one the same unified state-people that assumed different physical features due to the territorial diversity of China (SHIN 2006 192-193).

To consolidate the spatial idea of a modern Chinese state, the Guomindang tried a radical modernization project in the 1920s and 1930s by prohibiting all festivals of the lunar calendar and

replacing them with their own holidays. It was part of a larger modernization concept to unify the country in the wake of the Japanese occupation and the competition with communist forces for ritual, social and political power. Like that, the Guomindang wanted to create a civic body out of an imperial population and turn it into malleable citizens of a new, rational, nationalized state that could exist without a religious, cosmological legitimacy base (NEDOSTUP 2008, 88, 91-93). The new ideology was also a means to border a new space. The new calendar started with Year One of the republic and so constituted China as a nation in time while the new institutions anchored it in place, with new ideas of authority, power and territoriality replacing the ethos-based state of the empire (NEDOSTUP 2008, 94, 96). These cultural and institutional reforms and new concepts of social order provided a checkpoint for orientation that helped avoid total disintegration of the state during the chaos of the Republican-Nationalist quarrels, Japanese occupation and the civil war against communists but also provided caveats for local powerholders to navigate their own autonomy vis-à-vis the central state (NEDOSTUP 2008, 96-97,104).

The Burmese pacification in the British-French rivalry also had the effect that the border hardened even more as Yunnan got more into the orbit of the French empire and Burmese trade vanished into insignificance until the Japanese war (CROIZIER/CROZIER 1962, 15). Still, the British followed a very liberal tariff regime determined by the needs of British India, which spurred trade especially with Japan (BOOTH 2007 103). It just did not benefit the border-regions that much as in the logic of the empire, the British continued channeling all goods from the border to the coast and so intensified the hardening of the border. Steep taxes on land ownership increased the impact the state had especially in Upper Burma, where half of the net profit from the land had to be handed over to the state. This was not often applied, discounts and lenient assessments were rather the norm in taxation, but still the state could effectively claim control and oversight over these lands (BOOTH 2007, 82-83).

The British first grouped the Northern and Southern Shan States into the Federated Shan States in 1922, that the newly founded Burma Frontier Service was tasked to administer. Categorizing the area as backward track, the British set up a public service that followed its own principles when tasked to develop the area independently from the rest of Myanmar. The sawbwas stayed in power but were reduced to an advisory role to the Frontier Service and the Commissioner. This dual system worked like a membrane through which British means of coercion could flow through but modernization investments as in the rest of the country stayed out. This did not change with the Government of India Act of 1935 that established Burma as a proper colony that still excluded

the Shan states and foresaw a continuation of the dual administration (MONG 2007, 259-260; AUNG 2015, 7).

From 1930 to 1932, a rebellion caught the British by surprise, which should turn out to be one of the most massive uprisings against the colonial power. The Saya San Rebellion started in the South but the battalions of Kachins and Karens the British employed to subdue it could not stop its spread until it even engulfed the remote Shan states. With his millenarian messages, Saya San promoted himself as king who will restore the traditional moral order and the Burmese monarchy. He had two coronation ceremonies, the first in Insein, and the second in the Shan states to mark his territorial claims through ritualistic appearances. Only in 1932 could government forces subdue the rebellion with harsh consequences for instigators, leaders and participants, which in turn made the British acutely aware that it needs to implement tighter control mechanisms (BROWN 2005, 97-98; BROWN, 1997, 30). With greater British control, resistance of the Shan grew as well in the 1930s, as they wanted to see their autonomy restored as promised by the British at the time the Shan transferred their loyalty from the monarchy to the colonial powers. When the British however rejected the claim, the Shan sawbwas tried to stylize themselves as defender of the realm against invaders, yet their attempts to set up own forces was dwarfed by the recruitment of indigenous soldiers in the British Indian army (TAYLOR 2007, 77). The border so could remain intact, protected by a territory that was largely cut off from the rest of the country and still under control of British forces.

Due to this hardening and centralizing, the remaining Wa-states who maintained their independence got under pressure again in the 1920s when slag heaps and the Maolong mine proved to be exploitable for lead. In 1934, the British undertook a military expedition against the Wa that eventually failed against the resistance of a pro-Chinese Wa alliance who after the warlord-era and the re-establishment of the republic reconnected with their tributary ties to the Chinese. In the end, a commission of the League of Nations had to propose a boundary in 1937, whose findings however China only accepted in 1941. When the Second World War spilled over into Southeast Asia, the British used the Wa states to supply Chinese Nationalist forces over the Burma Road while the Japanese occupation finally split up the states and attributed them to either China or British Burma, turning them into an extractive periphery (FISKESJÖ 2010, 253-254; WHYTE 2013, 194-195; PRESCOTT/TRIGGS 2008, 331).

Another area that got under similar territorializing pressure was the Hkakakabo Razi Range, Adung Long valley and the T'runng River in the area where Tibet, Burma and China meets. This

area was home of the Khampti Shan kingdom that was hardly mapped and up to the 1930s a target for Chinese and Tibetan raiders for herbs and T'Rung slaves, while the Qing Empire since 1904 tried to gain control over the area out of fear of incursions. British control brought some stability, yet the area was so remote that hardly any explorers or merchants settled there (KLIEGER 2003, 238, 241). Some civilizing missions and missionaries tried to penetrate the area inhabited by not only T'Rung but also Rawang, Karon, and Hlatu who periodically cooperated or fought each other, but this area was so secluded and communication lines limited only to interaction between the communities that even in the 1950s encounters with T'Rung were labelled as discoveries (KLIEGER 2003 242, 245-246). The British claimed their border but it did not have any meaning for the groups that inhabited this area for most of the time. Even when Tibetan Khampas settled in the region after clashes with Guomindang over Tibet in the 1930s and constituted a form a local elite of transregional merchants, their activities remained fairly uninhibited by the British boundaries (KLIEGER 2003, 247-248).

Laos was transformed from being a backwater and buffer to an integral part of the colony. The main goal was to dissolve any links to Siam to make it a colonial polity in its own right. Infrastructure was the main means – such as air links or the Route Coloniale No. 13 – to anchor Laos in the construct of Indochina. This was supported by a greater influx of Vietnamese workers and officials to administer Laos on behalf of the French colonial administration (IVARSSON 2008, 98, 101). The design in which the Lao space should be integrated was a Vietnamese-dominant Indochina, in which Laos should be brought under Vietnamese administration – a trope that also Vietnamese nationalists in the 1920s and 1930s picked up. The result of this process was a stable administrative integration of Laos into the colonial design of Indochina, but not as a nation – colonized or not – in its own right (IVARSSON 2008, 106-107).

To preserve local identities and traditions, the negation of which could become a danger for French rule, the French envisaged a federalization of Indochina in the end of the 1920s. This idea would allow taking into account local particularities but binding them together within the French empire – and should serve as a remedy against increasing nationalist rebellions and revolts. Laos, Tonkin and Annam so should be strengthened as distinct cultural spaces in their identity, hardening the border further and instilling a territorial notion of nationhood and statecraft (IVARSSON 2008, 110-111; STUART-FOX 1993 110). The French only did the bare minimum to build Lao institutions. In education, they relied on pagoda schools until the 1930s, which essentially excluded the non-Buddhist people from participating in the new space that the Lao-people dominat-

ed more and more. The nationalization of the Sangha was another means to create a spiritual dimension of the Lao space that coincided with the territorial reach of the colony. This should happen by giving the Sangha a national character devoid of Siamese influence through adopting specific Lao-related rules and constructing a Buddhist Institute in Vientiane. Further means to instill a distinct Lao national identity included a Lao historiography that celebrated French colonial rule and the vernacularization and standardization of the Lao language and script in the 1930s. The educated elite though also learned from other forms of nationalism, especially from Siam, and started to develop an anti-French national consciousness (EVANS/OSBORNE 2002, 70-73).

The Second World War was a general watershed moment for the entire area. It did not dissolve the border-space as in previous cycles, rather it re-confirmed the boundaries as they existed before.

The turmoil Japanese atrocities caused to China did not allow for grand discussion but required actions to restore the integrity of China as a whole. In addition to forming two United Fronts, the Republicans also called on hitherto frowned-upon sectarian movements to support the anti-Japanese agenda and co-opted them as tools for anti-Japanese resistance (PALMER 2008, 118-119). The Japanese on the other hand were skillful in setting up a collaborating regime in Nanjing under Wang Jingwei, which it used for pacification campaigns to counter communist forces and increase the territorial reach of the Japanese empire into the Chinese countryside (HACK/RETTIG 2006a, 23).

This had wide-ranging repercussions. The war against Japan sparked a keen awareness of the border that suddenly gained in strategic importance. Guangxi lost its autonomy and became part of the Republic in 1937, whose government became so the sole responsible for Sino-Indochinese relations. The province became a launchpad to send troops to fight against the Japanese. With the establishment of the Vichy-regime in France and Indochina and the agreement with Tokyo allowing Japanese troops to roam in the French colony, the border became a potential threat to the Guomindang-state that the Japanese had not yet occupied. Interestingly, this stretch of the border remained largely under control of French forces who prevented a direct stationing of Japanese troops and who maintained friendly relations with Chinese forces. Still, in the war theater, the Guangxi border became another frontline in the fight against the Japanese, which despite being inactive for most of the time-fixated limits of the Chinese realm at this boundary due to the permanent and potential threat it posed and due to the invasion Japan launched via this line in 1940. This invasion was pushed back across the boundary line. In the end, Japanese troops conquered

the province in a massive campaign in 1943 without any Japanese troops dispatched from Indochina (LARY 2007, 191-192, 193-194, 195).

On the Sino-British border, the Japanese invasion also left its marks. With the influx of Chinese settlers and refugees to Burma after the war broke out in 1937, not only did it increase the sense for the border among the Burmese who saw the Chinese influx with concern for their country, but also elevated nationalist support among the existing Chinese diaspora in favor of a territorially defined China, whose inviolability the Japanese infringed. This part of the border became a showdown of a Western colonial world order against Showa expansionist nationalism where both British and Chinese troops tried to turn the fate of Burma getting under Japanese occupation (STUART-FOX 2003, 133-134). The Japanese entered Myanmar by sea, the warfare dissolved the barrier the British had set up between the frontier-region and the Burmese core, yet still the Japanese followed a similar system of divide and rule as the British did, not allowing the Shans and the border polities in general to administer their states according to their tradition (MONG 2007, 260). What they caused though was a revival of ethnic nationalism among the general and border population who had faced the discriminatory policies of the British, especially regarding security and defense. Some border-people, such as the Kachin, were in turn crucial for the reconquering of Burma as they had deep loyalties to the British (TAYLOR 2006, 191).

