

Jiuxing and Jiuxingyang in Ming Records: Geographical Notes

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ABSTRACT: There are several islands along the east side of Zhuhai. One small archipelago bears the name Jiuzhou (Liedao) (九洲列島), which means ‘Nine Islands’. In ancient times, its name was Jiuxing (Zhoushan) (九星洲山), literally ‘Nine Stars’. The sea near this archipelago is known as the Jiuxingyang (九星洋) or Jiuzhouyang (九洲洋). Traditional Chinese texts and maps provide information on both the islands and the sea, but they do not always record their geographical positions correctly. Thus, in some cases, they locate these entities at some distance from old Xiangshan (香山), in the open sea, and not near the Lingdingyang (伶仃洋). The present article examines references to these toponyms in local chronicles, maps and other works, mainly of the Ming period. This involves the discussion of various names, the symbolic dimensions associated with the ‘Nine Stars’, and the possible conceptual relations between two worlds: the islands near the Xiangshan coast and those in the South China Sea.

KEYWORDS: History of Xiangshan; Island studies; Traditional geography.

1. INTRODUCTION: THE SETTING

Everyone familiar with the area of modern Zhuhai, adjacent to Macao, has heard of the so-called ‘Nine Islands’/‘Nove Ilhas’ or Jiuzhou (Liedao) (九洲列島) to the east of Jiuzhougang (九洲港). Today these islands, formerly often called Jiuxing (Zhoushan) (九星洲山), form a tourist area full of scenic spots, wonderful vegetation and fishing resources. Although

land reclamation and construction work have changed their landscape, one can still imagine what they were looking like two or three decades earlier, especially when consulting old maps.

This is what textual sources and maps published in the 1980s and 1990s say: the largest island in the group had the name Dajiuzhou (Dao) (大九洲島) and comprised circa 1.5 km² (but one also finds different figures in the literature). The other islands were much smaller. Their names were then: Jiuzhoutoudao (九洲頭島) (originally Shangzhoutou 上洲頭), Jilongdao (雞籠島) (also Yuangang 圓崗), Hengshandao 橫山島 (formerly Hengzhou 橫洲),

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Hengdangdao 橫當島 (Hengdang 橫擋), Haitazhou (海獺洲) (Xigang 細崗), Chahugaidao (茶壺蓋島) (also Chaguanzhou 茶罐洲), Xidapaidao (西大排島) (also Daxipai 大西排, Dapai 大排, Luanshidui 亂石堆), and Longyanzhou (龍眼洲). Sometimes these names ended with the term *zhou* (洲), and not with *dao* (島), but that is of minor importance.¹ One may add, most of these names are still in use. Moreover, one can divide the archipelago into two groups of islands. The two westernmost locations are Hengshan and Haita. A channel, which runs from north to south, separates them from the remaining islands. This becomes evident from maps and handbooks. Today a road leads from the mainland to Hengshan and that island is now much larger than it was in the past. Traditional Chinese texts and maps also mention these ‘Nine Islands’, but as far as I can tell, there is very little research on early references.²

The sea around the archipelago is called Jiuzhouyang (九洲洋) or Jiuxingyang (九星洋). Both these toponyms derive from the names of the islands. Like the latter, they also appear in traditional and modern books and on maps. However, the precise extension of that space remains an open issue. Some modern works vaguely state the Jiuzhouyang would be the space to the south and east of the ‘Nine Islands’. Other sources say the area north of it, up to Lingjiaozui (菱角咀), a cape on the Zhuhai mainland, would form a further part of the Jiuzhouyang.³ In a few cases, the southern limit is said to be near Coloane Island, i.e. Luhuandao (路環島), but probably not everyone would agree with that. The eastern extension seems somewhat clearer. It is ‘defined’ by the space now called Qingzhou Shuidao (青洲水道), i.e. Qingzhou Channel. This last name comes from a small island called Qingzhou (青洲), located near that channel’s eastern rim (and not to be confused with the former Ilha Verde in the Porto Interior of Macao). Still further to the east is the Lingdingyang (伶仃洋), or Lingding Sea. Traditional sources often use different characters for the first two syllables of this name, but what counts

more is that some geographers and historians define the Lingdingyang as a large entity and not just a small area restricted to one part of the Pearl River mouth (珠江口). Thus, the entire space from the Humen (虎門) ‘down’ to the Wanshan Liedao (萬山列島) sometimes appears as one major sea — named Lingdingyang — with all or some of the other entities subordinated to it.⁴ Other works locate the Lingdingyang next to the Jiuzhouyang. These texts do not mention the Qingzhou Channel. However, it is not important for the present note to investigate different perceptions of the space in question. It is enough to state that we are looking at a small spatial entity near the ‘Nine Islands’, mostly to its south and east.

The present note summarises the more important references to both the Jiuzhou/Jiuxing Islands and the nearby Jiuzhouyang/Jiuxingyang in representative works of the period from circa 1300 to 1600. Regarding the late Ming and Qing material, the article will only cite a few selected sources. No theory or model is necessary for such a simple note. The principal idea is to draw attention to certain problems associated with the relevant names and the possible concepts behind them.



Section of ‘Guangdong Guangzhoufu yutu’ (《廣東廣州府輿圖》) (1685). The ‘nine islands’ are near the right margin. Below them is the name Jiuxing yang (九星洋). Qianshan (前山) (Casa Branca) and the Macao Peninsula are clearly visible. Besides the old city wall and some buildings the map shows several names, for example, Shizimen (十字門). Source: *Aomen lishi ditu xingxuan*, no. 7, p. 21.

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2. THE 'NINE STARS'

Under the Yuan and Ming, the area now called Zhuhai belonged to Xiangshan County (香山縣). At that time, Xiangshan consisted of one major island, with many smaller islands scattered near its shores. Of these Huangliangdao (黃梁島), roughly identical with modern Doumen (斗門), was next in size to the main island. Geographers, historians and others have tried to identify the coastlines of this ensemble and they concluded that the area to its north then was a broad space of flat water.⁵ Traditional texts contain various names for individual segments of that space, for example Shiqihai (石岐海). Today the seascape, or rather landscape, looks very different. Silting and land reclamation have led to a gradual disappearance of these waters and of several broad channels along the west side of Xiangshan. The county's former nucleus now forms part of the Guangdong mainland. That also applies to many islands along the southern shore of Xiangshan. Reclaimed areas connect some of them to the continental landmass. The eastern shore of Xiangshan is somewhat different in that regard. Here, many of the old islands have preserved their island 'status'. Among them is the 'Nine Islands' archipelago.

As indicated in the introduction, these islands once had the name Jiuxing, literally 'nine stars'. Modern sources provide several explanations for this combination, suggesting the archipelago derives its name from some early astronomical or rather cosmological concept. The *Yi Zhou shu* (《逸周書》) of the Han period is one source quoted in such contexts. It contains a famous passage, which links the sequence *jiuxing* to Heaven and a 'parallel' term, *jiuzhou* (九州) ('nine continents', not 'islands'), to earth. According to an early commentary by Kong Zhao (孔晁), a scholar of the Jin period (265–420), the first expression refers to the 'four quarters and five stars' (九星, 四方及五星也).⁶ One may add, *wu xing* ('five

stars') usually stands for Venus, Jupiter, Mercury, Mars, and Saturn; *si fang* ('four quarters') implies the four directions, or one may simply take it to mean 'all over'. Regarding the 'nine continents', this combination reminds us of the so-called 'nine divisions' commonly associated with the mythological Emperor Yu (禹).

Another interpretation cited in connection with the name Jiuxing comes from a comment to the *Wen xuan* (《文選》). Li Shan (李善) (d. 689), the commentator, refers the combination *jiu xing* to 'stars, the *chen* direction, sun and moon, the four seasons, and the year' (九星：星、辰、日、月、四時、歲).⁷ These elements are clear, only the meaning of the term *chen* raises questions. It can stand for one of the earthly branches, the dragon, and a particular day in the Chinese calendar. It also represents a specific direction on the Chinese compass (i.e. 120°). Besides that, *xing* and *chen* often form one compound expression, simply meaning 'stars'. Although we can no longer tell what Li Shan had in mind when writing down the line quoted above, his explanations as well as those by Kong Zhao seem to suggest that one may relate the combination 'nine stars' to some cosmological concept. Other explanations found in modern sources, but not cited here, also point to such interpretation.

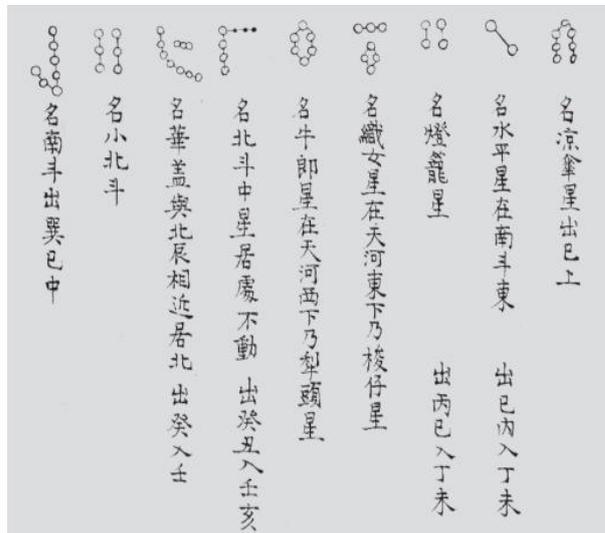
A third option, not discussed in the literature, takes us to a set of stars used in traditional navigation. The *Zhinan zhengfa* (《指南正法》), an anonymous nautical work of the Qing period with detailed sailing instructions, contains a list of nine constellations accompanied by graphical presentation of their images. This includes the polar star, to which we shall return further below. Although stellar diagrams are tools used for sailing through the open sea, and not necessarily in coastal waters or major bays such as the ones around the Lingdingyang, we cannot completely exclude the possibility that the name 'Nine

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Islands', or Jiuxing, had something to do with such navigational aids.⁸

Finally, another point is very certain. Ancient numerological texts of Han and pre-Han times refer to various combinations based on the numbers three, nine, eighty-one, etc. Here one may think especially of Zou Yan (鄒衍; first character also 騶) (traditionally 305–240 B.C.). His works are now lost, but some ideas have survived in the *Shi ji* (《史記》).⁹ They specify various geographical divisions related to these numbers. It thus seems possible that people saw in the 'Nine Islands' a mirror image of a larger order, which philosophers had invented in the remote past to describe Heaven and Earth. Old maps sometimes show the nine islands grouped into three clusters with three islands each. This could be an argument for such an interpretation. That in turn may have something to do with navigation. If so, then the name Jiuxing/Jiuzhou must have carried a strong symbolic weight.

Further details appear in later works. One text, dated 1887, is by Li Hongzhang (李鴻章) (1823–1901), famous for his political activities and scholarship. When Li passed through the Jiuxing, he tried to relate the position of the seven islets in the eastern section of the archipelago and the two islets in its western part to the Polar Star constellation, usually called Beidou Jiuxing (北斗九星). This constellation consists of the Beidou Qixing (北斗七星) and two additional stars: Zuofu (左輔) and Youbi (右弼) (or just Fu and Bi).¹⁰ Chinese traditional works, especially Daoist texts, and popular compendia dealing with astrology also refer to the Jiuxing, but their names often vary from one source to the next. Here is just one set of such names: Tianshuxing (天樞星), Tianxuanxing (天璇星), Tianjixing (天璣星), Tianquanxing (天權星), Yuhengxing (玉衡星), Kaiyangxing (闔陽星), Yaoguangxing (搖光星), Dongmingxing (洞明星), and Yinyuanxing (隱元星). One also finds some of them, often written differently, in very early texts, and



Nine star constellations shown in the *Zhinan zhengfa* (《指南正法》). Source: *Liang zhong haidao zhenjing*, pp. 126–127. See also note 8 of this article.

even in archaeological writing, but that is beyond the limits of the present article.¹¹

Clearly, Li Hongzhang was familiar with traditional records and the symbolism associated with the 'Nine Stars', but whether people in Ming times, or earlier, had similar thoughts when travelling to or writing about the Jiuxing, or 'Nine Islands', we shall probably never know.

