

# From Quarantine to Colonization: Qing Debates on Territorialization of Aboriginal Taiwan in the Nineteenth Century

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## ABSTRACT

This paper explores the changes in Qing territorial perceptions and frontier policies in nineteenth-century Taiwan. I trace the territorial question of aboriginal Taiwan to Qing quarantine doctrine in the eighteenth century and outline important historical contingencies and different local circumstances that shaped official debates on the aboriginal boundary policy in Gemalan and Shuishalian in early nineteenth century. Moreover, I point out the impacts of Sino-foreign negotiations and especially the territorial crisis of Japanese invasion in Langqiao that transformed Qing territorial discourse in the 1870s. The famous *kaishan fufan* campaign signifies the changing nature of Qing colonialism from passive quarantine to aggressive colonization. Despite the efforts of progressive officials, the late Qing colonial project was limited by its military, administrative and financial capacities in opening the mountains and pacifying the aborigines. Moreover, the territorialization of aboriginal Taiwan was continued by the Japanese colonial government after the cession of the island in 1895.

**Keywords:** Nineteenth-century Taiwan, Aboriginal Boundary, Quarantine, “Opening the Mountains and Pacifying the Aborigines (*Kaishan Fufan*)”, Territorialization

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