During the Japanese occupation, private armies sprang up, such as the All-Burma Volunteers (*Ye Tat*), who even offered their services to fight against Japanese forces and who increased the patriotism among the young Burmese generation. The mobilization of the youth in paramilitary organisations was a staple in the Japanese strategy to instill anti-colonial hatred and a nationalism oriented towards Japanese liberation. This large body of young people, trained and educated in Japanese anti-colonialism, became later a bedrock to mobilise against a British re-occupation of Burma (TAYLOR 2006, 194; AHMAD 2006 212-213). The most powerful of the nationalist armies by Japanese design were the Thirty Comrades around General Aung San, who were trained in Tokyo and should liberate Burma from the British on behalf of the Japanese. They were the core of the Burma Independence Army, ethnically predominantly Burman, nationalist in their conviction but despite its constant growth in numbers, unable to penetrate the border-areas (TAYLOR 2006, 195-196). Economically, the Japanese promoted the production of cash-crops on industrial scale and even allowed Thailand to occupy the Southern Shan States in 1942 and Shan States of Mongpaw and Kengtung in 1943, creating a Sino-Thai border which only ceased to exist when Thailand turned the states over to Britain as part of the peace-treaty in 1947

(MAULE 2002, 221; WHYTE 2013, 195; AUNG 2015, 9). To consolidate their territorial reach and facilitate the transport of their army, the Japanese built railways and other infrastructure that would allow maintaining a large number of troops (CRAGER 2008, 67).

By 1942, all colonial powers had surrendered to Japan – taking a huge blow to their prestige and power, yet Japan had not yet set up the capacities to govern the vast areas it had conquered. Tapping the narrative of being the liberators of the colonized countries, the Japanese could install local officials to administer their states as Japanese provinces except for Indochina, which granted Japanese access and special rights for economic exploitation and stationing troops. The methods with which the Japanese tried to eradicate Western legacies in the construction of the Greater East Asian Co-Prosperity Sphere however reinforced the pre-existing borders. Ideologically it relied on the idea of a common civilizational realm that was on par with the West, which should find to a new awakening by expulsing the colonialist powers and emulating the Meiji Restoration – including its nationalism – and should be led by Japan. In practice it turned into a system that promoted economic autarchy, resource extraction for and political control from Japan, so that each part had a specific place – delineated by already existing borders – and from this place could serve a specific function, supported by nationalist – not Japanese – youth groups that should instill a political role and organizational identity into the youth of the countries Japan occupied. Southeast Asia remained only on the periphery of the Japanese empire, yet this view only increased the bordering practices vis-à-vis its more closer colony, China (BOOTH 2007, 150-151; HACK/ RETTIG 2006b, 58-59; ESENBEL 2004, 1144-1145).

The Chinese nationalists, alerted by these movements and in fear the Japanese may plan an overland-expedition against Yunnan and Sichuan, stationed two divisions to protect the border in 1941. They also upgraded the military infrastructure, while Long Yun, the local warlord, kept a tight control over the people of Yunnan. Later, the Americans supplied Nationalist troops at the border as the fear of a Japanese invasion via the border against Yunnan increasingly turned a real threat (VAN DE VEN 2003, 22, 38).

In Burma, the Japanese-introduced nationalism sparked too anti-Japanese resistance, which should find its apex with the rebellion of 1945. While first nationalist armies were glad for foreign support in their anti-colonial struggle, like the formation of the Burma Independence Army, soon anti-Japanese forces formed, such as the Communist Party of Burma, which grouped several rebel groups, including minority leaders in an anti-Japanese struggle. The created a united resistance group, the Anti-Fascist Organisation, in 1944, including Aung San and his Thirty Com-

rades. The unity was under constant stress as it spanned communists, non-communists, members of the Burmese army, Burmese and minority resistance troops. Still, in 1945 they decided to overthrow the Japanese occupation and ally themselves with the Allied forces. This was the founding moment of the Anti-Fascist People's Freedom League (AFPFL) that divided Burma into seven resistance zones, each one led by a different movement (AHMAD 2006, 215-216).

While Japan ravaged China, Indochina remained a supply-center for the nationalist Chinese forces in Chongqing. The Japanese however tapped into the pool of Vietnamese refugees in China to coopt them with promises of independence from colonial oppression. The goal was to set up a Vietnamese liberation-force, the Việt Nam Kiến quốc Quân (Army for the Reconstruction of Viet-Nam) to undertake a conservative liberation under the authority of the emperor Bao Dai as remnant of the Nguyễn dynasty. This irregular troop attacked border-postings of the French in Guangdong in 1940 and so paved the way for a Japanese invasion, which turned against the Vietnamese once an agreement was hammered out that allowed continued French authority under the Vichy regime and Japanese economic exploitation of the colony (BOOTH 2007, 152; CHIEU 1986, 299). For Japan, Indochina was a raw-material supplier, which it forced to convert food-crop land to cash crop cultivation and conscripted forced labor for defense and infrastructure projects (BOOTH 2007, 156; RAFFIN 2003 308). The Vichy-regime representatives in Indochina imported their reactionary ideology and applied it in the colony as well with ever-harsher repressions against all agitation that was considered anti-French (BROCHEUX/HENERY 2009, 337-340; BOOTH 2007, 149). In addition, the Vichy government tried to instill pro-French patriotic feelings into the youth of Indochina by requiring them to join paramilitary youth organizations. These organizations were part of a technique to keep control over the hybrid governance of the colony in which neither Japan nor France had a monopoly of violence. Vietnamese in the administration and the colonial armies quickly adapted to the new circumstances of French sovereignty and Japanese exploitation, and mutual defence obligations between these two powers (RAFFIN 2003, 303-304, 308). The French constantly increased their measures to instill an imperial patriotism and love for the colony and the colonists among the youth, given the Communist alternatives to national liberation that spread underground. They were tasked with upholding internal security and serving as bulwark against anti-French organizations (RAFFIN 2003, 309, 313).

It was in this atmosphere that Nguyễn Ai Quoc, better known as Ho Chi Minh, saw a chance to free Vietnam from colonial oppression. He created the League for Independence of Vietnam (Việt Nam độc lập đồng minh), better known as Viet Minh, with the sole goal of liberating the

country – the ideological underpinnings were secondary. The Viet Minh used the border-areas to first devise a strategy of how to spread their revolutionary ideas (ANDERSON 2005, 10; RAFFIN 2003, 309).

In terms of societal development, this strategy of hybrid power and an imperial nationalism backfired. Even though the French designed them to be non-elitist, these groups did not spread far beyond the colonial centers and remained an affair of collaborating Vietnamese officials. In Laos, these groups even served the purpose of promoting a Lao national identity among the offspring of the Lao elites, of which some should later become the core of the anti-colonial Lao Issara that should take power in 1945. In Vietnam, alumni of the Vichy-youth movements joined the Indochinese Communist Party and the Viet Minh (RAFFIN 2003, 317-318).

Politically the co-existence of Japanese forces and Vichy-loyal officials also backlashed on the international and national level. In Indochina's international relations, it had repercussions with the Guomindang, who saw a betrayal of China in the French behavior. The Guomindang started support anti-French revolutionaries who had sought refuge in Yunnan and Guangxi – regardless of their ideological adherence. Among those trainees in Guomindang academies were also later leading figures of the Viet Minh, who used the border-areas under the umbrella of Chinese protection and supplies to gain strength and map the re-structuring of the state after the revolution (LARY 2007, 195; ANDERSON 2005, 11). One important pillar of the Viet Minh strategy was literacy. As the French used education as a tool to maintain control and only a small number of people were admitted to secondary schools and the number of university students were negligible, Vietnamese intellectuals and nationalists appropriated *quoc ngu* for their own purposes, launching a literacy campaign that brought ideas of independence and Vietnamese nationalism even into the most remote places of Vietnam (CARTER 2008, 41; HENLEY 1995, 292-293; REID 2009, 27).

Domestically, in Indochina, when facing the repressive, discriminatory Vichy-regime, the new French-trained local intellectuals – mainly in Vietnam – were further attracted to nationalist ideas. The Indochinese Communist Party, founded 1930, took these up with the integration of various other nationalist groups with a similar attraction to communist ideas in the Viet Minh front in 1941. Japanese occupation and French repression gave them time to develop a clear agenda and ideology tailored for the needs of especially the Vietnamese. The dismantling of communal structures in the countryside was met with ire and frustration among the population – a dissatisfaction the communists could tap easily. They successfully transformed the communalistic character of

village-politics and traditional thinking into a political resource and so they were ready to strike in 1945, declaring independence and eclipsing all influence the VNQDD has had as it fled to China under protection of the Guomindang (BROCHEUX/HENERY 2009, 339, 349-350, 352; KERKVLIT 2005, 39; NGUYỄN-MARSHALL 2005, 240; NGUYỄN-MARSHALL 2007, 166). The two major factors in the success of the ICP-established Viet Minh was first its main appeal to patriotic and nationalist sentiments, while toning down the emphasis on socialism and communism. Second, it learned from the mistakes of the 1930 Yen Bay uprising and concentrated on the mobilization of the rural areas, in which it could spread its messages over larger territories and trap the French in a protracted guerilla warfare. It could so rally communists, non-communists and minorities along the lines of a common goal – Vietnamese independence. The Viet Minh conducted major campaigns to foster a shared patriotic sense among the population, such as literacy campaigns, land distributions, tax reforms, while the guerilla-troops under Vo Nguyễn Giáp gathered strength in the border-region of Cao Bang, Lang Son and Bac Kan. The Viet Minh also received weaponry and equipment from the Allied Forces in exchange for anti-Japanese intelligence, which increased its capabilities to police its territories at the border (AHMAD 2006, 217-218; THEE 1980, 223-224; WOMACK 2006, 143, 153; GOSCHA 2012, 808-809). A major catalyst was the Tonkin Famine of 1942-1943, caused by Japanese rice-requisitions to which the French administration could not find an adequate solution but starving the Vietnamese population. While they exploited Vietnam on large scale for rice exports, the famine – aggravated by the destruction of granary systems and the establishment of state-farms and plantations – drove more and more people towards the Viet Minh who were able to control the worst effects of the food shortage (WOMACK 2006, 73, 151).