3. MAPS IN THE *YONGLE DADIAN*

We shall now look at some of the first references to the 'Nine Islands' in ancient Chinese sources. The starting point is three maps found in the *Yongle dadian* (《永樂大典》), a huge source collection compiled in the Yongle period (1403–1425). Chapters 11905 to 11907 of this work contain valuable fragments from local Guangzhou gazetteers.¹² The maps appear in chapter 11905. The first one to consider here bears the title 'Guangzhoufu Dongguanxian zhi tu' (《廣州府東莞縣之圖》). As its title suggests, this is a map of Dongguan County, on the east side of the Pearl River estuary, opposite of Xiangshan. The presentation is very schematic, which implies that

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'Guangzhoufu Dongguanxian zhi tu' (《廣州府東莞縣之圖》). Source: *Yongle dadian*, vol. IX, *juan* 11905, p. 8349 (4). See also note 12 of this article.

all locations in that county are grouped around its administrative centre. The upper margin of the map points to the north, the lower margin to the south. Colophons on all four sides define the distances to the adjacent counties. While this arrangement poses no questions, the map contains some inaccuracies. That also applies to the 'Nine Islands'. They appear as a cluster of small dots in the lower righthand corner of the map, i.e. in its southeastern section. There is no name for the islands as such, but one finds the toponym Jiuxingyang in association with them, therefore the dotted area is a clear reference to the Jiuxing. One of the colophons at the nearby margin seems to confirm the spatial arrangement, i.e. the geographical position of the islands in relation to the central position of Dongguan. Here is the relevant text: 'it is difficult to define the *li* [distance, when sailing] southeast-bound, towards the great ocean' (東南至大洋難定里數). In other words, the map suggests that both the Jiuxingyang and the unnamed Jiuxing are to the southeast of Dongguan, while one would expect them to appear to its southwest. One wonders why the mapmaker(s) opted for such a setup, especially since the same map correctly places Xiangshan to the west of Dongguan.

As just mentioned, the *Yongle dadian* contains two more maps that are of relevance. One of

them shows Xiangshan. Its name is 'Guangzhoufu Xiangshanxian zhi tu' (《廣州府香山縣之圖》). The presentation of the Jiuxingyang and the associated islands is similar to their presentation on the previous map. Again, both entities appear in the lower righthand corner. In this case, the arrangement is acceptable, because seen from the county seat of old Xiangshan, the 'Nine Islands' were in fact located at the county's eastern/southeastern 'rim'. However, somewhat surprisingly, a colophon at the right margin of the map — i.e. to the east of the name Jiuxingyang — also carries the same toponym. It says the route towards the southeast leads to the Jiuxingyang. This seems to imply that we are looking at two entities with an identical name: one near the east side of Xiangshan, the second at quite some distance, in the open sea. We shall return to that issue further below, in the course of our discussion.¹³ Here it may suffice to add that another point of orientation on the same map is the name Shaweicun (沙尾村); it stands for a small village, normally called Nanping (南屏), on Lapa Island, to the west of the Jiuxing. Also, along the east coast of Xiangshan, we see from north to south Sizili (四字里), Dazili (大字里) and Gongchangli (恭常里). These names all appear in correct places.¹⁴

A third map, still in the same source, bears the title 'Guangzhou fujing zhi tu' (《廣州府境之圖》). It outlines the greater area around Guangzhou, or Guangzhou Prefecture, which then included Xiangshan, Dongguan and other counties. As in the previous piece, this map also places the 'Nine Islands' at the prefecture's southern periphery, but there are two characters behind the name Jiuxing and these are not legible. It also seems that there are some dots underlying the colophon with the name.

Several other colophons on this map and the Xiangshan map are difficult to decipher because of poor graphical reproduction, but the more important names and instructions are legible. Examples on the prefectural map include the

Lingdingyang (written 伶仃洋), correctly placed to the east of the ‘Nine Islands’ area, and Daxishan (大奚山) (also Daxishan 大溪山; Dayushan 大虞山; Lantau Island), shown in the lower righthand corner. Yet, some problems prevail. The name Jinxingyang (金星洋) raises questions. It appears to the east of the Jiuxing colophon. The Xiangshan map has Jinxingmen (金星門), not Jinxingyang. Probably both mark the same space. Today the name Jinxingmen represents a small passage between the island of Qi’ao (淇澳) and the Zhuhai mainland. Apparently, this was also the case in Yuan and Ming times, which implies that both maps are not very accurate, because the passage in question is to the north of the ‘Nine Islands’ and not near that area.¹⁵ One may add, in later periods control over the Jinxingmen passage was an important element within Xiangshan’s local defence system.¹⁶

Providing exact dates for the above maps is nearly impossible. The sources collected or just cited in the fragmentary *Yongle dadian* belong to different periods. Scholars hold divergent opinions regarding their dates and origin.¹⁷ All we may say here is that, in all likelihood, we are looking at material of Song-Yuan times, passed on from one editor/author to the next, with or without modifications. Clearly, the modifications included certain names. One notices, for example, that some toponyms on the Xiangshan map are not identical with those recorded on sixteenth-century maps and in later texts dealing with the same area. Thus, on the map cited above, several administrative subdivisions within Xiangshan County bear the character *li* (里) or ‘hamlet’ after their names, while they appear as *du* (都) later on. This arrangement on the Xiangshan map in *Yongle dadian* should point to an early date.

Regarding the dating problem, we may consider a further point. It seems that in Yuan times the teachings of Zou Yan, mentioned above, were quite popular among geographers. Prefaces to the fragmentary *Nanhai zhi* (《南海志》) (preface



‘Guangzhoufu Xiangshanxian zhi tu’ (《廣州府香山縣之圖》). Source: *Yongle dadian*, IX, j. 11905, p. 8350 (7). See also note 12 of this article.

dated 1304; some surviving parts of that book appear in chapter 11907 of the *Yongle dadian*) and Wang Dayuan’s (汪大淵) famous *Daoyi zhilüe*¹⁸ (《島夷誌略》) of the mid-fourteenth century explicitly refer to Zou Yan. Hence, one may ask, did the name Jiuxing appear under the Yuan, due to its supposed symbolic dimensions, or was it in use much earlier?¹⁹

A final question in that context concerns the name Jinxingmen. The element Jinxing stands for Venus and therefore the western direction. On the prefectural map in *Yongle dadian* both names, Jiuxing and Jinxing, appear in exposed positions, next to each other, at the southern rim of the Guangzhou area. Does that imply a symbolic link? Perhaps in combination with occultation events? Alternatively, should we consider the Jinxingmen as a kind of

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gate towards the west, i.e. to the area in the west of Qi'ao? How should we explain this arrangement? — At present, there is no answer to such questions. Probably they are superfluous, but other sources may provide unexpected keys for solving the issue.

4. THE ZHENG HE MAP

In terms of chronology, our next source is the so-called 'Zheng He Map', or 'Zheng He hanghai tu' (《鄭和航海圖》), also called 'Mao Kun (茅坤) map'. Studies of this anonymous work abound. Its editorial history remains in the dark, but most scholars think the original version goes back to the early fifteenth century. At that time, Zheng He's (鄭和) fleets were sailing through the Indian Ocean and Zheng He and his captains may have used the map as a general guide during their voyages.²⁰

Although the original version of the 'Zheng He hanghai tu' is no longer extant, it probably was not too different from the current editions. Simply put, one can divide the entire map into two major sections. One part shows the China coast with dozens of islands, inlets, ports and other locations serving as points of orientation for ships sailing from Nanjing via the Zhoushan Archipelago (舟山群島) towards Hainan. The other half of the map presents the itinerary from South China to various destinations in Southeast Asia and around the Indian Ocean. If such a division is acceptable,



Section of the 'Zheng He hanghai tu' (《鄭和航海圖》). The nine islands are in the middle of the map, near Xiangshan. Source: *Xinbian Zheng He hanghai tuji*, p. 40.

then the segment presenting Guangdong, Hainan and the islands in the South China Sea appears in the middle of the map.

Placing these areas — and especially the South China Sea — in a central position is a recurrent phenomenon in medieval Chinese geography. Here one may again think of the *Daoyi zhilüe* and another text, the *Lingwai daida* (《嶺外代答》) (1178) of the Song period. Both works assign a strong symbolic weight to the Nanhai as a kind of geographical nadir.²¹ On the 'Zheng He hanghai tu', quite naturally, the Pearl River estuary, adjacent to the Nanhai, forms one element of such a central area. Within that arrangement, the Jiuxing appears as a cluster of 3 × 3 islands near the east side of the Xiangshan Xunjiansi (香山巡檢司), i.e. the military inspectorate of Xiangshan.

To the south of the Jiuxing cluster are further islands. Their locations are not always correct, but one can easily identify the more important names as, for example, the two islands called Shangchuan (上川) and Xiachuan (下川), which are drawn as a single entity. By contrast, the names Da Jin (大金) and Xiao Jin (小金) pose questions. The map places them to the south/southwest of Xiangshan Island. Therefore, some scholars thought they would stand for Da Hengqin (大橫琴) (Ilha Montanha) and Xiao Hengqin (小橫琴) (Ilha Macarera, also other names/spellings), others identified them with Da Jindao (大襟島) and Xiao Jindao (小襟島).²² Whichever applies, both options are not fully compatible with their positions on the map. However, they are drawn near the mouth of a channel, which bypasses Xiangshan Island on its western side; this could be an argument for Da Jindao/Xiao Jindao. The reason is very simple: modern maps place Da Jindao near the southern rim of the Huangmaohai (黃茅海), which leads to the Yamen Channel (崖門水道), at the west side of Doumen County.²³

Here we should return to the 'Nine Islands'. Their depiction in the form of clustered dots

resembles their presentation on the maps discussed above, in section III, but on the ‘Zheng He hanghai tu’ they no longer appear in an exposed position, far from the centre of Xiangshan. Also, the ‘Zheng He hanghai tu’ does not record the name Jinxingmen. Furthermore, the dashed line on the map, which indicates the sailing route from Nanjing via Fujian into the general direction of Southeast Asia, bypasses central Guangdong at some distance.²⁴ Consequently, the navigational instructions near that line ignore the ‘Nine Islands’ and other locations ‘inside’ or near the Pearl River estuary, i.e. to the north of the Wanshan Qundao. It thus seems that the mapmaker(s) relegated this zone to a position of secondary importance, while they certainly understood the symbolic weight of the ‘Nine Islands’ — for, otherwise, they would not have recorded them on their map. Put differently, they adopted a mariner’s view, who would look from the sea to the coast and not in the other direction, from the land to the sea. That is perfectly in line with the above statement, namely that the Nanhai with all its reefs and islands (the Xisha Qundao 西沙群島, etc.) fills the central part of the map. Moreover, as we shall see farther below, there could be a conceptual link between the Jiuxing and some parts of the Nanhai.

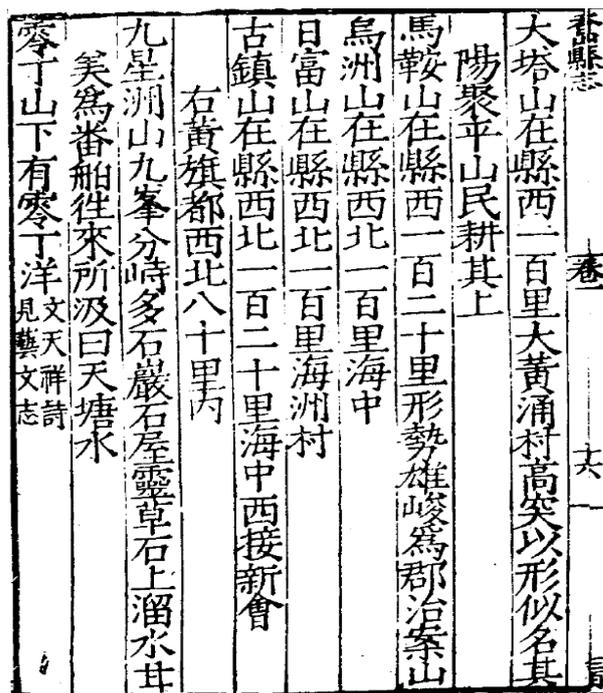
5. LOCAL CHRONICLES OF THE MING PERIOD

Under the Ming, the area of Gongchangdu (恭常都) covered much of Xiangshan’s eastern and southeastern sections; that included the Jiuxing.²⁵ There are no explicit references to permanent settlements or villages on the ‘Nine Islands’ in texts of this period or earlier times, but modern sources record traces of former houses on Dajuzhou.²⁶ Moreover, the Jiuxingyang near the archipelago constituted one element within Guangdong’s coastal defence system. Further to the north, on

the large island of Qi’ao, there was a major military post. The space towards the east of the Jiuxingyang belonged to the area protected by another military unit, the Fuyong Xunjiansi (福永巡檢司). The latter formed part of the defence installations on the Dongguan side of the Lingdingyang. However, this mostly relates to the Qing era.²⁷

Above we saw that the Jiuxing appears on early maps. Textual records of the Ming period also mention them and it is very likely that some of these references that ultimately go back to earlier chronicles are now lost. However, the extant imperial geographies of the Song and Yuan periods — for example, *Taiping huanyu ji* (《太平寰宇記》) (late 10th century) and *Yudi Jisheng* (《輿地紀勝》) (early 13th century) — do not mention their name. Therefore, we may turn directly to the Ming chronicles, and especially to local gazetteers.