The watershed happened in March 1945, when the Japanese disarmed the French and took over the administration of Indochina as a whole. The French troops had to evacuate, except for one part that moved to the mountains in the Sino-Indochinese borderland to protect itself and plot a counter-attack. Nevertheless, the damage was done: the Japanese handed over a conditional independence to the Indochinese, which only catalyzed underground anti-colonial sentiments, most of which were still forbidden like the ICP or in exile like the VNQDD (CHIEU 1986, 295; BROCHEUX/ HENERY 2009, 348-349). After the coup, the Viet Minh could consolidate its position in northern Vietnam gathering more and more supporters for the national cause. In August 1945, the Viet Minh finally took the matters of Vietnam in their own hands. They formed a government, gave honorific titles to nobles and promised the VNQDD representation in the national

assembly under the condition that Chinese nationalist troops – flowing into Northern Vietnam towards the end of the war – withdraw from the Vietnamese borderlands. Even though the French arrived again in Indochina a few months later to take back control, they never could re-establish full control over the entire territory. The Viet Minh were too organized and disciplined and knew better how to navigate the northern mountainous border areas to retreat, build bases, gather support among locals and launch guerilla attacks on French posts, which was facilitated by the French reluctance or inability to deploy the necessary resources to control the remote corners of Vietnam (ANDERSON 2005, 13, 15; AHMAD 2006, 218). The role of the Guomindang was very ambivalent. On the one hand, they occupied and looted northern Vietnam and facilitated the return of the French to Tonkin in 1946 – despite all anti-colonial rhetoric – if they let go of their privileges in China. On the other hand, they maintained ties to the Viet Minh when it retreated to the border-area, opened trade routes and fostered bilateral relations with the Vietnamese communists, until the People's Liberation Army conquered the Chinese southwest in 1949. Overall, the coup of 1945 legitimized Ho Chi Minh as leader of an independent Vietnam and mandated him to continue his struggle against the French (WOMACK 2006, 157, 158).

The border for the time being reverted again to a quiet, badly policed area in which the Viet Minh could gather strength, only interrupted in 1949 when Guomindang troops fled from communist forces into Indochina. The boundary became again of geostrategic importance as it shielded French Indochina from two threats: decommissioned Guomindang soldiers and Communist forces that were allied with the Viet Minh, whose fighting tactics included the negation of any national boundaries to seek refuge, provide supplies and install bases. The border became a fortified line, this time not to prevent the French from invading China but keeping a Chinese threat out of Viet Nam – the purpose it served throughout the entire pre-colonial era (LARY 2007, 196).

In Laos, the Japanese advance had similar detrimental effects on French prestige. In the border war with Siam in 1941, the Japanese forced the French colonialists to leave Sayaboury to Siam. As of 1939, a new pan-Tai ideology emerged in Thailand – the kingdom changed its name to reflect a modern nationalism – that was supposed to include all Thai and Tai-speaking peoples, within and outside the borders of Thailand. This included the Lao-inhabited parts of Laos, the Shan states and Sipsong Panna. To counter anti-French sentiments all over Indochina, Japanese troops and pan-Thaiism of the Phibun government, the French opened higher positions in the administration for Lao people and set measures in motion to secure the loyalty of local elites helping the colonialists to cultivate pro-French nationalisms in the context of federalization, like the

Lao Renovation Movement, that were supposed to anchor Laos more firmly in Indochina and legitimize colonial rule by recognizing a Lao culture and identity (IVARSSON 2008, 146; PHOLSANE 2004, 242-243; STUART-FOX 2003, 140; CRIBB/NARANGO 2004, 170). The Lao Renovation movement had the task to instill a distinct Lao identity by promoting literature, music and history and so should help build a unitary state population that could be distinguished culturally and geographically from the surrounding countries, though it only spoke to the Buddhist lowland population (PHOLSANE 2004, 244). A major tool was the Ecole d'Administration that should promote the "National Idea of Laos" instilling nation building into administration as well as the many newly constructed schools that should put education in the service of nation-building (EVANS/OSBORNE 2002 78). The French had great hopes for the King of Luang Prabang to support their endeavor. To compensate for the losses in the debacle of the war against Siam, the French included the provinces of Haut-Mekong, Xieng Khouang and Vientiane into his kingdom, which should provide the outlining concept to give Laos a distinct cultural personality within the French empire. However, except for the nominal suzerainty of the king of Luang Prabang, the French failed to build political or other institutions that would actually put the federalization in cultural, linguistic and identity-terms into action. It was not more than a ploy to counter the pan-Thaiist movement and elevate French oppression as protection against belligerent Siam and Hawbandits and as a remedy against decadence, internal rivalry and anarchy. Nationalist sentiments were nevertheless there and the proclamation of Lao independence under the Japanese in 1945 not only proved the viability of a Lao state but also served as a precedence for the validity of the nationalist ideas of a unified Laos that could blaze their trail in the vacuum after the Japanese surrender. 1945 so was the year in which for the first time since the demise of Lan Xang that northern and southern Laos formed a unitary state (STUART-FOX 1995, 137-138; IVARSSON 2008, 149, 155, 167; TOWNSEND-GAULT 2013, 143).

After the war, the re-establishment of institutions proved their resilience to adapt to changing circumstances. The Japanese war had two large effects. First, it confirmed the borders as they existed as the ideas about an East Asian Co-Prosperty Sphere featured a strict bordering-principle between jurisdictions and peoples under Japanese control and different purposes allotted to them. As Southeast Asia was only seen as a raw materials supply for Japanese exports, the role of China and South Korea was to maintain supply chains and manufacturing – drawing a border of economic activities and responsibilities along the political borders as set by the colonial states – a policy that left Southeast Asia with poverty, starvation and economic and infrastructural devasta-

tion after the war (HOTTA 2007, 202-204; YANG 2008, 25-26; BOOTH 2007, 148, 158). Second it amplified and catalyzed the power of nationalist narratives once the war was over and the colonial powers tried to make a comeback. The Japanese created local armies to support anti-colonial tendencies against the former powers, but also spurred the foundation of anti-colonial armies that directed their expeditions against both Japanese and European colonial oppression. Vietnam had declared its independence in 1945, Myanmar engaged in a long nationalist battle to reach independence and Japanese occupation of Laos confirmed this piece of territory to be a viable state. All attempts to retake the colonies were met with resistance and uprisings, but all of these happened within and along the borders as set by colonists and none of the movements put the validity of the boundary between China and the Southeast Asian states in question (LOCKARD 2009, 153-154, 160-161; CHANDLER 1987, 443; STUART-FOX 1995, 138; AHMAD 2006, 222; AHMAND 2006, 202-203).

The period of Japanese colonization also set in motion an industrial development and economic expansion in the colonial states, which could form a base for viable independent economies in a post-colonial world order. It also instilled the idea of a national state-led economy, confined to its territorial border within which it should be developed and fostered (BEESON 2009, 10-11). Communist and non-communist armies rejecting European rule grew in force over time and even collaborated emulating the United Front in China. Anti-Japanese and anti-colonial sentiments so bound together a ragtag of troops – like the Viet Minh, Pathet Lao or the Burma Independence Army – whose aim was to nationalize their states (AHMAND 2006, 202-203). In addition, China's border hardened during that time as most of the state actors were caught up in solving their internal issues for which they needed a stable and controlled situation at the border (STUART-FOX 2003 142).

During the period of decolonization, despite the wars, violence and commotions that left the states vulnerable, the national agenda to harden the boundaries and establish an equilibrium based on control and sovereignty inexorably institutionalized.

After the Japanese war, the only state that could assume its independence in full was Vietnam – and later found itself in a 30-year protracted warfare to stay independent –, while the others succumbed to civil wars, anti-colonial wars or internal rebellions (AHMAD 2006, 214). Vietnam found a strong supporter in Chinese Communist Party for its declaration of independence in 1945 and in the subsequent war to avoid a re-establishment of colonial oppression. This support was as much driven by ideological affinity as it was by geopolitical concerns of the Chinese Com-

munists to avoid Western powers on their southern borders. At the border so again China's regional ambitions crystallized with its claim to be a leader of the communist movements in the decolonizing states. However, the border hardened even more when Vietnam became itself more assertive to take a leadership role of the communist movements in the former territory of Indochina and the relationship with China tilted from unequivocal support to an unease relation of convenience under constant threat of military clashes (THEE 1980, 226-227).

The six months after the Japanese helped the birth of Laos' independence saw the unification of the country as a political entity, that could survive on its own. The constitution of 1947 was the starting point of Lao decolonization as well as the revival of institutionalized politico-religious Lao practices and institutions. To give the state a territory, all people in Laos became citizens of the new state. To shield Laos from Thai or Vietnamese claims, the nationalists defined Lao-ness through Buddhism, monarchy and Lao language. The revival of Buddhism's role in statecraft and the authority of the royalty however lacked a clear political or ideological role in the new set-up of a constitutional monarchy. The kingdom of Laos also could not solve the question how to integrate indigenous people in the new political life. The new political order in combination with traditional sources of legitimacy only led to exclusions. Coups instigated by elite clans and families continued to weaken the legitimacy of the internal structure, and pockets grew in which the communist Pathet Lao could gain ground (STUART-FOX 1993 111-112; STUART-FOX 1983, 436-437; PHOLSANE 2004, 245). Despite all that, the territory did not dissolve or fragment, the boundaries became even stronger as markers of the state as they were the base of the communist rebels – a distinctively nationalist movement against the royalists. In the discriminatory structure of the Lao state, which labelled the indigenous population as inferior, the communists could quickly gain support among the population in the borderlands and create a new narrative for the state based on equality between and among the peoples reflected in the idea of Laos as a multi-ethnic nation that shared a national space, making politically the margins and borders as important as the lowland centers – something the Royal Lao Government never even considered. But in essence in the end not much changed: Lao hegemony stayed in place with Buddhism as state religion and Lao the official language and script to culturally demarcate the political space (SAFMAN 2007 41-42; PHOLSANE 2004, 246, 258). Laos' independence was tied to a declaration of neutrality, which should prevent Lao expansionism and protect Laos from territorial incursions – legally strengthening the borders of Laos, yet not preventing violations of Laos' sovereignty and territorial integrity. Not all of the Lao state was under control as remnants such as

Hmong who collaborated with the French and later the Americans had their own pockets of autonomy, while the Americans maintained a large military base in the Plain of Jars literally outside the reach of the Lao state. Still, these pockets existed within the defined boundaries of the Laotian polity (LEE 2008, 3; THEE 1980, 228-229).

1945 was also a watershed year for Burma. The constant growth of the Burma Independence Army became less controllable for the Japanese, so that they dissolved and re-established the troops as the Burma Defence Army already in 1942. The Thirty Comrades were the officer corps that was tasked to maintain a free Burma on behalf of the Japanese. It turned into the Burma National Army and in 1945 into the Burma Army. Its size and force increased suspicion and scrutiny from the Japanese overlords, who still funded training and equipment, including a military academy whose graduates should later staff large parts of the administrative, military and diplomatic corps of the independent Union of Burma (AHMAD 2006 204-206). These suspicions proved to be right as in 1945, the Burma Defence Army turned against the Japanese, strived for full independence and only found an uneasy relationship with Louis Mountbatten who was tasked with restoring British order. The White Paper for Burma foresaw that after a period of reconstruction, Burma should become a self-governing polity in the commonwealth, yet this essentially meant the return to pre-WWII conditions. This prospect led to the foundation of the Anti-Fascist People's Freedom League and the preservation of the Aung San-troops (TAYLOR 2006 195-196; WALTON 2008, 896).

The Japanese capitulation, the power-vacuum it left over the border and the promotion of the ideas of the Anti-Fascist People's Freedom League (AFPFL) under Aung San, provided the border-peoples the necessary impetus for new claims for autonomy. The British White Paper proposal that should allow self-government for Burma and a Frontier Administration Department indirectly ruling the border-regions never had a chance to be accepted. Burma gained its independence in 1947, facing major unrest among the ethnic minorities. Under British rule, the Shan had a prominent spot in the fabric of the colony as they enjoyed not only internal autonomy but also its written language recognized in coins and public signs. However, pressure to integrate non-Burmese into Burmese society was a major goal of the British. When the Japanese granted independence to Burma in 1943, they accelerated this trend when they included Shan and Karenni states in the Burmese polity as a result of Burmese pressure so that after 1945 the course of territorial consolidation was set. The new federal constitution adopted at the Panglong Conference in 1947 granted a high degree of autonomy of the Shan and Kachin states but put them under supervision

of a Secretary of the Frontier Area as condition for their participation in the Union of Burma. The conclusion document of the Panglong Conference was supposed to bring the different parts of this highly divided Burmese society together but failed in including all elements. Nevertheless, this constitution granted the sawbwas stay in power, which they did until 1959 or even beyond. (JAIYEN 1993, 1-3; TAYLOR 2007, 78; MONG 2007, 260; AUNG 2015, 10; LEE 2011, 78; GIERSCH 1997, 39-40; WALTON 2008, 898).

In the 1950s the Shan states themselves were by no means a unified territory. Guomintang troops were present until the 1970s, the Communist Party of Burma hid in the Wa hills until it fell apart in 1989 and a Shan United Army fought for Shan independence until 1996 (CHANG 2015, 264). The states still had a short revival as crossroads for regional trade in the frontier area between Thailand, Burma and Yunnan – a fact owed to the strong Guomintang presence at the border and the focus on illicit opium trade given that after 1949 regular trade between Burma and the People's Republic came to a halt (CHANG 2015 257; GIERSCH 1997, 36).

At the beginning of the Japanese war, the Guomintang posted two companies at the border between Burma and Sipsong Panna, which not only disrupted trade and broke transregional ties, it also changed the mode of production as Chinese soldiers – and bandit groups that sprawled in the vacuum after the end of the war – regularly looted surrounding villages for opium and livestock. After the allied forces stopped supplies, these soldiers in their isolation became a semi-independent polity that lived of opium trading between Burma and China. When the Communists advanced on Burma, the Nationalist troops and Yunnanese Han Chinese fled to Burma so that in some Shan-cities, Chinese were the majority and some Shan counties came under control of the Guomintang. By 1951 there were 2000 Guomintang troops stationed in the Sino-Burmese borderlands, building military bases and airfields and enlisting the local population for auxiliary tasks. The Guomintang soldiers continued controlling the opium trade networks becoming the largest drug traffickers in the region and extracted fees for “protection” from the villages, while Han-Chinese refugees provided resources and taxes from their trading activities to maintain the troops. The government on Taiwan sent funds to support these troops in their fight against communism, which became an ever more popular ideology among the Shan. Also the US supported the Guomintang troops in Burma to prevent a spill-over of communist forces to Burma and Thailand. The turning point was 1960, when Burma and the PRC concluded a border agreement, which allowed China to intervene militarily against the Guomintang troops twice. After intense diplomatic efforts and several additional military expeditions by the Burmese Army, the

Guomindang troops were finally evacuated to Taiwan in the 1960s, leaving behind a war-torn and political instable territory, which would struggle to consolidate again throughout the rest of the 20th century. Given the increased pressure from the Burmese Communist Party, minority troops and the Burmese state, remaining Guomindang troops pushed southward to Thailand in the 1970s before they disbanded in the end of the 1980s (AUNG 2015, 10; STURGEON 2004, 469; CHANG 2015, 249-250, 251-253; BACHMAN 2006, 951; VAN DE VEN 2003 243-244, 284). The constant struggle between Chinese nationalists and Shan communists let small, armed political groups among the minorities emerge, who followed policies to strengthen the agency of Shan polities militarily and politically. (STURGEON 2004, 469). With the retreat of the Guomindang forces, Shan-polities quickly replaced them in managing the opium trade networks to Thailand and Hong Kong, from the income of which they could arm themselves. Local farmers were kept in check by being bound in patronage-relations, which provided protection in exchange for grain and the opium (STURGEON 2004, 470, 472).

Aung San promised the nascent local Shan and Karen polities a greater role in the new Burmese state, yet after his assassination in 1948, a period of constant fights between the central government and the local armies started, that essentially maneuvered the Shan-states totally out of reach of the Burmese state (STURGEON 2004, 470; GIERSCHE 1997, 32-33). In subsequent years, the Burmese pressure grew considerably so that by 1959 all sawbwas had given up their autonomies, leading only to more conflicts that did emanate in the border-regions and should determine the precarious sovereignty the Burmese state grappled with throughout the 20th century. In the early 1960s the Union of Burma was on the brink of dissolution. In the Shan states, for example, the Shan United Army resulted from the extractive ecosystem that the Guomindang left, which should seal the Shan states off from any intervention of the Burmese government. A military coup in 1962 under General U Ne Win set the stage for a new form of state-building through the massive use of force which reversed the trend of regional autonomy and loose centralization. A large nationalization programme of agriculture and natural resources should increase centralization and command over the border-areas. It disrupted official trading patterns, but actually drove a lot of activities underground and sparked more resistance that eventually morphed into multiple local warlord governments that split the country along ethnic lines (SAFMAN 2007, 58; STURGEON 2004, 470; CHANG 2015 257-258). The Shan United Army was a major group in this patchwork of local powerholders, controlling an area from the northern Shan State to the northern Thai border and fighting both the Burmese central government and the remnants of Guomindang-

troops, which once supported them with weapons and manpower. Despite some brief periods of collaboration with the Burmese government, their fight for Shan independence continued until 1996 – a timespan during which the Burmese government had hardly any control over the northern border, even though it managed to station some troops in the area (CHANG 2015, 254-255). It was somehow a pre-colonial pattern of a government that had no direct control over the area and multiple actors in constantly shifting alliances, which eventually hardened the border as an undefined territory, yet not as a strict line.

French Indochina faced the most protracted transition to independence. Out of fear to set a precedent for the colonies in Africa, the French tried to suppress the agitations of nationalist leaders that garnered popular support under the Japanese occupation and ignored the independence declarations of Laos and Vietnam, eventually leading to the First Indochina War. The Sino-Lao-Vietnamese borders remained untouched in their geographic location throughout this period and inscribed as an internationally recognized fact with the Geneva Convention of 1954 and the Paris Peace Accords of 1973 (BOOTH 2007, 160-161; cf. CLAD 2011, 16; LEE 2011, 72). The northern Vietnamese consolidated their territorial reach with several campaigns meant to increase state control and administrative penetration. After 1954, the party set up labor exchange groups in which several households collectively had to organize their contributions towards a mostly agricultural, labor-intensive task – a precursor to collectivization. An excessive land reform provided the new state with a detailed overview of possessions and the power to nationalize these lands for its own economic design. This land-reform helped the party and the government to gain support, even though its flaws led to a lot of injustice. On state-level, it however helped the administration to penetrate and show its power even in remote areas. In addition, the state launched relocation campaigns to sedentarize minorities and resettle Kinh-villagers from the lowland in the border areas for economic development and national defense purposes (KERKVLiet 2005, 45-46; MACLEAN 2013, 50; cf. SOLOMON 1969, 33; PELLEY 1998, 385; HARDY 2000, 320; MCLEOD 1999, 368). From 1961 to 1966, in the aftermath of the Sino-Soviet split, the communist government fortified its claim by a re-settlement campaign to create New Economic Zones along the border areas Bac Thai, Son La and Lai Chau. These campaigns were meant to integrate the peripheries in the newly independent state, expand agricultural production and create a border-population into whom the state could instill strong nationalist and patriotic sentiments and whose loyalty rests with Hanoi and only had limited interests in trans-border relations. The fear of a fall-out of the split between Mao and Khrushchev certainly also played a role to in-

crease border-vigilance and emphasize nationalist struggles, even though China was a main supporter of the Viet Minh in the war against the United States. With the tool of agricultural expansion and re-settlement, the state could expand its control over the border areas and local minorities and could territorialize and consolidate its administrative reach while legitimizing its claims over these remote areas (DE KONINCK/DERY 1997, 10-11, 21-23; WOMACK 2006, 26; THEE 1980, 224).