One early description appears in the *Guangzhou zhi* (《廣州志》) (1527) of the Jiajing period.²⁸



Description of Jiuxingzhoushan and other entries. Source: (*Jiajing*) *Xiangshan xianzhi*, juan 1, 16v (p. 301). See also note 29 of this article.

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The Jinxinyang is to the east of [Xiangshan] county, in the sea. There are nine islands [scattered] like stars, [with] many cliffs and rocks, [where] more than ten persons can rest, [and among] its herbs are many marvellous [plants].

金星洋，在縣東海中。有九島如星，多石巖、石室，可坐十餘人，其草多芝。

A similar description is in the Jiajing version of the *Xiangshan xianzhi* (《香山縣志》) (1548). There we encounter the following entry:²⁹

The Jiuxing Islands [consist of] nine ‘peaks’, which rise separately [from each other]. [There are] many cliffs and rocks, marvellous plants, and the water running over the stones is sweet and pleasant. Foreign ships come here to collect it; they call it ‘Heavenly Pond Water’.

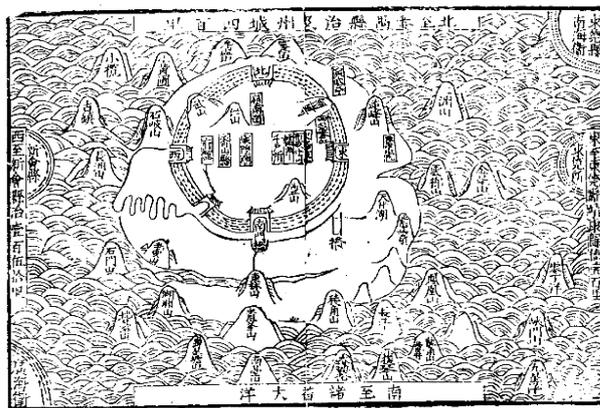
九星洲山，九峰分峙，多石巖、石屋、靈草，石上溜水甘美。為番舶往來所汲汲，曰天塘水。

These descriptions require some comments. In the earlier source, Jinxinyang must be a mistake for Jiuxinyang. Above we saw that both Jinxinyang and men appear on the maps in *Yongle dadian*. It is possible that this confused the author of the passage in question. Regarding the ‘peaks’ of the nine islands in the second text, these are not very high; in fact, some of them are rather low. The highest elevation, on Dajiuzhou, rises to circa 56 metres. Moreover, there are four hills on this island, which means that the description in *Xiangshan xianzhi* is not very accurate. Evidently, the idea was to provide a general image of lofty and steep rocks. This would suit another image — that of an island growing ‘marvellous’ plants. Such literary features served to embellish a location. Regarding the term *shiwu*, it is unlikely to represent “stone buildings”. Probably it simply implies cave-like structures. The cliffs and rocks on the islands are mostly of granite and there are some small caves on Jilongdao.

The last part of the second entry refers to fresh water and foreigners. There is a spring on Hengshandao and modern works refer to the availability of fresh water on Dajiuzhou. When and how foreign sailors accessed these islands in Ming times, or earlier, to obtain water, we can no longer tell. Probably the Xiangshan administration was lax in supervising them, so smugglers and others had a chance to hide on them for short periods.³⁰

The *Xiangshan xianzhi* also contains a county map, which shows the Jiuxinyang (in the textual part, the name appears as Jiuxing Dayang 九星大洋).³¹ Interestingly, this map places the Jiuxinyang at the southeastern rim of Xiangshan. Thus, the arrangement is similar to what one finds on the maps in *Yongle dadian*. Besides that, it also shows the name Jinxingshan (金星山), opposite of Dongguan. As mentioned above, Jinxingshan stands for the small island now called Jinxingdao, south of Qi’ao, in the area named Jinxinggang (金星港).³² Another interesting feature of the map is the name Nanxingshan (南星山), at its central lower (or southern) margin. We shall return to it further below.

Later editions of the *Xiangshan xianzhi* repeat some of the information cited above; the wording of the Jiuxing entry is almost identical in these



Map of Xiangshan. The Jiuxinyang appears in the lower right corner. Source: (*Jiajing*) *Xiangshan xianzhi*, p. 293. See also note 31 of this article.

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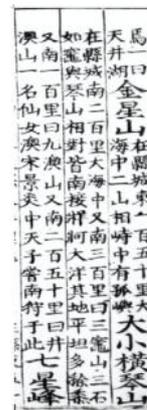
sources. Of course, there are minor additions and modifications, but all this belongs to the Qing period, so I shall not treat the relevant descriptions here. Earlier versions of the *Xiangshan xianzhi* are now lost. Therefore, we cannot tell what kind of information on the Jiuxing and the Jiuxingyang they had offered.³³

Here we can turn to a different set of Ming chronicles, namely the provincial gazetteers, which discuss Guangdong in its entirety. This includes the *Guangdong tongzhi chugao* (《廣東通志初稿》) (1535), which predates the *Xiangshan xianzhi* of the Jiajing period by some years, the *Jiajing Guangdong tongzhi* (1561) and the *Wanli Guangdong tongzhi* (1602). The second and third texts have long entries on Xiangshan, which mention the Lingdingyang (零丁洋) and several old names for smaller spaces farther west in the direction of the Shiqihai (for example, Xiangjiaotouhai (象角頭海) and Dieshihai (疊石海); these names also appear in *Xiangshan xianzhi*), but they do not record the ‘Nine Islands’ and the Jiuxingyang. However, they list the Jinxingmen (near Qi’ao).³⁴

The *Chugao* work is somewhat different. It contains a survey map of Guangdong called ‘Guangdong dili zongtu’ (《廣東地理總圖》), which places Xiangshan in a central position off Guangdong’s southern shore. It also records the Jiuxingyang, along with nine dots, for the ‘Nine Islands’, to the southeast of Xiangshan, in the open sea, i.e. not inside the Pearl River estuary. To the right (east) of the Jiuxingyang, also in the open ocean, one sees further names among which are Lingdingyang (伶仃洋) and Nanxingmen. Paradoxically, Hengqinshan (橫琴山) appears between these two.³⁵ Leaving aside the wrong position of the latter, some parts of the *Chugao* map resemble the maps in *Yongle dadian* and *Xiangshan xianzhi*; that also applies to the exposed position of the Jiuxingyang. Regarding Nanxingmen, perhaps we should replace that name by Jinxingmen (?). Literally, Nanxing means ‘southern star’. However,

whether that implies some kind of relation to Mars, which normally represents the southern direction, remains an open issue.

The relevant textual parts of the *Chugao* — in the geographical entry (*Shanchuan* 山川) on Xiangshan — are again somewhat special. They present important locations in roughly the same order as the Jiajing and Wanli chronicles of Guangdong, but one also notices some differences. For instance, the *Chugao* lists Jinxingshan and Jinxingyang, but not Jinxingmen. Regarding Da/Xiao Hengqinshan (大小橫琴山), the text links these two to the southern part of Xiangshan, which is correct. The Lingdingyang (零丁洋) is in the sea to the east of Xiangshan (在縣東海中); again, that is better than its position on the map. The entry on the Jiuxingyang remains ambivalent: ‘[it is] in the sea, to the southeast. In the sea, there are nine islands like stars; there are many cliffs and rocks’ (在海東南。海中有九島如星，多石巖、石室。).³⁶ The ambiguity concerns the first full stop: where should we place it, after *hai*, after *dong*, or after *dongnan*? The combination Nanhai in particular could point to the open ocean. Finally, one may also notice that the text is shorter than the description in the *Xiangshan xianzhi* cited above; it leaves out the part on foreigners going to the ‘Nine Islands’.



Entries on Jinxingshan and the Hengqin Islands. Source: *Guangdong tongzhi chugao*, *juan* 1, 18b. See also note 36 of this article.

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In sum, regarding the maps, there seems to be some development from the earliest extant pieces in *Yongle dadian* to the later ones in the Ming gazetteers. The textual parts also undergo certain changes. Regarding the names Jiuxing and Jiuxingyang, the *Guangdong tongzhi chugao* and the *Xiangshan xianzhi* provide the most details. Probably, the editors of the later *Guangdong tongzhi* versions refused to accept some of this information, because they thought there were too many contradictions. Hence, they left out the ‘unclear’ parts.

6. MAPS OF THE MING PERIOD

This brief chapter looks at several works related to coastal China. The focus is on maps, all produced in the mid and late Ming period. Our



Section of the ‘Guangdong yanhai shansha (tu)’ (《廣東沿海山沙(圖)》). The names Jiuxingyang and Sanzaoshan appear near the right margin. Source: *Chouhai tubian*, *juan* 1, 8r–9r (pp. 584–8 and 584–9). See also note 37 of this article.

first source is the *Chouhai tubian* (《籌海圖編》). One of its maps, widely known as ‘Guangdong yanhai shansha (tu)’ (《廣東沿海山沙(圖)》) and often dated 1556, shows the Jiuxingyang in an exposed position, near Sanzaoshan (三龜山) (later also Sanzaodao 三龜島), at some distance to the southeast of Xiangshan. Xiangshan itself appears as a major island. This is nothing new, but there is another location called Daxingshan (大星山), which merits some attention. It is located in the vast space between Xiangshan and the name Jiuxingyang; we shall return to it later on.³⁷ Here it may be sufficient to state that the ‘shansha’ map is imprecise. Thus, Sanzao Island should be to the south of Xiangshan, and not near the Jiuxingyang.

A second map in the same source — called ‘Guangdong yanhai zongtu’ (《廣東沿海總圖》) — is somewhat similar to the map in *Guangdong tongzhi chugao*. The Jiuxingyang, in association with nine dots, and the name Nanxingmen are placed in the open sea, far away from Xiangshan, to the south of Dongguan, i.e. in the distant southeast of Xiangshan. Again, Hengqinshan appears near Nanxingmen and a location called Lingdingshan (伶仃山) (Lingdingyang on the *Chugao* map).³⁸ The latter may stand for modern Nei Lingdingdao (內伶仃島) or Wai Lingdingdao (外伶仃島), but in either case its position would be incorrect. Yet, this is irrelevant to us, especially because the entire map is not very ‘realistic’.

Another special feature of the ‘Guangdong yanhai zongtu’ takes us to the so-called Qixingyang (七星洋). This sea is the sea around the Qizhou (七洲), or ‘Seven Islands’, near the northeastern extremity of Hainan, i.e. far to the west of Xiangshan and Macao, or central Guangdong more generally. Maritime historians also know the ‘Seven Islands’ under their Malay name Pulau Tujuh (usually transcribed as Pulau Tujo in old Portuguese sources). The Qixingyang bears a second name: Qizhouyang (七洲洋).³⁹ The ‘zongtu’ map places

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this area in the correct position, but that implies a special geographic feature: Xiangshan seems ‘framed’ by two island clusters, both represented in the form of little dots, and both placed at almost the same distance from this county — the ‘Nine Islands’ in the Jiuxingyang and the ‘Seven Islands’ in the Qixinyang.