The relationship between China and Vietnam deteriorated from then on, as Vietnam repeatedly violated China's borders, condoned anti-Chinese discrimination and grew closer to the Soviet Union. As Vietnam saw China as the most direct enemy, it took a more offensive strategy against its northern neighbor, which continuously hardened and fortified the Vietnamese boundaries as an anti-China front. The antagonism finally erupted in the Third Indochina War of 1979, in which China attacked the borders of Vietnam to bring the country back in line, eliminate potential threats and also to use it as a playground testing the PLA's capabilities in the field (ZHANG 2005, 852-854; THAYER 2014, 2). China did not go for a full-blown offensive, but engaged in a limited, orchestrated campaign to take the border-provinces, destroy military installations and then withdraw. The attacks were still massive and the battles some of the bloodiest the Vietnamese and Chinese armies had to fight in the 20th century. What followed was a Chinese containment policy against Vietnam, that included both constant military threats, occasional battles at the border and reduced material and monetary support for Hanoi, which hardened the boundary between the two states further (ZHANG 2005, 860, 863, 867; THAYER 2014, 1). Hanoi used the incursion for a general mobilization and a strengthening of border posts by pandering to Vietnamese patriotism and the historical Chinese attacks on Vietnamese sovereignty (ZHANG 2005, 868).

The war against Japanese occupation and the civil war between republicans and communists in China perpetuated violence, conflict and coercion between the territorial spread of these ideologies but by continuing this systemic competition through establishing territorial control, the civil war solidified the reach where the Chinese state should end in the south. In the aftermath, violent outbursts such as the Cultural Revolution or the Great Leap Forward had the same effect to contain the territorial reach of the state and so to continue the border where it was set by the colonists (MAZOWER 2002, 1170). A great step in the institutionalization of these borders happened when the Peoples' Republic in 1949 granted automatic citizenship to all residents within the boundaries. To not provoke too much resistance in the sensitive border areas, the communists

first tried to co-opt local elites and relied on their charisma to integrate the rest of the people. The adaptation of Leninist doctrine to the rural reality in China allowed the Communists to conduct vast mobilizations of the masses to have them contribute to the construction of a new state and so also tying them to a new form of governance. Indigenous minorities so slowly became minority nationalities collectively and Chinese citizens individually, whose rights and equality were enshrined in the constitution of 1954. Like this, the margins were legally integrated into the state, while classification systems for recognition fostered cultural integration. Plans to bring these minorities into the socialist modernity of the new Chinese state also included their economic integration. As only the state owned all land, its plans, including collectivization and people's communes for economic development were also a method of bordering. The new state achieved centralization by high re-investment rates of the agricultural surplus into industrial projects, tying the hitherto subsistence farming into the framework of a grand national economy steered by the central government (STURGEON 2004 471-472; WELLENS 2010, 51-52; WOMACK 2006, 45, 54, 143).

On the religious and spiritual side, the end of the Chinese civil war and the take-over of the Communist Party saw the building of associations to tie independent societal elements, such as religious groups and minorities with their own internal sovereignty and agendas to the state administration. The possessions of places of worship and religions were nationalized as a way to break with the past and make the state felt which should later end in anti-religious campaigns as part of class struggle. Religions as tools for domination had outlived their purpose in the eyes of the communists, who replaced it with ideological struggle that was supposed to penetrate all social relations and provide a new form of cohesion around an ideological core. The state also made sure that these ideas were spread through new theater companies which propagated the overthrow of the Republicans and socialist values in easy to follow plays and simple language (LI 1995, 51, 62). The party-state could so increase its capabilities to solidify the border by re-orienting the mindset of its people towards Beijing as source of ideological wisdom (YANG 2008, 27; ZHE 2008, 236-237). The state could underpin this control with the introduction of the residential permit (*hukou*) system, which allowed to territorially fix the people and their activities as it was in the remit of the state to decide if someone could change the place of residence, a practice widely utilized to control the population in the margins, especially Tibet (CABEZON 2008, 283). In addition, the Communist state relied on military force and the resettlement of staunch northern Communist loyalists to control border-provinces and bringing them under the direct supervision

of Beijing while eradicating the last bits of local autonomy (LARY 1996, 20-21). The creation of Autonomous Regions for minorities – a giant state-task that lasted from the 1950s to the 1980s – proved to be a useful tool to increase state-control and putting the minorities into the service of keeping the unity of the state by granting them autonomy and recognition from the central government. In the end, this idea of a “unitary, multi-national state” even found its way into the constitution. The state established a hierarchy among the minorities, depending how important and/or dangerous they were for its territorial cohesion. The state could penetrate the granted self-rule insofar as all minority-regulations had to be approved by local communist authorities in higher levels. Often these regions, when they were in the border-area, could so be administered more tightly for security and defense reasons, especially since the southwestern borderlands had shown a tendency for secession. (LARY 1996, 21-22; YANG 2009,742, 746; SHIN 2006, 198-199). In addition, the government started already in 1950 to train minority cadres and opened a regional institute of nationalities in southwest China to provide political education to local students. It also established provincial-level cadre schools and other education facilities in the border-provinces and autonomous regions (SHIN 2006, 200). Like that, the People’s Republic could span over, integrate and consolidate its authority over the far-flung border-areas by winning over – or coopting – minority elites within the structure of the state. This was an important task, as the state itself after years of civil war had to re-constitute its institutions and strengthen its weak integrity.

In this regard, Yunnan was a crucial province given the many minorities whose members spanned across the border, where still Guomintang-remnants roamed the Shan states. Given the sensitive situation on the ground, the government decided to first establish stable relations before transforming local polities. The center wanted to bring the two million people that were part of local minorities and still under the rule of local chieftains into the fold of the communist mass movement. Dependent on the cooperation on the side of the minorities to protect China’s territorial integrity, the state decided to appease the local elites with special policies, gifts to and sponsored trips to reduce suspicions (YANG 2009 747-749).Sipsong Panna for example so became an integrated part of the People’s Republic as the Tai Autonomous Prefecture in 1953, after the Guomintang already tried to tie it to central administration in the 1920s and 1930s to increase Han-migration into the area and to root out the traditional power-structure based on kings and princes (HANSEN 1999, 396-397). Once recognized as a national minority – with or without an autonomous prefecture – this minzu (民族) becomes an integral part of the state, endowed with special rights, targeted policies to their needs and representatives on all levels of the Chinese

government. Like that, the critically important peoples could be drawn into the state apparatus that the minzu symbolize at the border as a constructed marker of belonging and territorial demarcation. In the end, the minorities became institutionalized in the political system through which the state could so define its territorial reach (YANG 2009, 744, 758).

During the first decades of the People's Republic, China was in a constant state of an all-encompassing mobilization to shield off perceived threats from the outside and fortify its territorial reach inside the borders. The military-industrial complex of the Third Front in the interior of the People's Republic should strengthen both local and national defence capabilities against possible border-breaches. The People's Liberation Army (PLA) was under constant alert, fighting numerous battles and skirmishes, supported by a national economy, which was mobilized for defense industrialization. Campaigns, like the "Everyone a Soldier"-campaign drew the wide public into the national defense strategy, instilling a sense of spatiality and territorial limits of the new state. The defense industrial sector so constantly grew – even in the aftermath of the Great Leap Forward famine – which rapidly increased fortifications and policing capabilities at the borders (BACHMAN 2006, 949, 955-956).

With these measures in place, a formerly fluid region of exchange and encounters hardened to a nearly impenetrable defense line of the Communist state.

The ideological pitfalls of the Cold War, the Pax Americana and the separation of the world in three blocs, allowed the different newly independent states to exploit this competition of worldviews for their nationalist purposes. The Communist versus other types of state-ideology rift so further demarcated the ideological reach that underpinned the means of coercion and their manifestation within the states that border China to its south – and so hardened the territorial boundaries (MAZOWER 2002, 1172, 1174; HACK/RETTIG 2006a, 6; DAYLEY/NEHER 2013, 6-7). Over time, relations between governments and minorities became more and more politicized, China under Mao was more perceived as threat than leader of communist Asia, and foreign powers tried to use minorities to infiltrate and subvert the territorial integrity of the communist states. The recruitment of mercenaries among powerless upland minorities, building secret military bases, massive aerial bombardments and propping up local warlords, like Vang Pao who commanded the Hmong secret army in Laos, became a staple strategy in the fight against communism (DAYLEY/ NEHER 2013, 7; CARTER 2008, 245-246; HOWLAND 2011, 177). Even though these troops behaved like a state within the state and their fights violated the integrity and put territories outside the reach of the state, the back and forth expeditions against these rebels

over time solidified the boundaries of the states – and created animosities and disputed areas, for which the neighboring states like to cite historical precedent. This prevented supra-nationalism to take a foothold to foster transregional cooperation, rather this cooperation continued to be an affair between states across their shared border driven by national interests and historical suspicion. The step to dilute or even dissolve sharp bordering through establishing functional intra-regional modes of cooperation did not have the same momentum as it had in post-war Europe as the weight of the baggage around border-disputes and wars keeps defining the states' places in the regional order and interactions. The overturn of the Sino-centric order by European imperialism and a messy, protracted era of decolonization cemented a spatial sense of bordering that became the core of the formation of the new nation-states, enshrining historical competition, hostilities and animosities within the structure of the Westphalian state-order (BEESON 2009, 5-7).

3. Conclusion and limits

It was only at the height of the imperialist incorporation of Southeast Asia and the acceptance of a new world-order by China with subsequent modernization efforts that a clearly demarcated and generally accepted boundary in form of a line appeared that separated Southeast Asia from China. The advent – as this thesis shows – was a back and forth of cycles of territorial dissolution and consolidation in which the polities in this area either assumed different roles in relation to the lowland-states or were attributed different tasks by and in the interest of these lowland states. These roles included adversarial autonomy vis-à-vis the lowland states, accommodating autonomy vis-à-vis lowland states, buffer-zones between lowland states, defense-lines for the lowland states, or refuge zones and strategic basis for lowland actors in times of trouble.

This thesis attempted to show, how these changes affected the status of the borderlands through examples that span the entire period from the first independence of a Viet-polity until the imperialist heydays. The particularities of loose control and the non-exclusive character of tributary relations allowed a high degree of flexibility and fluidity, and also preserved the agency of the border polities. Structurally, in assuming or rejecting these different roles, the border-polities could modulate their relations with the lowland states, whose internal constitution was often responsible to what degree border polities could exercise their autonomy and sovereignty.