The *Zheng Kaiyang zazhu* (《鄭開陽雜著》), by Zheng Ruozeng (鄭若曾) (1503–1570), our next source, contains further cartographic



Section of the ‘Guangdong yanhai shansha (tu)’ (《廣東沿海山沙(圖)》), but from a different text. Again, the names Jiuxingyang and Sanzaoshan appear near the right margin. Source: *Wu bei zhi*, *juan* 210, 8v–9v. See also note 40 of this article.

material. One of the maps in that work bears the name ‘Wanli haifang tu’ (《萬里海防圖》). The Guangdong part, again called ‘Guangdong yanhai shansha’, is very similar to the Guangdong map of the same name in *Chouhai tubian*. Indeed, the relevant toponyms and their geographical positions are almost identical on both maps.⁴⁰

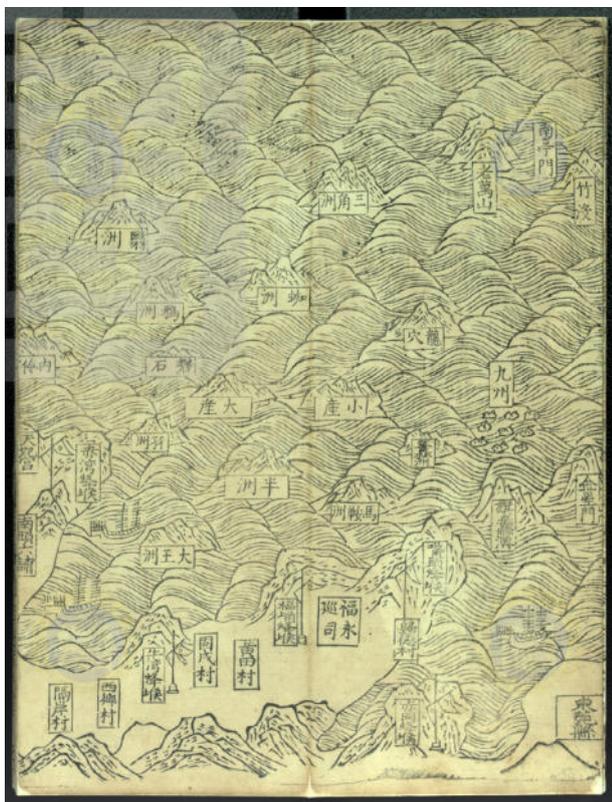
As was mentioned, presumably the ‘shansha’ map in *Chouhai tubian* dates from the late 1550s; the one in *Zheng Kaiyang zazhu* should also be from the middle of the sixteenth century. In terms of chronology, this puts both cartographic works between the ones in *Guangdong tongzhi chugao* and the relevant texts in the chronicles of Xiangshan, as well as the *Jiajing Guangdong tongzhi*. However, there is more to tell. A second map also named ‘Wanli haifang tu’, appears in chapter 8 of the *Zheng Kaiyang Zazhu*. As in the first case, the topographical arrangement of this piece is not very accurate. Again, the Jiuxingyang is near Sanzaoshan, to the southeast of Xiangshan. Several locations surrounding Xiangshan are not clear or are misplaced. Although the credibility of this map is low, it is special in a different sense: there are several colophons, which provide information about local defences, piracy and various events. These texts mention individual sites, but the Jiuxing and the Jiuxingyang are not among them.⁴¹

Another source is the *Cangwu zongdu junmen zhi* 《蒼梧總督軍門志》. It carries a map called ‘Quan Guang haitu’ (《全廣海圖》) (possibly before 1581), which shows the ‘Nine Islands’, now named Jiuzhou, in an acceptable position, i.e. to the east of Xiangshan, near Jiu’aoshan (九凹山) (usually written 九澳山, i.e. Ká-Hó Hill, Coloane). Besides that, the name Jiuzhou also appears in a colophon. The text of that colophon vaguely links the ‘Nine Islands’ to the pattern of tides along the route from the open sea to Guangzhou, because the tidal system varies along that route. One may add, the *Cangwu* map seems to be one of the earliest

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cartographic works, which refer to these islands under the name Jiuzhou.⁴²

Another map of the late Ming period is the ‘Quanghai tuzhu’ (《全海圖註》) (the last character sometimes 注). Some parts of it resemble the ‘Wanli haifang tu’ while other parts look similar to a Guangdong map (known as ‘Guangdong yanhai tu’ 《廣東沿海圖》) in Guo Fei’s *Yue da ji* 《粵大記》 (1596/1597; printed 1602).⁴³ We see the ‘Nine Islands’ on the ‘Quanghai tuzhu’ where they bear the name Jiuzhou (not Jiuxing), and near them, in a northwestern direction, Jinxingmen. Both these names appear closer to the mainland than on many earlier maps, while locations such as Laowanshan (老萬山) are in exposed positions, near the open sea. Clearly, this arrangement comes closer to reality.⁴⁴



Section of the ‘Quanghai tuzhu’ (《全海圖註》). Source: Courtesy of Jin Guoping. See, for example, Jin and Yang, eds., “*Quanghai tuzhu*” *yanjiu*, addendum with map. See also note 43 of this article.

7. DAXINGYANG AND OTHER TOPONYMS: OPEN QUESTIONS

Several toponyms mentioned in the foregoing chapters pose tantalising questions. This part will look at some of these names. As mentioned above, the ‘Guangdong yanhai shansha (tu)’ in *Chouhai tubian* places the name Daxingshan somewhere in the large space between Xiangshan and the name Jiuxingyang, to the west of the latter. Another feature is the position of the Jiuxingyang in the sea, far to the southeast of Xiangshan, more or less to the south of Dongguan. Only some maps place the Jiuxingyang and the ‘Nine Islands’ where there really are, i.e. to the north of modern Macao and the south of Jinxingmen.

Regarding Daxingshan, evidently an island, it is possible that the mapmakers confused it with Jinxingshan near Qi’ao, or with Nanxingmen, another questionable location sometimes shown in the open sea. Alternatively, it may mark a very different place, known under another name, but, admittedly, no plausible option suggests itself. Nevertheless, one point is certain: we cannot link it to the well-known site called Daxingjian (大星尖) — at least not in the case of the map in *Chouhai tubian*, because this map records both toponyms, Daxingshan and Daxingjian, and it places the latter quite correctly. The latter, one may add, stands for a steep rocky structure in the open sea, south of modern Huidong (惠東). Traditional European sources and maps call it Pedra Branca (Blanca etc.). In the age of sailing ships, it served for navigational orientation.

The matter becomes even more complicated when one considers other Guangdong names with the element *xing* (星) and further sources. Along the shores of Huidong we find two or three such places. The sea near or around them — and that may include the area around Daxingjian — was once called the Daxingyang 大星洋. It seems possible that this led to confusion with the name Jiuxingyang.⁴⁵ One

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argument could support that assumption, namely the fact that several maps place the Jiuxingyang at some distance from Xiangshan, towards the southeast of Dongguan, i.e. in the general direction of the Daxingyang. However, we also find the large island now called Lantau nearby, and that seems to limit the eastern extension of the Jiuxingyang.

Be this as it may, the name Daxingyang compels us to look at two further sources: the *Meizhou haishen zhuan* (《湄州海神傳》) (late Ming period) and the *Tianfei xiansheng lu* (《天妃顯聖錄》) (Qing period). Both these texts are religious works dedicated to Mazu (媽祖), the Chinese goddess of seafarers. They claim that Zheng He's fleet, when sailing through the Daxingyang, ran into a storm. Other sources do not confirm this event. Moreover, the earlier text links the Daxingyang to Yue (粵), which stands for Guangdong in general; this makes it impossible to associate that sea with a particular coastal segment of Guangdong. The second source connects it to Guangzhou. This option seems to suggest that one may replace the name Daxingyang by Jiuxingyang, i.e. the space near the eastern shore of modern Zhuhai. However, as mentioned above, the sailing route shown on the Zheng He map bypasses the Pearl River estuary. Certainly, from time to time, ships under Zheng He's command must have come through that area, but the extant records provide very little to verify this assumption.⁴⁶

Clearly, the matter is difficult to decide. One finds the name Daxingyang in a number of works, for example in the *Xin'an xianzhi* (《新安縣志》) (1668) of the Kangxi period, where it points to the sea near Huidong.⁴⁷ This raises an important question: when did that name come in use? Did it always designate the area near Huidong? Alternatively, did it replace the version Jiuxingyang, provided the latter once stood for a larger area in the open ocean, an area that included the later Daxingyang?

Indeed, perhaps a large section of the sea south of Xiangshan/Dongguan once had the name Jiuxingyang. If so, then a second assumption may be in place: cartographers, not fully aware of certain geographical details, simply placed the 'Nine Islands' in the form of small dots near that toponym. In other words, the position of the sea was correct, but transferring the Jiuxing from the east side of Xiangshan to the open ocean was wrong, at least from a geographical point of view. Moreover, as early sources provide no delimitation of the space called Jiuxingyang, some scholars probably thought this sea would extend very far towards the east. The question is, can we accept such an explanation?

Earlier, Han Zhenhua also touched the issue in his research on the South China Sea. As is well known, he repeatedly discussed the names Jiuxingyang, Qixingyang, etc. One of his valuable conclusions was that we are in fact looking at two entities called Jiuxingyang: (1) the small space near the 'Nine Islands' at the east side of modern Zhuhai; (2) and a large segment of the Nanhai. Other names for the second area and some of its islands include the versions Jiuruluozhou (九乳螺洲), Jiuxingshan (九星山), Wanzhou Jiuzhouyang (萬州九洲洋), etc. The last name in particular points to a region south of Hainan, because Wanzhou is a location along the southeast side of that island.⁴⁸

There is still more to say. According to Han Zhenhua and others, Hainanese fishermen often used the character *zhi* (峙) behind certain toponyms related to the Nanhai. In such cases, *zhi* means 'island', and one can identify a cluster of nine such *zhi*, or Jiuzhi (九峙), in the region now called Nansha Qundao (南沙群島) (Spratly Islands). Elsewhere Han Zhenhua mentions another group of nine islands within the central section of the Yongle Qundao (永樂群島); this archipelago belongs to the Xisha Qundao (Paracel Islands). Both options, the group inside the Nansha

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Islands and the one of the Xisha Islands, link to the second Jiuzhouyang.⁴⁹ Furthermore, readers will recall, above we had quoted a brief entry from the *Xiangshan xianzhi*, with the term *zhi* as one of its descriptive constituents. Although the relevant passage has nothing to do with the Nansha and Xisha world, in this particular case the character *zhi* may (still) have carried the connotation ‘island’ or ‘reef’ at the time when it entered the text (or even earlier material now lost?). Hence, we may ask, are we looking at a vague and implicit link between the Jiuzhou of Zhuhai and some of the coral islands in the open sea?

There could be a second link. In section II, we drew attention to a set of star constellations recorded in the *Zhinan zhengfa*. Although most scholars believe this text dates from the early Qing period, it certainly contains many elements with ancient roots. Put differently, sailors and pilots transmitted nautical knowledge orally before it came to be ‘fixed’ in written form. Thus, was there an early ‘mental link’ between the Jiuxing near Zhuhai, the art of star navigation in the Nanhai, the distant islands in that sea, and the toponym Jiuxingyang used for the space around them? Clearly, such ideas sound far-fetched, but perhaps one should not reject them right away.

There are further aspects one may wish to consider in this context. First, as mentioned above, several old maps show Xiangshan in an exposed position, at some distance from the Guangdong mainland. Second, occasionally one also finds a set of unnamed islands, drawn in the form of steep mountains, farther to the south, in the open sea.⁵⁰ Taken together, both observations could point to a larger concept in which Xiangshan, along with its Jiuxing ‘annex’, served as a connective element between the mainland and China’s island periphery in the Nanhai. Third, maps of the Ming and Qing periods contain errors or provide a very unconventional panorama. For instance, in several

cases the name Qixing appears where Jiuxing should be. Other maps place the Jiuxing near the east side of Xiangshan, opposite of the Dongguan region, but leave out the more important name Lingdingyang. Occasionally, cartographers also moved Hengqin and Lantau Island (then often called Dayu[shan] 大虞[山], also written Liuyu 六虞) to distant positions beyond the continent.⁵¹

These and other iconographical arrangements could imply that scholars involved in drawing such maps had a general idea about the geography of coastal Guangdong and the Nanhai, while they were unaware of the relevant details. Alternatively, we may say, mapmakers were not careful when preparing their work, thus committing all kinds of mistakes. However, can such a simple assumption really explain the many unexpected features encountered above? Whether there was an implicit link between the Jiuxing near Xiangshan and some of the many islets scattered across the South China Sea remains an open issue. Yet, one point is certain: Han Zhenhua was correct in stating that we must make a clear distinction between two entities called by the same name — Jiuxingyang.

8. THE SONG–YUAN WAR AND THE JIUXINGYANG

Evidently, the ‘oceanic’ Jiuxingyang was to the south or southwest of central Guangdong. However, several maps place that name to the southeast of Xiangshan or even to the southeast of Dongguan. We mentioned this in our discussion of the maps in *Yongle dadian*. Of course, we may argue geographers confused the directions, but it is also possible that they thought this space would stretch in a long arc from the sea near Huidong ‘down’ to the area south of Hainan. Whichever applies, the issue of directions, in combination with the name, has led to lively debates in modern works. This relates to a famous tragedy — the final stages of the war between the Song and the Yuan.⁵² We

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shall briefly look at the relevant points in our final section, which forms a kind of annex to the above.

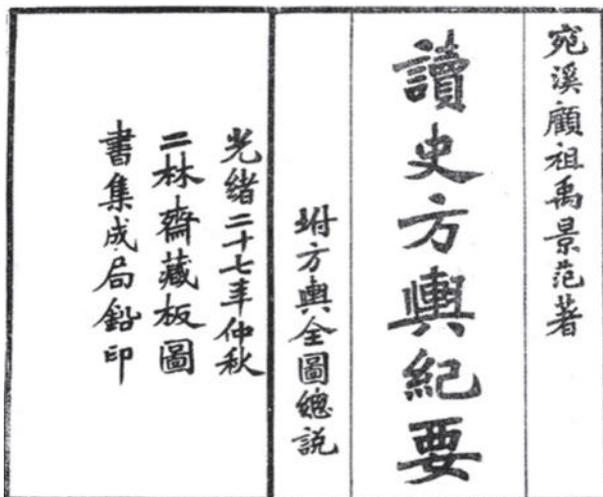
To begin with, several texts, which refer to the Song–Yuan war, mention the Jiuxingyang. One rather late example comes from the *Du shi fangyu jiyao* (《讀史方輿紀要》) (started in 1659). Here are some of the relevant passages found in that text:⁵³

[There] also [is] the Jiuxingyang; it is in the southwestern [section] of [Xiangshan] county. During the second year of the Song era Jianyan, the Yuan general Liu Shen attacked Jing'ao. [Thereafter] the [Song] emperor arrived at Xienüxia. [Later, the Song] put to sea again, reaching the Jiuxingyang, with the aim of going to Zhancheng, [but] without success.

又九星洋，在縣西南。宋建炎二年元將劉深襲井澳。帝至謝女峽，復入海至九星洋，欲往占城，不果。

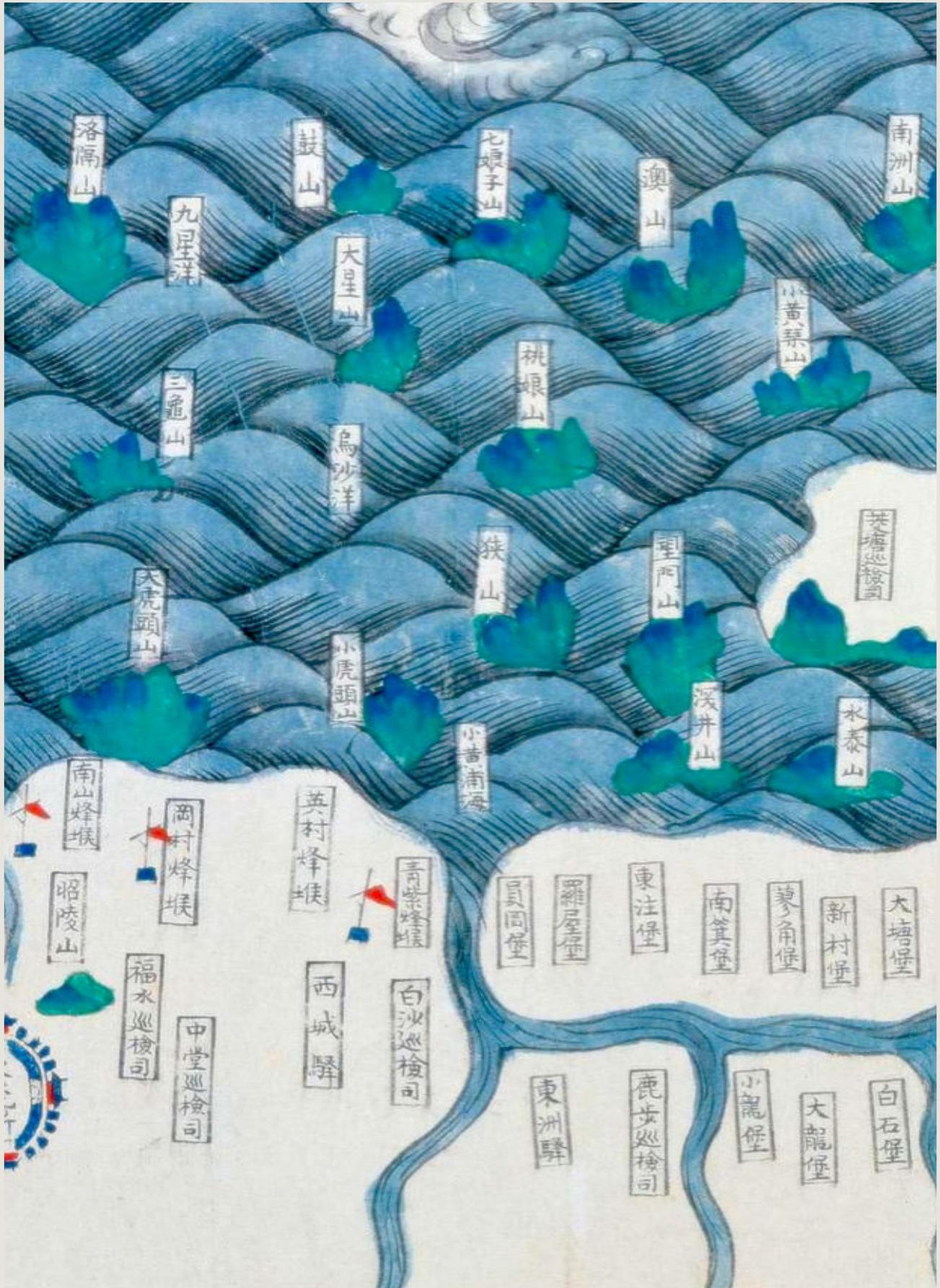
[There] also [is] Xienüxia; another name [of it] is Xiannü'ao; it is also within the territory of [Xiangshan] county.

又謝女峽，一名仙女澳，亦在縣境。



Cover page of *Du shi fangyu jiyao* (《讀史方輿紀要》), Guangxu edition of 1901, kept in several libraries.

Before discussing the name Jiuxingyang in this source, we need to look at the other names and facts presented in the quotations. (1) The reign title Jianyan (建炎) is wrong (the second year of Jianyan would be 1128). Elsewhere the *Du shi fangyu jiyao* correctly refers to the era Jingyan (景炎). The second year of that period corresponds to the year 1277. During this year and the next, Yuan troops attacked various sites around Xiangshan. (2) Liu Shen (劉深) (? – 1303) was one of the more important generals under Kublai Khan. (3) The above text presents various events in a condensed form. This invites readers to draw wrong conclusions. According to other sources, Liu attacked the Song in December. In January 1278 (still in Jingyan 2), Song naval units were in Xienüxia and the Song emperor (Duanzong 端宗) was with them. Driven out from there, they sailed in the direction of Hainan, towards the Qizhouyang. However, further clashes with Yuan forces made it impossible for the Song fleet to reach Zhancheng (Champa), along the coast of modern Vietnam. (4) The names Jing'ao and Xienüxia (Xiannü'ao) pose questions. The quotations suggest these were separate places. Indeed, the *Du shi fangyu jiyao* carries a special entry on Jing'ao, stating 'it is below the Hengqin Islands in the sea south of [Xiangshan] county' (在縣南海中橫琴山下), while it lists Xiannü'ao in an earlier chapter. Other sources provide a different image. The *Xiangshan xianzhi* contains an entry, which equates Shenjingshan (深井山) with Xiannü'ao and Jing'ao, adding this location would be 'below' Hengqin (深井山即仙女澳也，亦名井澳，在橫琴下).⁵⁴ Similar information appears in the *Aomen jilüe*: 'below the Hengqin Islands is Xiannü'ao' (橫琴山下有仙女澳). A few lines further on, one finds the following remark: 'Another name is Shenjingshan, [its] bay is called Jing'ao' (一名深井山，澳曰井澳). Current interpretations vary as well. One view is that Shenjingshan stands for a separate island.⁵⁵ Modern maps suggest a different view: they show a village named Shenjing on the west side of Da Hengqin



Section of a map showing coastal defences. Postscript by Feng Shi (馮時). The section shows Jiuxingyang, Daxingshan, Xiao Hengqinshan and other locations. Source: Taipei National Palace Museum.

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and call the bay in front of it Shenjingwan (深井灣).⁵⁶ Indeed, the matter is confusing. According to the modern editor of the *Aomen jilüe*, Jing'ao was *between* the two Hengqin islands. This seems incompatible with the equation Shenjingwan = Jing'ao = Xiannü'ao (in *Xiangshan xianzhi*) and the statement that Jing'ao would be a bay of/near Shenjingshan.⁵⁷ The *Jiajing Guangdong tongzhi*, to cite one more example, gives the following details: 'Da/Xiao Hengqin Islands; below them is Jing'ao' (大小橫琴山，其下有井澳). At the same time, it quotes a poem by Huang Yu (黃瑜) (1425–1497), which states, 'above is Shenjingshan, below is Xiannü'ao' (上有深井山，下有先女澳).⁵⁸ The matter becomes even more complicated if one considers the findings of Wu Hongqi and Zhang Jing. They say the names Da Hengqin and Xiao Hengqin can also refer to two hills on Da Hengqin and not just to the two islands themselves.⁵⁹

Here we should return to our main topic. The principal purpose of the above was to show that practically all locations discussed in point (4) are at the southwestern/southern periphery of Xiangshan. Furthermore, the itinerary from there to the planned destination, Champa, involved sailing through the Jiuxingyang. This means the space in question was indeed in the open sea, to the southwest Xiangshan. However, some scholars have argued the text would be wrong, because they thought the name Jiuxingyang would stand for the 'Nine Islands' area inside the Pearl River estuary.⁶⁰ Clearly, such an interpretation makes little sense. Why should one proceed to the 'Nine Islands', i.e. to the northeast, if the destination was in the opposite direction? More remarkably, other sources link the events addressed in the above quotation to the Qixingyang (Qizhouyang).⁶¹ As mentioned above, normally the name Qixingyang stands for an area near Hainan, i.e. again far to the southwest of Xiangshan. In sum, seen from Xiangshan's perspective, both entities, the 'Seven

Star Sea' and the 'Nine Star Sea', point to a southwestern direction.

There is more to say on the 'Nine Stars'. According to Han Zhenhua, the names Jiuxing and Jiuxingyang can point to two different island clusters/spaces in the South China Sea; one entity forms part of the Xisha Qundao, the other belongs to a large area of the Nansha Qundao. Besides that, Han has shown that the name Qizhouyang (and related toponyms) was in use for different zones (and not just for the waters near Hainan's northeastern tip). Thus, in some cases this toponym marked the sea near central Vietnam, i.e. the space adjacent to the Xisha Qundao.⁶² Hence, we must ask: when the retreating Song navy headed for Champa, did it proceed through the area near Hainan's northeastern tip, and just through these waters, or did it also try to reach one of the more distant archipelagos? Clearly, we may rule out the Nansha option because this area is not on the way from Xiangshan to Champa, but we cannot put aside the Xisha option, associated with the Qizhouyang and the Jiuxingyang. Indeed, it is possible that some ships of the Song navy went there. Some of these islands offered water and other supplies. However, this leads to different horizons, far beyond our theme.