A real adversarial autonomy was surprisingly rare. The best example could be the relationship between Nanzhao/Dali and the Chinese empire, which was determined by mutual disdain, warfare, partly economic isolation and a final conquest under the Yuan dynasty. Others might include the Panthay Sultanate, even though it never managed to consolidate its autonomy as a full-fledged state or the Chua Bau entity in Đại Việt – but even this statelet was integrated as autonomous *thổ ty* under Vietnamese rule. A flare-up of such an adversarial autonomy on similar scale can be observed in the secession struggles of the modern Shan states against the Burmese government. In most other circumstances, polities entered into relations that while still competitive and requiring measures for self-assertion against lowland-incorporation, were rather driven by self-interest, the quest for benefits such as protection, or a strategy for survival to accommodate stronger states to maintain autonomy when there was a mismatch in the extent coercive means were available.

As a general pattern in these cycles, one can see that the more stable the internal constitution of lowland states was, the better their abilities to turn their relations with border-polities into trans-

actions for the benefit of the imperial centers. The better a state could define and enforce its interests and amass the powers, commercial means and means of coercion to project these interests across its territory, the better it could bring the border-area in alignment with its own interests. Such penetration – regardless of whether it was based on territorial-administrative means of a Confucian state or the personalized control of polities based on Theravada principles of statehood – fluctuated as a function of internal consolidation and legitimacy of rule.

Through their coercive, political and commercial means, lowland states could lock these relations in and establish symbiotic transactions. Was it just based on commercial transactions such as raw materials, metals and gems for lowland products, the border-polities could still maintain a large degree of autonomy, like the Wa-states that were only incorporated politically and administratively in the 1930s. If these states navigated their lowland relations smart enough, they could maintain their independence and foster multiple strands of tributary loyalties. Xieng Khouang, most Shan states for most of their time and Sipsong Chau Tai were bound by tributary loyalties, which were mostly based on economic benefits and transactions – such as mining in the Shan states or free passage of trade caravans in northern Vietnam –, yet not necessarily on political integration. This autonomy strived to accommodate the relations with lowland states as long as both sides could draw benefits from it – upland polities had access to capital, lowland states received rare goods.

This accommodating autonomy also existed when there was a political alignment of interests. Allowing the establishment of garrisons or incorporation of these polities into the defense and border-architecture of the lowland states did not mean that these states were suddenly part of lowland states. Rather, these polities so turned into buffer-zones or buffer-states, with the explicit task to border and protect the core lowland states, like the *tusi* or *thổ ty* along the Chinese and Vietnamese frontiers. These still maintained a large degree of internal autonomy, yet their external activities were put into the service of larger empires up until the Ortai-reforms and a more assertive Qing-government reduced the margins of manoeuver for these polities. The sawbwas of the Shan states showed a similar pattern, as they were tributaries to the Burmese king.

In times of crisis, border-polities could re-assert greater autonomy, rendering their ties to lowland centers purely symbolic. These relations then continued without substance, frayed or totally broke down, as it happened numerous times in Burmese-Shan or Sino-Shan relations. Another option was to change the character of these relations in times of distress. They could then become bases for maintaining the idea of an imperial or national body when for example the continuation

of lowland-rule became dependent on the loyalty and support of border polities, like during the last days of the Song-dynasty, the Lê-Trinh-Mac rivalry or the Viet Minh retreat to the border during the Japanese occupation.

The weight of these symbiotic relationships was not constantly one-sided with the lowland states. It was often in the self-interest of the state and its elites to seek submission to powerful lowland states and empires for protection, legitimacy of their rule and access to markets and technology. Being recognized as an official tributary or as *tusi* by one of the Chinese dynasties, was an important bedrock for any local chief's legitimacy. So asked the Mac after being ousted from Hanoi for recognition in their mountainous retreat, several outer Shan states meandered between legitimacy from Chinese or Burmese or both centers. Becoming a buffer state or a polity at the defense line so had tangible benefits for local polities as these could also participate in the progress of larger states and adopt new knowledge and technologies. Lan Xang's orientation towards Siam is a case in point as are the Shan courts that intermarried with Burmese royal houses to benefit for their loyalty.

The tributary system allowed for this fluidity of interests to be manifested in the actual ties and alignments between border polities and imperial courts. It is important to note, that tributary relations differed between the Sinitic ideas of tributary relations and the interpretation of Theravada states. Ties with the Chinese or Vietnamese courts were based on a more abstract notion of loyalty and civilizational role models and so were often economically beneficial for the tributaries as the greater power bestowed the missions with lavish gifts. The Theravada Southeast Asian idea was more arduous as it came with requirements regarding the provision of taxes, soldiers and *corvée* laborers. Yet, tributary ties were flexible enough to react to changing interests and foci. Vectors of attention could shift in this system and turn the area into a flexible and self-acting zone that could weigh options, threats, dangers and opportunities before intensifying alignments in the absence of overwhelming means of coercion or force from the lowland states.

The cycles described so show the alternation in state-capacity and consolidation as well as the loyalties or abilities to penetrate the border-area that came with it. The border-area so could not be a single line but had to remain a waxing and waning great area onto where the effects of governmental centralization efforts were as much dependent on the constitution of the centralized lowland state as it was on local agency. The penetration and influence was not unilinear, top-down or bottom-up, rather it was a mutual negotiation in which the limits of state-power were constantly staked out. The autonomy of the border polities in this region and the liberties within

the tributary frameworks allowed the border states to be stabilizing factors as negotiations over penetration and influence went hand in hand with knowledge and technological transfers as well as cultural mediation between conflicting interests of different parties to which these border states may have had ties and allegiances.

Given the plethora of polities along the timeline of this thesis in addition to the direct contacts between the centers of lowland states regarding the fate of their boundaries, and given the different forms and designs of rule and territorial understanding of statehood, border maintenance and construction goes beyond the Westphalian state model until the arrival of the colonial powers. When the ties described above between the polities in the Sino-Southeast Asian borderlands and the larger lowland states were stable, the situation stayed in equilibrium. Equilibrium does not mean control, territorial reach or legally enforceable agreements of border-locations, but only a – forced or voluntary – balance between the actors involved. In this equilibrium either both sides had no interest in changing the status quo, like the Shan states in the beginning of the 17th century or the Chinese tuis during most of the Ming-era, or the overwhelming power of the lowland states kept them in check, so that upsetting this equilibrium could have had fatal consequences for the border polities. The latter case was much more common, including the tuis after the Or-tai-reforms, Laos after the fall of Lan Xang or the Shan states during the colonial era. The outlier in this story is Vietnam as it managed its border issues directly with China – from court to court, often foregoing the tuis/tho ty buffer at its boundaries – and engaged in legalist demarcation exercises through treaties.

The reason for this uneasy recourse to equilibria to describe the territorial reach of the states lies in the different forms and designs of territorial rule in the border polities. Centralized polities, such as Vietnam or China could easily argue, agree and negotiate on a simple center-to-center level. The pre-colonial border treaties support this argument, as do the various border-quarrels, wars and skirmishes that were conducted not against unruly tuis/tho tys but against the Vietnamese or the Chinese state itself. The case becomes more complicated when this center-to-center communication is not possible, like in the case where the idea of rule and authority rested on personal relations in a galactic polity and not in a centralized power projection over a defined territory. This we have seen for example in the Shan states during the time of expansion of the mining frontier, the behavior of Sipsong Panna, Lan Xang's waxing and waning between Vietnam, Burma and Thailand, or in the constant dilemma of China how to best deal with its border-principalities. It was not the interest of a state that was at stake in these relations, but how the

central ruler got along with local power holders and could accommodate their interests as representatives of border polities for the benefit of the lowland state. China and Vietnam opted for bestowing titles, presenting lavish presents during tributary missions and granting local autonomy in exchange for loyalty. The kingdoms of Burma and Lan Xang opted for a more coercive way, including raids, corvée services and population transfers to integrate their border polities into their cosmic model. An equilibrium arose here under very different circumstances, as it required active efforts on both sides – central elites and local elites – to find either a common interest or to intimidate each other by the projection of force. In these cases, border areas and central governments mutually influenced each other, like when sawbwas relied on the king of Burma for protection when they handed out mining concessions and allowed droves of Chinese miners in. In addition to local elites, also the local population had a big influence on the equilibrium. Their appeasement was often tantamount to avoid or quell rebellions, after all the Panthay rebellion started through the acts of ordinary people. The mining frontier was pushed southwards by migrants and the rebellion that brought the short-lived local Daxi Dynasty in Yunnan was started by disgruntled soldiers and farmers.

In addition to these multi-level relations between one center and one local polity, also the horizontal transregional relations between each level on both sides of the border polities played a significant role in determining the equilibrium. Trans-regional elite-to-elite relations between border polities often could form a bulwark against predatory lowland-states, as again the Shan proved repeatedly, the most obvious example being their reluctance to accept British overlordship. Elsewhere, the Sipsong Chau Tai polity was an association of several Tai-polities that connected across their respective borders to form an entirely new polity. The Wa-states survived so long thanks to a similar construction. Mutual commercial interests also spurred elites to look beyond their polities to find like-minded partners, like the cooperation between Burmese and Chinese Shan states showed. Trans-regional contacts between ordinary people of border polities had a more nuanced effect, that mostly manifested itself in times of uprisings, when ideas spread across boundaries and found sympathizers in other polities.

Thus, the spatial bordering effects of mutual influences, interests, dependencies and intimidations were the temporal result of larger circumstances such as the self-interest of lowland empires, the situation of regional and global markets, as well as local and central abilities to project force, impose cultural norms or claim autonomy. The border-polities had to carefully navigate and manage their relations as they often found themselves as pawns in the inter-imperial competition, like in

the case of the Wa, who were encroached by both Burmese and Chinese forces or Muang Phuan between Lan Xang and Vietnam. A sound diplomacy and multiple allegiances and loyalties within the tributary framework often achieved a balance in power and commercial interests that enabled the survival of border polities.