We may now summarise the above: in association with the final stages of the Song–Yuan war, the toponym Jiuxingyang, seen from a quasi-continental perspective, points to a distant quarter of the South China Sea. At the same time, it probably implied a large space, which extended from the Xisha world in the southwest to the region near Huidong in the northeast. However, it also seems that scholars handled this spatial concept in flexible ways. It was in part identical with the Daxingyang (mentioned in chapter VII), with the different spaces called Qixingyang/Qizhouyang, and perhaps even with other entities.

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9. CONCLUSION

The concluding remarks to these notes will be short. Written sources and maps of the Ming period show that geographers and cartographers made frequent use of the names Jiuxing and Jiuxingyang. They appear in different contexts, as simple toponyms, easily identifiable, but quite often they rest in ambiguity. In many cases, the sequence ‘nine stars’ must have encouraged scholars to adorn the Jiuxing with symbolic qualities, silently and implicitly embedded in traditional astronomy. It thus became possible to transfer the name Jiuxingyang from a local context to the greater entity of the South China Sea.

The alternative name Jiuzhou is not yet important in Ming times. We mostly encounter it in texts and on maps of the Qing period, which I did not discuss here. Some Qing maps are beautiful scrolls, often drawn like landscape paintings. Several such pieces are accessible in modern collections.⁶³ Another topic not addressed in the present article is European sources. Portuguese maps of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries show the Pearl River estuary, or Lingdingyang, as a large bay dotted with small islands. These islands rarely bear names.⁶⁴ Although it is difficult or nearly impossible to identify them with individual locations, one may assume that cartographers had a vague knowledge not only of the Wanshan Qundao, but also of the Jiuxing and other locations.

Finally, the ‘Nine Stars’ appear in Chinese verses and other literary works. Works related to Xiangshan and the adjacent areas mention or allude to individual sites in various ways. One line in the famous poem ‘Guo Lingdingyang’ (過零丁洋) (‘Crossing the Lingdingyang’) by Wen Tianxiang (文天祥) (1236–1283) reads ‘gange luoluo sizhou xing’ (干戈落落四周星). There are different explanations of that verse. Fuller translates it as ‘Clashes of arms, so many, through four circuits of stars’.⁶⁵ Clearly, the first four characters refer to the



Section of the ‘Huangyu quanlan tu’ (《黃輿全覽圖》), dated 1719. Several Chinese maps of Guangdong drawn in the eighteenth century show European influence. That also applies to this piece. Macao is called Haojing’ao. To its northeast one finds the Nine Islands and the name Jiuxingyang. Source: *Aomen lishi ditu jingxuan*, p. 35, no. 16.

Song–Yuan war. The sequence *sizhou xing* is less easy to understand; usually scholars link it to the age of the poet or they try to connect it to the dimension of time, more generally. However, perhaps it also involves a spatial ‘element’. When the poet crossed the Lingdingyang, or imagined sailing through it, he probably thought of the Jiuxing. Moreover, *sizhou* means ‘all around’. Hence, could it be that the line in question carries a second connotation, namely ‘Clashes of arms, so many, all around the stars’? The ‘Nine Stars’, as a miniature image of the cosmos, or China, burdened by a terrible war that spread all across the empire? — Specialists of traditional Chinese poetry will certainly be able to accept or reject the idea and they will certainly be able to identify possible links between Wen’s line and ancient texts on astronomy such as the relevant chapters in the dynastic annals. 

NOTES

- 1 Some handbooks with references to the ‘Nine Islands’: Guangdongsheng diming weiyuanhui bangongshi, ed., *Guangdongsheng haiyu dimingzhi* (Guangzhou: Guangdongsheng ditu chubanshe, 1989), 95, 153–154 (each island, its main features and names), 474–475 (map segments D3, E3); Zhongguo ditu chubanshe and Guangdongsheng ditu chubanshe, eds., *Zhongguo Zhujiang sanjiaozhou zhinan ditu* (Beijing: Zhongguo ditu chubanshe and Guangdongsheng ditu chubanshe, 1999), 43, 49 (maps); various entries in “Guangdongsheng Zhuhaishi dimingzhi” bianzuan weiyuan hui, ed., *Guangdongsheng Zhuhaishi dimingzhi* (Guangzhou: Guangdong keji chubanshe, 1989); Zhuhaishi dimingzhi bianweihui, ed., *Zhuhaishi haidaozhi* (Zhuhai: Zhuhaishi dimingzhi bianweihui, 1987).
- 2 One article, which discusses historical sources and maps: Guo Shengbo, Liu Guiqi, and Lu Yanzhao, “Ming Qing Xiangshanxian shu Zhujiangkou nanbu zhudao mingcheng de yanbian,” *Review of Culture (Chinese Edition)*, no. 72 (2009): esp. 156. Another recent work with some notes is Feng Guoqiang, *Liang Guang Hainan haiyang bulao yuyan jizhu yu qi yuyan tese he yuhui bianqian* (Taipei: Wanjuanlou tushu gufen youxian gongsi, 2020), 111–112. Han Zhenhua, *Han Zhenhua xuanji*, ed. Han Zhenhua zhuzuo zhengli xiaozu, vol. IV, *Nanhai zhudao shidi lunzheng* (Hong Kong: Centre of Asian Studies, 2003), 157–158, 215–216, also provides historical information, embedded in very different contexts.
- 3 For a discussion of this cape, perhaps once an island and formerly called Lingjiaoshan (稜角山), see, for example Guo, Liu, and Lu, “Ming Qing,” 155.
- 4 One example is an entry in Guangdongsheng jingu diming cidian bianzuan weiyuanhui, ed., *Guangdongsheng jingu diming cidian* (Shanghai: Shanghai cishu chubanshe, 1991), 985–986. This description provides exact latitudes and longitudes for the Lingdingyang. Its southern limit would be a diagonal line extending from Lantau Island in the east via Niutoudao (牛頭島) and Sanjiaodao (三角島) to Coloane in the west. Niutoudao and Sanjiaodao form part of the Wanshan Qundao (萬山群島) (not be confused with the Wanshan Liedao which form one archipelago of this huge cluster). Further descriptions of China’s coastal seas and bays are in such sources as Zhongguo diming weiyuanhui and Li Ximu, eds., *Zhongguo haiyu dimingzhi* (Beijing: Zhongguo diming weiyuanhui, 1989).
- 5 For a recent study, which addresses the physical shape of Xiangshan in previous ages, see Zhou Zhenhe and Lin Hong, “Zaoqi Xifang ditu zhong Aomen diming yu biao zhu fangwei de mituan,” *Journal of Macau Studies* 82, no. 3 (2016): 64 et seq. For a study in a European language, see Roderich Ptak, “Wegbereiter für Macau: Der Kreis Xiangshan, seine mutmaßliche Entwicklung und allmähliche Einbettung in den Seehandel (ca. 1000–1500),” *Saeculum* 71, no. 1 (June 2021): 3–47.
- 6 Huang Huaixin, Zhang Maorong, and Tian Xudong, *Yi Zhou shu huijiao jizhu*, rev. Li Xueqin, 2 vols. (Shanghai: Shanghai guji chubanshe, 1995), vol. I, *juan* 3, 290.
- 7 Xiao Tong, *Wen xuan*, comm. Li Shan, 6 vols. (Shanghai: Shanghai guji chubanshe, 2007), vol. IV, *juan* 36, 1636.
- 8 See Xiang Da, ed., *Liang zhong haidao zhenjing* (Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 2000), 126–127; Chen Jiarong, Zhu Jianchu et al., eds., *Zhongguo lidai hailu zhenjing*, 2 vols. (Guangzhou: Guangdong keji chubanshe, 2016), vol. I, 402; Jiao Tianlong, Chen Jiarong, Tom Christensen, and Fung Kam Wing, eds., *Mapping Ming China’s Maritime World: The Selden Map and Other Treasures from the University of Oxford / Zhenlu lanlü* (Hong Kong: Hong Kong Maritime Museum; Chung Hwa Book, 2015), 211.
- 9 For Zou Yan, see Sima Qian, *Shi ji*. With annotations by Pei Yin, Sima Zhen and Zhang shoujie, 10 vols. (Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 1975), esp. vol. VII, *juan* 74, 2344. See also, for example, Joseph Needham, *Science and Civilisation in China*. Vol. II, History of Scientific Thought. With the research assistance of Wang Ling (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1975), 232, 236. — Various chapters on astronomy in the dynastic annals refer to some of the stars mentioned above. Early examples are in Sima, *Shi ji*, vol. IV, *juan* 27.
- 10 For Li Hongzhang’s description, see António Vasconcelos de Saldanha and Jin Guoping, *Para a vista do Imperador. Memoriais da dinastia Qing sobre o estabelecimento dos Portugueses em Macau (1808–1887)* (Macao: Instituto Português do Oriente, 2000), 194–196, based on the text in Huang Fuqing, Zhuang Shuhua, Wang Yue, Xie Jingru, and Zhou Bihua, eds., *Aomen zhuandang*, 4 vols. (Taipei: Institute of Modern History, Academia Sinica, 1992–1996), vol. I, no. 136, 245–263. See also annex 2 under “1257 Beiyang dachen Li Hongzhang wei jisong muke Cheng Zuoheng xun ao shuolue shifu zongli yamen wen” (<https://www.macaodata.mo/macabook/book254/html/033102.htm>; accessed 07-05-2022). — The political background for Li’s observations is a separate issue not discussed here.
- 11 There are several related combinations. For instance, in Buddhism one finds the Jiuzhi (九執). There is also the name/term Jiuyao (九曜) (see note 53, below).
- 12 For the three maps discussed here, see *Yongle dadian*. 10 vols. (Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 1986), vol. IX, *juan* 11905, pp. 8347 (1), 8349 (4), 8350 (7). Also, see, for example, Luo Wei and Luo Ting, *Lingnan gudai fangzhi jiyi* (Guangzhou: Guangdong renmin chunbanshe, 2002), 250–251, 256–257, 262–263. The article by Guo, Liu, and Lu, “Ming Qing,” 156, also refers to them.
- 13 The text in *Yongle dadian*, vol. IX, *juan* 11906, 24v (p. 8376), differs from the colophon. The colophon mentions the toponyms Jiuxingyang and Daxishan (大奚山) (second character not clearly legible), the text has the ‘sea [around]

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- Dayushan' (大虞山海洋) and the sequence 'Dayushan Jiuxingyang' (大虞山九星洋), both to the southeast of Xiangshan. Also see, for example, Luo and Luo, *Lingnan*, 276, 326; Chen Dazhen, *Yuan Dade Nanhai zhi canben*, ed. Guangzhoushi difangzhi bianzuan weiyuanhui bangongshi (Guangzhou: Guangdong renmin chubanshe, 1991), 146. Note: Daxishan and Dayushan stand for Lantau Island of the Hong Kong region.
- 14 Several local chronicles mention Shawei. One example is in Yin Guangren and Zhang Rulin, *Aomen jilüe jiaozhu*, ed. Zhao Chunchen (Macao: Instituto Cultural de Macau, 1992), 40 and note 3 (now always quoted as *Aomen jilüe jiaozhu*); Yin Guangren and Zhang Rulin, *Breve monografia abreviada de Macau (versão anotada)*. Comment to Chinese version by Zhao Chunchen, trans. and annot. by Jin Guoping, revised by Rui Manuel Loureiro (Macao: Instituto Cultural, 2009), 31, 66–67 (note 226). For the three *li*, or villages, see Wang Ting, "Mingdai Xiangshan lu hai xingshi yu Aomen kaibu," *Zhongguo lishi dili yanjiu* 1 (2005): esp. 212 (map). This modern map classifies the places in question as *du* (都) (an administrative entity below the county level frequently found in Ming chronicles).
- 15 For orientation: Wang, "Mingdai". A representative Qing source showing all the places in question, is the *Aomen jilüe jiaozhu*. See there, 33, 34 (note 3), 202–203 (map); Yin and Zhang, *Breve monografia*, 23, 64 (note 158), 292–293 (map). — Jinxingmen is now sometimes called Jinxinggang (金星港), less often Jinxingwan (金星灣) (which also marks a bay of Qi'ao Island). A small islet in that passage between Qi'ao and the Zhuhai mainland bears the name Jinxingdao (金星島), formerly Jinxingshan (金星山). See, for example, Guangdongsheng diming weiyuanhui, *Guangdongsheng haiyu*, 35, 474 (map, section C3). For a detailed analysis of the relevant historical sources, see Guo, Liu, and Lu, "Ming Qing," 154–155. — For Qi'ao, see Guo Yanbing, "Ming Qing shiqi Qi'ao diming kao," *Review of Culture (Chinese Edition)*, no. 96 (2015): 41–51.
- 16 See, for example, Lu Yanzhao, *Ming Qing Lingdingyang quyu haifang dili yanjiu* (Beijing: Renmin ribao chubanshe, 2014), esp. 70–72, 91 (map), 109.
- 17 See, for example, Luo and Luo, *Lingnan*, 247–248. The editors of this work refer to various lost gazetteers of the Song period. Among the sources considered is Wu Zhongxing's (吳中行) *Guangzhou tujing* (《廣州圖經》) of 1185. Other modern works offer complementary but also different information. See, for example, Li Mo, *Guangdong fangzhi yaolu* ([Guangzhou]: Guangdongsheng difangzhi bianzuan weiyuanhui bangongshi, n.d. [preface 1987]), esp. 18, under the entry *Guangzhou fuzhi* (《廣州府志》).
- 18 For a revised and annotated version of this work, see Wang Dayuan, *Daoyi zhilüe jiaoshi*, ed. Su Jiqing (Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 1981).
- 19 The preface to *Nanhai zhi*, by Chen Dazhen (陳大震), appears in the *Nanhai xianzhi* (《南海縣志》) of the Chongzhen period (1628–1644). One finds it in several modern editions of the *Nanhai zhi*. See, for example, *Dade Nanhai zhi canben* (Guangzhou: Guangzhoushi difang yanjiusuo, 1986), 72–73. This book (in modern characters) also carries other short texts/bibliographical references related to the *Nanhai zhi*. Additional material is in Chen, *Yuan Dade Nanhai zhi canben* and Chen Dazhen, 'Dade Nanhai zhi' *dadian ji ben*, ed. Qiu Xuanyu (Taipei: Lan Tai chubanshe, 1994). — For a brief description of the *Nanhai xianzhi* one may consult Li, *Guangdong fangzhi yaolu*, 24, and the modern introduction to the *canben* edition.
- 20 A recent English study on the map: Roderich Ptak, "Selected Problems Concerning the 'Zheng He Map': Questions without Answers," *Journal of Asian History* 53, no.2 (2019): 179–219. — Here, the bibliography lists the most popular edition of the map under Haijun haiyang cehui yanjiusuo and Dalian haiyun xueyuan hanghaishi yanjiusuo, eds., *Xinbian Zheng He hanghai tuji* (Beijing: Renmin jiaotong chubanshe, 1988).
- 21 For the Song work, see Zhou Qufei, *Lingwai daida jiaozhu*, ed. Yang Wuquan (Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 1999). There is a German translation; see Almut Netolitzky, *Das Lingwai tai-ta von Chou Ch'ü-fei. Eine Landeskunde Südchinas aus dem 12. Jahrhundert* (Wiesbaden: Franz Steiner Verlag, 1977). For the schematic structure of the *Daoyi zhilüe* and the position of the Nanhai islands in that work, see Roderich Ptak, "Images of Maritime Asia in Two Yuan Texts: *Daoyi zhilue* and *Yiyu zhi*," *Journal of Sung-Yuan Studies* 25 (1995): 47–75.
- 22 See, for example, J. V. G. Mills, trans. and ed., *Ying-yai sheng-lan. The Overall Survey of the Ocean's Shores [1433]* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1970), 272; *Xinbian Zheng He hanghai tuji*, 43. For Da Jin/Xiao Jin and some adjacent islands, mostly in mid-Ming times, see Wen Qihong, "Cong Zhujiang xi an yanhai huanjing kan Ming chao dui Pu maoyi guan zhi," *Yuan shi ji minzu yu bianjiang yanjiu jikan* 23 (2011): 120–121. Recently on the two Hengqin islands, Jin Guoping, "Xiao Hengqin: Zhongwai wen diming kaoshi ji qi lishi diwei," *Macaology* 1 (2022): 150–173.
- 23 See, for example, Guangdongsheng diming weiyuanhui, *Guangdongsheng haiyu*, 162–163 (description of Da Jindao/Xiao Jindao), 477 (map).
- 24 Recently on this: Roderich Ptak, "A Rock in the Sea: Daxingjian in Chinese Nautical Texts and on Selected Maps (c. 1400–1600)," *Ming Qing yanjiu* 25 (June 2021): 6–8.
- 25 Wang, "Mingdai," esp. 211–213, including map.
- 26 See, for example, Guangdongsheng diming weiyuanhui, *Guangdongsheng haiyu*, 153; Guo, Liu, and Lu, "Ming Qing," 156, quoting a source of the Republican era. Li Hongzhang's memorial, mentioned above, refers to a temple and some fishing families living nearby. See Saldanha and Jin, *Para a vista do Imperador*, 195.
- 27 Details, for example, in Lu, *Ming Qing*, esp. 70–72, 91 (map), 98–99, 110. One Qing source, which mentions the military importance of the Jiuxingyang, then already called

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- Jiuzhouyang, is Shen Lianghan's *Kangxi Xiangshan xianzhi* (Guangzhou dadian photomechanic reprint of copy dated 1673, in the Zhongshan library collection, which mostly refers to the Ming period.) See there, *juan* 9 ("bingfang zhi" 兵防志), 464. Also see Tang Kaijian and Zhou Xiaolei, "Ming Song Yingchang 'Quanhai tuzhu Guangdong yanhai tu' yanjiu," in "*Quanhai tuzhu*" yanjiu, eds. Jin Guoping and Yang Xunling (Macao: Macao Foundation, 2020), 165. An earlier example is in Hu Zongxian, *Chouhai tubian* (Siku quanshu ed.), *juan* 3, 22v (p. 584-88). A local Ming map showing the Fuyong Xunjiansi (in association with the Dongguan [Qianhu]suo 東莞〔千戶〕所) and the Xiangshan Qianhusuo (香山千戶所), but neither the Jiuxing nor the Jiuxingyang, is in Guo Fei, *Wanli Guangdong tongzhi* (online, via Waseda Univ.). See there, vol. VII, *juan* 14, 1v-2r. Note, the second character in Guo Fei's (1529-1605) name also appears as Pei 裴. Short notes on his text in Li, *Guangdong fangzhi yaolu*, 6-8. Many more maps record the different *qianhusuo*, but I do not list them here. A useful article, which links Xiangshan's physical geography and seascape to local piracy and military installations under the Ming: Chen Zhiguo, "Binhai zhi di yu daokou zhi huan: Mingdai Xiangshan de kongjian geju yu haishang shijie," *Nongye kaogu* (2018/1): 73-82. A related article: Wen, "Cong Zhujiang,"; see esp. 133 et seq. A Ming reference to pirates sailing through the Jiuzhouyang is in Guo Fei, *Yue da ji*, eds. Huang Guosheng and Deng Guizhong, 2 vols. (Guangzhou: Zhongshan daxue chubanshe, 1998), vol. II, *juan* 32, p. 920 (entry 'Wanli 5'; i.e. 1577). Qing works also mention this event.
- 28 Quoted after Guo, Liu, and Lu, "Ming Qing," 156. For short bibliographical information on the *Guangzhou zhi*, see, for example, Li, *Guangdong fangzhi yaolu*, 19-20.
- 29 Deng Qian, *Xiangshan xianzhi*, in *Riben cang Zhongguo hanjian difangzhi congkan*, vol. VI, rev. Huang Zuo (Beijing: Shumu wenxian chubanshe, 1991; henceforth quoted as *Xiangshan xianzhi*), *juan* 1, 16v (p. 301). Unlike the earlier entry, this one appears in many internet entries and studies. One example: Guo, Liu, and Lu, "Ming Qing," 156.
- 30 Guangdongsheng diming weiyuanhui, *Guangdongsheng haiyu*, 153. Chen, "Binhai," associates the quoted passage (and other passages in the *Xiangshan xianzhi* related to different locations) with pirates and robbers. — One may also note: Several sources refer to a Ryukyuu tribute mission hit by a storm and blown into the Jiuxingyang. See, for example, *Ming shilu*, 133 vols. (Taipei: Zhongyang yanjiuyuan lishi yuyan yanjiusuo, 1962-1966), vol. XLII (Xianzong), *juan* 66, 1v (p. 1324; Chenghua 5, summer, 4th month, day *bingchen*); Zhou Huang, *Liuqiu guo zhilüe*, in *Guojia tushuguan cang Liuqiu ziliao huibian*, eds. Huang Runhua and Xue Ying, 3 vols. (Beijing: Beijing tushuguan chubanshe, 2000), vol. II, *juan* 3, 23v (p. 744).
- 31 *Xiangshan xianzhi*, 293 (map) and *juan* 1, 15r (p. 301; text).
- 32 For Jinxingdao/gang and Jinxingshan see above, note 15. The *Xiangshan xianzhi*, *juan* 1, 17r (p. 302), also carries a separate entry on Jinxingshan: "[Where] peaks are opposite of each other... is a small island between [them], like a pearl' (峰相峙……中有小嶼如珠). The peaks could refer to Tonggu Cape (銅鼓角) (south of Jinxingshan/Jinxingdao) and to the southeastern tip of Qi'ao, now called Nanmang Cape (南芒角). The 'small island' should be Jinxingshan itself, which has a round shape and shines in the sun.
- 33 For a list of Xiangshan chronicles, see Li, *Guangdong fangzhi yaolu*, 71-77. Another Qing text, the *Aomen jilüe*, carries related information. See *Aomen jilüe jiaozhu*, 33 and note 2 there; Yin and Zhang, *Breve monografia*, 23 and 63 (notes 148 and 149). Li Hongzhang's memorial also mentions the sweet water and other features. See Saldanha and Jin, *Para a vista do Imperador*, esp. 195.
- 34 Huang Zuo, *Jiajing Guangdong tongzhi*, 4 vols. (Hong Kong: Dadong tushu gongsi, 1977), vol. I, *juan* 13, 28r (p. 328); Guo, *Wanli Guangdong tongzhi*, vol. VII, *juan* 14, 35v-36r. Also see Chen, "Binhai". Some Qing versions of the *Guangdong tongzhi* contain information similar to the *Xiangshan xianzhi* quoted above.
- 35 See Dai Jing, *Guangdong tongzhi chugao*, comp. by Zhang Yue (unspecified copy in the net), *juan shou*, 4v-5r.
- 36 Dai, *Guangdong tongzhi chugao*, *juan* 1, 18v.
- 37 See Hu, *Chouhai tubian*, *juan* 1, 8r-9r (pp. 584-8 and 584-9). The relevant parts of the map also appear, for example, in Fang Kun, Wang Ying and Liang Chunhun, eds., *Zhongguo yanhai jiangyu lishi tulu: Nanhai juan* (Hefei: Huanshan shushe, 2017), 23-25. Another collection with many Guangdong maps is Wang Ziqiang, ed., *Zhongguo gu ditu jilu: Guangdongsheng, Hainansheng ji* (Beijing: Xingqiu ditu chubanshe, 2010). Generally, on the maps in *Chouhai tubian* and related works: Cao Wanru et al., eds., *Zhongguo gudai ditu ji (Mingdai)* (Beijing: Wenwu chubanshe, 1995), esp. explanations nos. 194-200 on pp. 15 and 42; Liang Erping, *Haiyang ditu: Zhongguo gudai haiyang ditu juyao* (Hong Kong: Joint Publishing, 2015), 158-161. A Chinese study: Fan Zhongyi, *Chouhai tubian qianshuo* (Beijing: Jiefangjun chubanshe, 1987). — There is some work on Sanzao. One early piece: Liang Zhenxing and Wen Liping, "Sanzaodao jianshi," *Zhubai wenshi* 5 (1987): 63-73.
- 38 Hu, *Chouhai tubian*, *juan* 3, 1r-v (p. 584-75). Some modern works also include this map. See, for example, Fang, Wang and Liang, eds., *Zhongguo*, 35-36.
- 39 There are many works on the Qixingyang/Qizhouyang and the 'Seven Islands'. European readers may profitably consult the relevant parts in Pierre-Yves Manguin, *Les Portugais sur les côtes du Viêt-nam et du Campã. Étude sur les routes maritimes et les relations commerciales, d'après les sources portugaises (XVIe, XVIIe, XVIIIe siècles)* (Paris: École française d'Extrême-Orient, 1972). A Chinese source: Han, *Han Zhenhua xuanji*, vol. IV.
- 40 Zheng Ruozeng, *Zheng Kaiyang zazhu* (Siku quanshu ed.), esp. *juan* 1, 7v-8r (pp. 584.447-448). The map also appears, for example, in Guo Shengbo, Fang Jing and Lu Yanzhao, "Cong Ming Qing Laowanshan diming qianxi kan Aomen haifang yinsu," *Review of Culture (Chinese Edition)*, no. 76 (2010), 95. Note: The *Wu bei zhi* (《武備志》) of