A stable equilibrium could also emerge when rebelling against the requirements and conditions of the lowland powerholders would have dire consequences for lowland polities, so that it was in their interest to forego agency to ensure survival. Thus, the expansion of central states was as important for the bordering exercise as the way the local polities reacted to it by adapting their social, political and economic order to navigate encroachments and power-projection attempts. In this complex web of relations, interests and antagonisms across a myriad of actors, control was hard to achieve with the means of rule that were available to the center. Therefore, maintaining an equilibrium between different desires and intentions and so creating grey-areas and zones of fluidity whose allegiances showed multiple orientations was the most efficient way to keep an orderly border as it ultimately helped furthering lowland-state interests in a framework in which the actual territorial reach played hardly any role. Given the agency of central states and local polities, equilibria of interest and power therefore are a useful term to describe how in an area of multiple modes of rule and diverging ideas of territorialization of statehood still an area could exist to keep the external reaches of lowland states apart without having to use the awkward term of a border that by all accounts did not exist as a singular agreed-upon line.

An equilibrium as outcome of the interplay of commercial, political and power-related interests is therefore also an expression of the nature and conditions of the ties between lowland and upland polities. As changes in these conditions regularly occurred, the equilibria also were shaken up, leading to dissolution of the fabric of the statescape in the border-area, which was replaced by an enhanced agency of local actors or the attempts of new actors to use the border-area for their own agenda. Factors that could upset this equilibrium are manifold. They range from local rebellions against lowland states or their own leaders, warfare between lowland states, disruption of commercial ties, re-orientation of market forces or also the impact of new policies emanating either from the lowland or the border polities.

As in the case of establishing stable relations, a period in which equilibria folded was again an expression of changes in wider circumstances, interests and conditions in the regional web of ties and relations as upsetting an equilibrium never had a singular reason but was the combined effect of several interlinked tendencies. It is therefore necessary to group these factors into internal or

external influences and exogenous and endogenous events, which though often interlinked left distinct marks on the development of the borderlands. Exogenous events and external influences shall summarize factors that did not emanate out of the borderland itself but were brought into or impacted the border polities from outside. Endogenous events and internal influences include all those factors that upset the equilibrium that were set in motion from within the borderlands and so changed their shape, attitude, territorial reach and condition.

From the great disruptions, it becomes clear that exogenous and endogenous factors of destabilization had very different impacts on the border polities and their ties and relations to lowland centers. Exogenous, external factors had the capacity to introduce long-lasting change in the role and constitution of border-polities. The Mongol invasion of Nanzhao/Dali swiped the polity off the map, the Ming-invasion against Vietnam catalyzed the integration of the northern border area into the Lê dynasty, while Fa Ngum's conquests of border-polities such as Muang Phuan allowed the rise of Lan Xang. Ortai's reforms during the Qing dynasty introduced lasting changes in the relations between the Qing and their border polities, their role to play within the empire and the attitude the Qing and the polities had for each other. The Neo-Confucianist agenda of the Nguyễn-dynasty in Vietnam had a similar effect. Bayinnaung's conquests of the Shan states and generally the entire Tai-world also introduced new forms of relationship-management and re-focused and re-calibrated the loyalties of the border polities. The largest impact of these events can be seen at the end of the 19th century and the beginning of the 20th century, when European ideas penetrated the Southeast Asian statescapes and introduced fixed boundaries, upsetting the existing equilibria and replacing them with totally new forms of rule that continued until now. Exogenous events however go beyond war and politics, also commerce had an important role to play. When in 1715 Japan had stopped copper-exports to China, it also started a period of increased Han-migration into the border-area for mining activities, that tied the previously autonomous chieftains closer to the imperial core and which eventually caused the Panthay Rebellion. The same is true for the opium monopolies the late pre-colonial kingdoms established and that the colonial powers expanded, which gradually introduced stable and long-lasting change in the border-polities and their agency. Culturally, external factors that upset the border equilibria included the spread of religious practices and knowledge like through pagoda-schools in Lan Xang and Lan Na, imperial cosmologies that were replicated all over the realm like in China or Burma or the deployment of administrative capacities to reign in the autonomy of border polities.

Endogenous factors that upset border-equilibria were also common, however their effects usually did not last long enough to bring the constitution of the border-management under a new paradigm. Spurred mostly by dissatisfaction with lowland-state policies, poverty, unreasonable tax and corvée demands, these internal factors that disrupted the equilibria came most often in the form of rebellions. They sometimes managed to carve out a state for themselves, or increased their autonomy or territorial reach, but then proved too weak, disorganized or did not have the political or commercial means to mold these enclaves of rebellions into stable polities or were faced with punitive expeditions of the lowland states to bring the area back to the status quo. There are many examples analysed and described of such endogenous factors throughout the thesis, like the Panthay sultanate that formed against the discrimination against Muslims by the Han in Yunnan, the Tay Son uprising that catalyzed dissatisfaction with the houses of Trinh and Nguyễn, or the short-lived rule of the Confederation of Shan States in Upper Burma. Another example is the last attempt of Yunnan to secede from China in 1915, which only lasted for a few months. Zhang Xianzhong's Daxi-dynasty that sprang up during the rebellions against the Ming was also such a case, as were the Haw-bandits, who wrested off territories, caused turmoil but never managed to integrate it into a long-lasting polity or Chua Bau, a polity that rebelled against the Lê and the Mac but could not keep a stable autonomy. What these endogenous disruptive factors had in common was that despite their often large scale and huge turmoil that they caused, their effect never lasted for long. The Tay Son were one of the shortest dynasties in Vietnam, Chua Bau was integrated into the imperial system of the thys, the Panthay Sultanate existed only for some years, the Confederation of Shan States ruled over Ava for less than thirty years and the Haw Bandits, despite their firepower and terror they brought over the borderlands, never grouped together and consolidated their territorial reach.

Often external and internal events upsetting the border-equilibria were embedded in an inextricably linked interplay due to imperial competition and local self-assertion, the outcome of which only manifested at a later stage on which of these factors prevailed. In basically all cases of disruptions to equilibria, it was the external factors and the development they spurred that in the end shaped the new constitution of the border area. What the disruption of equilibria through external factors show is that despite the chaos they introduced at first, in the longer-run during the phase of resolution of the chaos, the external disruptors showed longer-lasting and more structured effects than the internal disruptors. The reason for that were advantages in technology of power projection, administrative techniques, liquid and well-functioning markets and the difference in

size and population density, that allowed developments spurred by external disruptors to anchor in the structural fabric of the border-area, while the developments due to internal disruptions faded out or were superseded or crushed by the superiority in power and administration of the lowland states.

From the events analysed in this thesis, it becomes clear that the strategy for resolving the chaos brought about by disrupting the border-equilibria was dependent on the internal structure of the lowland states and the border polities alike. Thus, strategies and mechanisms employed to re-configure the border-area were different as a function of the state-system that was in place. Bayinnaung used force while most of his predecessors tried to woo the Shan states and leverage personal relations to bring them into tributary submission. Vietnam and China always struggled to find a balance between administrative penetration and maintaining local autonomy as long as these local polities accepted surveillance and submitted to the lowland's civilizational and cultural superiority. Yet in all these cases the lowland states had to win over the loyalties anew after each disruption. This dependence of the lowland states for the function and services – and sometimes goods, like jade or timber – of the border polities provided them with a much larger incentive to strive for a recalibration of the border-relationships and include the border statelets in their zone of influence. Therefore it should not surprise that also from this point of view – what each side could gain – the incentives were much larger for the lowland states to mobilize their resources more coherently – which trumped already the resources available to the upland polities – to bring the border states into their fold and have them serve for the purpose of the lowland's security.

Resolution of the disruption was therefore largely a lowland-affair as their imperial design was dependent on the security the border polities provided as allies or buffer-states, in combination with much more powerful resources and techniques at hand. Thus external disruptions always prevailed in the long run and with each major disruption tied the border-areas closer to the lowland centers. With each step the border-area became closer tied to the larger lowland states, they became more integrated into the fabric of the state itself. Abilities to opt out from the wishes of centers were reduced after each re-consolidation, penetration gradually increased and techniques developed over time to re-configure the dependence between upland and lowland polities. When at first these polities enjoyed wide-ranging autonomy, they had to become more accountable also for their internal affairs after each dissolution of an equilibrium. The Chinese appointed Pacification Commissioners who had strict reporting duties, the Burmese kept an army and the system of

ahmudins to keep the polities in line and Lan Xang relied on intermarriage and a strong sangha to control the outlying muangs. As after each disruption new layers were added to keep the border polities under control, each time during the re-consolidation a parts of their autonomy were chipped away, until the colonialists integrated the entire territory in their respective colonial states. Every time a new equilibrium had to be established, market forces and politico-socio-economic and civilization-cultural dimensions had to adjust to balance a new set of interests that each time reflected more the military, economic and political strength of the lowland centers. Essentially all disruptions and restorations showed the same pattern. The Qing gaitu guiliu policy (改土归流) and the establishment of tuis under the Ming were a case in point. Also the restoration under the Nguyễn dynasty, the measures taken by the Lê after the Ming occupation or the conquests and subsequent consolidation over the Shan states of King Bayinnaung and Thabinshweti support this thought. The ultimate restoration and final blow to local autonomy was the colonial conquest in the end of the 19th century in Southeast Asia and the establishment of a republic in China before it succumbed to warlordism again. This warlordism fits insofar into the model as it was an internal disruptor that could not materialize in the long run but had to submit to the greater forces of centralization and territorial consolidation.

Institutions played a major role to convey the will of the lowland states when each time the border-area had to re-consolidate again. These institutions not only increased the physical presence of the state in the border polity after each cycle of dissolution, they also were in a constant mutual influence in the interplay of local and central institutions. For example, the establishment and re-establishment of tuis as institutions within the Chinese framework of territorial management only worked when the markers of these institutions were acceptable and recognizable for the people at the border. Bestowing titles and granting seals would not mean much on the ground if the symbolism they carried could not be conveyed in an institutional setting. Like that, local and central markers and institutions adapted to the new realities after each cycle of consolidation and stabilization. When elites adopted dresses and rituals of the centers, the character of the tuis as an institution of the Chinese empire became visible and recognizable, while on the other hand local officials to oversee this tuis adopted local customs in order to be accepted. Other institutions were deliberately put in service to mark a distinction between central and border polities. An interesting case pose the Mac who styled themselves according to the Vietnamese court but used this very same institution to distinguish themselves from the central rulers. Institutions co-existed and influenced each other, yet with each step towards integration, the penetration of central institu-

tions to administer the country and the border became stronger. Next to tuisis the Ming and especially the Qing posted more and more government officials, the Burmese kings increased their presence after each disruption with new garrisons and troops stationed in the border-regions, corvée, taxes and tribute – institutions in their own right – also were more strictly enforced after each cycle. Also here, the pattern becomes clearer that internal disruptions did not last in the long run, as after a disruption the institutional set-up penetrated the border-polities more strongly. This could be seen in the militarization and spread of a national education system after the Tay Son uprising or the stationing of a border-police during the Haw-banditry. The same effect of greater consolidation and control also happened after external disruptions like the increased vigilance in Burma after the Mongol invasion, or the set-up of trade monopolies under the Konbaung dynasty. Like that, the institutional penetration could increase over time and so could mark territorial claims to which the institutional set-up of the border polities had to adapt. While local institutions were always agents in border-formation given their transregional ties and their own resources, this agency gradually diminished the more powerful and consolidated the central institutions became and the more they leveraged their internal consolidation against the institutions of the border-polities. Institutions so could be leveraged against each other to the benefit of the central states gradually reducing the agency of the border-polities. With the advent of the colonial powers the institutional penetration found its apex. This ultimate external disruption transplanted new institutional set-ups in the border-area that had long-lasting impacts and so chipped away the last bits of autonomy to eventually end with a demarcation line.