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- the early seventeenth century also contains the ‘Guangdong yanhai shansha (tu)’. For the relevant segments, see Mao Yuanyi, *Wu bei zhi* (Taipei: Huashi chubanshe, 1984), *juan* 210, 8v–9v, or Fang, Wang and Liang, eds., *Zhongguo*, 86–88. Several other maps in the *Wu bei zhi* show Guangdong and its coast.
- 41 Zheng, *Zheng Kaiyang zazhu* (Siku quanshu ed.), *juan* 8, 2v (p. 584–622). See also Cao et al. eds., *Zhongguo*, esp. article on pp. 69–72. Some later maps are similar to or (partially) based on the same ‘Wanli haifang tu’. One such map is in Zhang Huang, *Tushu bian* (Siku quanshu zhenben ed.). This piece does not record the ‘Nine Islands’ region, but the text in that work mentions the Jiuxingyang in a list of toponyms; see there, vol. XII, *juan* 57, 14v. Another map (called ‘Wanli haitu’ 萬里海圖) appears in Xie Jie (1537–1604), *Qian tai wo zuan*, 2 vols. (Xuanlantang congshu xuji, vols. 17–18), after *juan shang*, map 3v. It shows the name Jiuzhou (not Jiuxing) surrounded by eight (not nine) dots or islands. — For general information on such maps and how they are related to each other, see, for example, Li Xingui, “Ming Wanli haifang tu quanhai xi yanjiu,” in “*Quanhai tuzhu*” *yanjiu*, eds. Jin and Yang, esp. 133–137.
- 42 Ying Jia (1494–1554), *Canguo zongdu junmen zhi*, rev. Ling Yunyi and Liu Yaohui, ed. Zhao Kesheng and Li Ran (Changsha: Yuelu shushe, 2015), *juan* 5: 81. For a brief and general description of the map, see Zhu Jianqiu, Chen Jiarong, James K. Chin, Tam Kwong Lim, eds., *Zhongwai jiaotong gu ditu ji* (Shanghai: Zhongxi shuju, 2017), 131–134. Several articles discuss special aspects of this work. See, for example, Guo, Fang and Lu, “Cong Ming Qing,” 93; Wen, “Cong Zhujiang,” esp. 126 et seq.; Shi Cunlong, “Puren chulai di ‘Maoyidao’ huo ‘Tunmendao’ ying shi Nantoudao zai kao,” *Review of Culture (Chinese Edition)*, no. 54 (2005), 179–180; Tang and Zhou, “Ming Song,” 155; Yang Xunling, “‘Quanhai tuzhu’ Aomen ji qi yi xi bufen diming kao,” in “*Quanhai tuzhu*” *yanjiu*, eds. Jin and Yang, esp. 183. — The map in *Qian tai wo zuan* (see note 41) places Jiu’aoshan to the southeast of Jiuzhou, and Xiangshan to its northeast.
- 43 A recent work dedicated to the study of the ‘Quanhai tuzhu’ is Jin and Yang, eds., “*Quanhai tuzhu*” *yanjiu*. For a general discussion of that map and the ‘Guangdong yanhai tu’, see Zhu et al., eds., *Zhongwai jiaotong*, 151–152. — For the relevant parts of the map in Guo Fei’s work, see Guo, *Yue da ji*, vol. II, 938–939. For some names found in its segments related to the Pearl River estuary, see, for example, Shi, “Puren chulai,” 179–181.
- 44 For Laowanshan see, for example, the relevant parts in Roderich Ptak, “Chinese Navigation near the Coast of Central Guangdong: Nantingshan and Nantingmen in Ming Times,” *Monumenta Serica* 68.2 (2020): 339–367.
- 45 For details, see Ptak, “A Rock in the Sea”.
- 46 Chi Xianfang, *Meizhou haishen zhuan*, in *Mazu wenxian zhengli yu yanjiu congkan (di er ji)*, ed. Mazu wenxian zhengli yu yanjiu congkan bianzuan weiyuanhui (Fuzhou: Haixia wenyi chubanshe, 2017), vol. X, 4v (p. 12). For the later text, see Gerd Wäadow, *T’ien-fei hsien-sheng lu*, „*Die Aufzeichnungen von der manifestierten Heiligkeit der Himmelsprinzessin*“. *Einleitung, Übersetzung, Kommentar*. (Sankt Augustin, Nettetal: Institut Monumenta Serica, 1992), 220 and note 489 there (translation), 317 (no. 41; Chinese text). For a discussion of both these entries, see Roderich Ptak, “Mazu und Zheng He im Jahre 1403: Notizen zu Einträgen in zwei religiösen Texten,” in *Profesor Roman Malek SVD i jego dzieto dla Kościoła w Chinach*, eds. Barbara Hoster et al. (Górna Grupa: VERBINUM, 2021), 263–281.
- 47 See Jin Wenmo, (*Kangxi*) *Xin’an xianzhi*, in *Shenzhen jiu zhi san zhong*, ed. Zhang Yibing (Shenzhen: Haitian chubanshe, 2006), *juan* 8, 389.
- 48 Han, *Han Zhenhua xuanji*, vol. IV, esp. 156–158, 215–217. — A large number of old maps, from the Song period through to Qing times, show Wanzhou, also called Wan’an (萬安), on Hainan’s shore. Together with some nearby islands this area was important for navigation between Guangdong and the coast of Champa. See Roderich Ptak, “A Note on Dazhoudao 大洲島/Tinhosa (c. 1000–1550),” *Journal of Asian History* (forthcoming).
- 49 See, for example, Han, *Han Zhenhua xuanji*, vol. IV, 158, 175–195 (esp. map and table on pp. 178, 179); Guangdongsheng diming weiyuanhui, ed., *Nanhai zhudao diming ziliao huibian* (Guangzhou: Guangdongsheng ditu chubanshe, 1987), esp. 69 et seq. (table, several entries), 168–172 (descriptions of Yongle Islands), 175, 177, 179 (maps showing them), 193 et seq. (nos. 98, 100, 111, 116, 117, 126, 133, 157, 249: descriptions of Nansha Islands), 213, 215, 217, 219 (maps showing them), 245 et seq. (table, several entries).
- 50 Fang, Wang and Liang, eds., *Zhongguo*, 2–3, 68. Also see Jiao et al., eds., *Mapping Ming China’s Maritime World*, 36–37 (‘Da Ming jujian wanguo renji lucheng quantu’ 大明九邊萬國人跡路程全圖), 40–41; Chen and Zhu, eds., *Zhongguo lidai hailu zhenjing*, 346 (the last two references: ‘Dong xi nan hai yi zhuguo zongtu’ 東西南海夷諸國總圖).
- 51 See, for example, Fang, Wang and Liang, eds., *Zhongguo*, 4–5, 8–9, 72, 122–123 (Qixing, Dayu); 136 (Hengqin exposed); 156 (Lingdingyang left out).
- 52 For an early English summary of these events, only published much later, see Lo Jung-pang, *China as a Sea Power 1127–1368. A Preliminary Survey of the Maritime Expansion and Naval Exploits of the Chinese People during the Southern Song and Yuan Periods*, ed. Bruce A. Ellmann (Singapore and Hong Kong: NUS Press and Hong Kong University Press, 2012), 232–245.
- 53 The editorial history of this work is complicated. Modern studies date it in different ways. Here I used the modern edition: Gu Zuyun, *Du shi fangyu jiyao*, eds. He Cijun and Shi Hejin, 12 vols. (Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 2008). — Several earlier texts contain similar entries. Sometimes they are easier to comprehend. One example: *Xiangshan xianzhi*, *juan* 1, 17r (p. 302). — The entry in *Dushi fangyu jiyao* continues by citing a passage from the *Yitong zhi* (《一統志》) of the Qing period: ‘There are nine dazzling islands

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- in the sea, spread like “nine stars”, hence the name of that sea.’ (海中有九曜山，羅列如九星，洋因以名). One may take the sequence *jiuyaoshan* as a name. It stands for the Beidou Qixing and the two stars Fu and Bi (see above), similar to Jiuxing. It may also remind readers of the Qiyao (七曜), the seven sources of brightness (the sun, moon and the five planets). In Buddhism Jiuyao (Sanskrit ‘Navagraha’) combines the Qiyao and two other celestial objects.
- 54 Gu, *Du shi fangyu jiyao*, vol. IX, *juan* 100, p. 4588 (list with Xiannü’ao), *juan* 101, p. 4611 (quotation from Jing’ao entry); *Xiangshan xianzhi*, *juan* 1, 17r (p. 302). The entry continues: In the twelfth months of Jingyan 2 (December 1278), the emperor’s vessel put to sea again and reached Xiannü’ao... At the end of the entry, the text refers to the ‘yiwen’ (藝文) chapter. See there, esp. *juan* 7, 33r (p. 402), 39r–v (p. 405). — Note: The list of names also appears in earlier (and later) sources, for instance in *Tushu bian*.
- 55 *Aomen jilüe jiaozhu*, 49, 50 (notes 7 and 8); Yin and Zhang, *Breve monografia*, 43, 71 (notes 342, 343).
- 56 See, for example, Guangdongsheng diming weiyuanhui, *Guangdongsheng haiyu*, 475 (map; sector F1). Moreover, on p. 155 this source says Hengqindao was once called Xiannü’ao, Hengqinshan, Da Hengqindao and Xiao Hengqindao.
- 57 *Aomen jilüe jiaozhu*, 43 and 45 (note 26: Jing’ao); Yin and Zhang, *Breve monografia*, 34 and 69 (note 275), 43 (note 343).
- 58 Huang, *Jiajing Guangdong tongzhi*, poem 28r–v (p. 328). For the poem, see also *Aomen jilüe jiaozhu*, 49, and Yin and Zhang, *Breve monografia*, 43, 44. Huang Yu was the grandfather of Huang Zuo (黃佐). The latter is known for writing/editing local chronicles.
- 59 See Wu Hongqi and Zhang Jing, “‘Xiangshanxian shu Aomen yilantu’ de chubu yanjiu,” *Ji’nan shixue* 9 (2014), quoted in Jin, “Xiao Hengqin,” 154. These explanations largely follow Qing sources.
- 60 For a discussion, see Han, *Han Zhenhua xuanji*, vol. IV, 156–158. Han mostly cites an article by Tan Qixiang (譚其驤). For this article and more, see Guangdongsheng diming weiyuanhui, ed., *Nanhai zhudao*, 447–452.
- 61 These sources are cited by Han Zhenhua and Tan Qixiang; see previous note.
- 62 See Han, *Han Zhenhua xuanji*, vol. IV, 116 et seq.
- 63 The relevant sections of many maps are in Zhongguo di yi lishi dang’anguan, ed., *Aomen lishi ditu jingxuan* (Beijing: Huawen chubanshe, 2000).
- 64 A useful study is Zhou and Lin, “Zaoqi Xifang”.
- 65 Michael A. Fuller, *Drifting among Rivers and Lakes: Southern Song Dynasty Poetry and the Problem of Literary History* (Cambridge, MA, and London: Harvard University, Asia Center, 2013), 459. There are many interpretations and translations of Wen’s poem in English-language works. Two examples: Cai Zong-qi, ed., *How to Read Chinese Poetry. A Guided Anthology* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2008), 391; Li Yuying and Gao Yaping, “Translation of Classics by JX Native Literati of Song Dynasty under Foregrounding Theory,” *Theory and Practice in Language Studies* 8, no. 4 (April 2018): 420–421.

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