What the case of the Southeast Asian-Chinese borderlands shows is not only the close interactions between the constitution of the state and the parallel workings of border formation and territorialization efforts but also that these processes were not part of a linear reactive model. Rather, the particular set-up of Southeast Asian states and the Chinese model of governance at its southern borders does not allow describing the dynamics, parallelisms and divergences in the border-formation as derivative of state-formation. This thesis thus attempted to also include the characteristics of the locale's inherent transnationalism that granted a high degree of fluidity in the territorial conception of statehood. Bordering was not only the result of state entrepreneurship and military entrepreneurship – despite these were two major factors – but also the outcome of economic, political and geographic integration and centralization through inter alia the above mentioned institutionalization. The transnationalist character of the border polities showed itself most clearly in trade relations – both legal and illicit – and transboundary cultural features that elites

and general population of the border polities adopted. Being in control of a trade network provided opportunities to opt out from onerous obligations imposed by the central states yet with increased integration into the state network, the transnational ties became weaker if it was in the interest of the central state. Still, the possibility to smuggle and to create a shadow-economy out of sight of the state often continued, forming a very own narrative around networks that were beyond the national narrative of state integration. The trade embargo imposed on Burma in the 1760s supports this idea, as its enforcement only led to increased smuggling activities as an opt-out option for the local population. Over time, the state could better control these transnational ties by bringing them into the oversight of central institutions, such as customs posts, tariff regulations and border-checkpoints as well as bringing localities into the state's structure and enforcing an alignment of interests. The transnational character of the border area so diminished over time until the point was reached where historically grown relations were entirely replaced with ties to the center. Guangxi for example stopped essentially the transnational fluidity at its borders and dissolved its close ties to northern Indochina when it was integrated into the Republic of China after 1911.

Attempts to form a collective identity through migration as in Vietnam or China also had their fair share in the construction of spatial centralized lowland polities. This was even more catalyzed by the ideas of nationalism as part of the modernity the European powers introduced and also included the shaping of new identities, penetration with institutions that were meant to instill this identity – for example the Laotian schools under French rule – and so were supposed to increase order. The nationalization of transnational ties and practices is the fourth trend this study observed – in addition to the non-linear cyclicity in border-formation, institution building and the gradual reduction of agency and autonomy of border polities.

This thesis relates to Zomia insofar as the processes described and the cyclical structuring of border-formation reveals the upland between the Southeast Asian states and China as not being a defensive area to which polities and people can retreat in defiance of the state, and which reacts to changing circumstances in the centralized polities. Rather, the border area was always a functional territory within the zone of interest of the central states that only gradually moved it into the lowland states' zone of influence. Political, commercial and social agency of border polities was not a function of or enabled by remoteness, rather the limits of agency were set by state capabilities and the circumstances determining to what degree the interests of both central states and border polities aligned. This area, which according to the different models belong to the Zomia-

region, was not one of defiance or resistance, the different cycles and behavior of the border polities suggest that it at least this part of Zomia was marked by opportunistic fluidity and temporal alignment of interests in a complex social interplay of elites and general population on the side of the central state as well as the border polity. This makes it possible to explain, how for example Kengtung state switched allegiance several times and the Wa states only became integrated into the Burmese and Chinese states in the 1930s while neighboring Shan states conducted stable tributary relations for centuries, or how the Hmong were seeking recognition from the colonial powers but avoided instrumentalization by or refused orders from the Vietnamese or Lao administrators.

The greatest difficulty in this geographical area is the fact that polities, and thus their identities, borders and ordering principles could not be always clearly assigned as a periphery that belongs to a specific center. Thus, their functioning regarding identity construction and bordering were not mutually reinforcing, as the fluidity and the multiple options of alignment provided in the flexible fabric of borderland-management did not enforce fixed patterns of allegiance. The proposed model and the subsequent analysis of the historical dynamics of the border area provide so a way to take the complexity of interactions and negotiation processes on multiple levels of analysis into account while simplifying the identification of general trends across the long timelines of the examined cycles.

Apart from the already mentioned factors that determine the stability of allegiances or the disruption of equilibria, the border-area was also one of the first places in which shifts and changes in the greater regional or even global settings made themselves felt. Examples would be the fallout from the Japanese curtailment of copper exports to China in 1715, that had nothing to do with this border area which however had to face the consequences of increased mining activities and a unprecedented influx of miners. Another example is the Mongolian threat against the Song Dynasty, which motivated the Song court to change its border policies in order to get horses to defend their realm. Laos' fate as a border-province of Siam was decided also outside the immediate territorial reach of the Lao-polities in the framework of colonial expansion. The development of the border-polities between China and Vietnam was more often than not determined by factors emanating far away – like the Hmong migration, French economic policy, Vietnam's southward expansion or dynastical issues that impacted for example the Đèo-clan. The polities within this framework had to carefully navigate these dynamics, as their actions sometimes were impacted by developments in trade, politics or culture abroad or outside of their control, but of which they

had to carry the collateral fall-out. This constrained the polities' agency as they had to react to these events but also enabled the polities to act for themselves and devise mechanisms to avoid unforeseen crises by adaptation, flexible alliances and an independent economic base, which only shall be integrated into the national economy with the advent of colonization and the enforcement of state monopolies.

This thesis has shown that in this particular area of Asia, the border came into being only after a century-long, back-and-forth process of negotiation, integration and dissolution among multiple actors across multiple levels and multiple timelines that eventually formed a system that could accommodate the very different trajectories of state-building, territorial expansion and consolidation of the larger lowland-states. The creation of a continuous border did not follow a similar trajectory as in other world regions since the constitution of the states in question was a very different one and so the transmission of outside events onto the territorial integrity of the states and their borders had a very different impact. Disruptions were common, the stability of border-equilibria often weak with constantly changing fault lines, that were never really hard pronounced. Seeing the border-area as a distinct region into which lowland states slowly penetrated with their means of consolidation allows determining the trendlines and identifying the factors that let the polities strengthen or disappear over time. The trajectory is clear with economic and political power as main determinants to produce and maintain long-lasting change – an asymmetry in the means available to lowland and border polities that in the long run put the latter on the weaker end. The concrete factors that pulled each part of the border-area towards one side of the solidifying border and in the remit of a single lowland state changed over time, with different emphasis given on economic factors, cultural factors, administration and political and military power in different cycles of the trajectory to border solidification. The trend lines one can see are the aggregation of many smaller actions and developments on the ground that finally brought the border area into the fold of the lowland states.

Given that this thesis looks mainly at trendlines, there are some important limitations to keep in mind and that require further examination. First, this thesis looks at long-term trends and exposes some of the lynchpins and watershed events. For a more detailed account how these events happened and the role the border-polities played in there, more data is needed and a thorough analysis of local documents from that era. This puts up two limitations: language and documentation. There is a myriad of languages present in the border-region, some of which have already vanished. To bridge this barrier, the author relied on secondary literature, however this can only pro-

vide a glimpse into the actual developments on the ground. Documentation itself provides also difficulties. Most documents describing events in the border region stem from the bureaucracy and royal records of the lowland states as either border polities did not have a tradition of written documentation or had themselves to rely on documentation principles – and languages – of the lowland courts. Thus, a lot of secondary literature exists based on inferences from these lowland documents that provide a picture through their lenses and priorities regarding the border area.

In addition, as court and official historiography paints events from the point of view of the elites, there are limitations to the understanding of the impact routines and daily practices of the general population had in the making of the border. This is unless actions of the general population morphed into larger revolts such as the Panthay revolution or showed itself in endemic banditry or support for rebel groups such as the Tay Son. Beyond ascribed practices from the point of view of lowland states, sources that would allow inferring the self-understanding of these borderland communities are rare. This thesis so could not delve into bordering and state-rejection practices of the ordinary borderland-people outside from reports and findings regarding the use of coinage, rituals, traditions, trading practices and violent uprisings that set them apart from the lowland states. This thesis therefore can only use these proxies to determine how the local population perceived and engaged with the territorialization of lowland states and the stepwise integration of the borderlands.

A final limitation is the scope of the thesis. It looks at trendlines and at contexts and correlations in the bigger picture. A more detailed account for any event that is mentioned here could fill another book and may refine the understanding of border-formation between China and Southeast Asia. Thus, this thesis may serve as a starting point to dig deeper into new and rarely looked at questions. The polities mentioned in this thesis deserve a more detailed look and chronicle of their roles in the history of Southeast Asia and China. This applies both to the temporal and spatial trajectories. Places like Chúa Bầu and their role in world history are hardly mentioned in Vietnamese historiographies. There is no detailed account of the role of polities in the Cao Bằng area for the formation of Vietnam throughout the centuries until the formation of the Socialist Republic of Vietnam. A detailed and structured account of the revolutionary and independence-driven tradition in the southwestern provinces of China and the functioning of local polities would provide more insights into the territorial conception of the Chinese state throughout the centuries. A systematic analysis of transboundary interactions between two or more distinct polities would allow a better understanding of the means of cooperation and strategic interactions of

upland polities vis-à-vis lowland states. The trendlines and events described in this thesis should therefore also serve as inspiration for further research into individual polities and events and their impact on territorial consolidation and transregional interactions in this area.

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