

# The Dunn Map: An American and a Long-Forgotten Curio from Nineteenth-Century China

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## Introduction

In the autumn of 2011, librarians at the Library of Congress in the United States rediscovered a map (Fig. 1) that had lain undisturbed for more than a century. It is part of a collection that had belonged to Thomas Dunn, an American businessman and diplomat who spent at least fifteen years in Qing China. The “Dunn Map”, as I will refer to it, seems to have been drawn between 1872 and 1884. Its original title, *Fusheng quantu* 福省全圖 (Complete Map of Fuzhou), is written in four solid characters along the top of a curio that can be considered an exquisitely coloured painting or artform that captures part of the coastal scenario of nineteenth-century Fuzhou 福州. With regard to the heading of the map, it is uncommon to refer to Fuzhou as Fusheng 福省. The city in question has been known as Fuzhou since the Tang dynasty (618–907), while Fusheng refers to the entirety of Fujian province.<sup>1</sup> The map, however, only depicts the area close to the mouth of the Min River. It might have been the case that the cartographer-artist that produced it shortened the phrase “the capital of Fujian” (*Fujian shengcheng* 福建省城), indicating Fuzhou, to Fusheng. It is nevertheless unusual to see Fusheng as a contraction for Fuzhou in other cartographic projects.

In addition, the third character in the title, *quan* 全, meaning “complete” or “inclusive”, suggests the painter’s desire to include everything he had or could have seen in that location at the time. It also implies the preciseness and accuracy

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1 Schinz (1996), 260.



FIGURE 1 *Fusheng quantu*, c.1872–1884

SOURCE: LIBRARY OF CONGRESS, GEOGRAPHY  
AND MAP DIVISION (G7824.F8A5 1884 .F8 VAULT),  
[HTTP://hdl.loc.gov/loc.gmd/G7824F.CT003181](http://hdl.loc.gov/loc.gmd/G7824F.CT003181)

of the images illustrated on the map. The idea of producing a *quantu* 全圖, a comprehensive and systematic representation of a region or an entire country, was in fact a testament to the remarkable advancements in cartography in late imperial China. These undertakings were characterized by their extensive coverage, detailed depiction of geographical features, and meticulous cartographic techniques. One notable example of a *quantu* in Chinese history is the *Kunyu wanguo quantu* 坤輿萬國全圖 (Complete Map of the Ten Thousand Countries), produced in the Ming dynasty by Matteo Ricci (1552–1610),<sup>2</sup> a Jesuit missionary, in collaboration with a group of Chinese elites. This map is renowned for its scope in showcasing the world beyond the geographical borders of China, covering countries in Asia, Europe, Africa, and the Americas. In 1644, a publisher in Nanjing named Cao Junyi 曹君義 also compiled a map titled *Tianxia jiubian fenyen renji lucheng quantu* 天下九邊分野人跡路程全圖 (Complete Map of All

2 The *Kunyu wanguo quantu* is also known as the Ricci Map. Mario Cams and Elke Papelitzky have persuasively argued against the use of the term Ricci Map to describe a singular entity, noting that it generically refers to a collection of maps from the late sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries. They contend that employing a single term to represent the diverse cartographic works produced during the Ming and Qing periods is overly simplistic and potentially misleading. See Cams and Papelitzky (2024b).



under Heaven, the Nine Frontiers, Astral Allocations, Human Traces, and Route Itineraries), based on the “Wanguo quantu” 萬國全圖 (Map of All Nations) that he had come across in the *Zhifang waiji* 職方外紀 (Record of Everything Beyond the Administration).<sup>3</sup> Therefore, the production of comprehensive maps can be traced back to the Ming and Qing, if not earlier. Although the scale of the Dunn Map is not comparable to the *Kunyu wanguo quantu* or Cao Junyi’s map, it is very likely that the cartographer of the Dunn Map was familiar with such a cartographic tradition and keen to examine and inspect what he deemed important and necessary from a macroscopic perspective.

Regarding its dimensions and style, the Dunn Map was hand drawn on a horizontal paper scroll and is 59 centimetres in height and 97 centimetres in width. While modest in size, its quality and artistry suggest that it could have been displayed as an artwork in a wealthy merchant’s household. By its appearance, it is apparent that the surviving Dunn Map is incomplete. As time passed, its backing has stiffened, and fragments of the map have fallen off, perhaps each time it was lifted or moved. Even more unfortunate is that the right-hand side is missing. If the lost sections of the painting had been properly maintained, then they could provide more textual and visual information. There might have been a paragraph or two written on the missing section, potentially providing more background information on the Dunn Map itself. It is not unusual to find paratextual information (or inscriptions and seals) on Chinese maps or traditional paintings.<sup>4</sup> In exceptional cases, such textual descriptions can extend to several hundred characters in length. They narrate in detail the story of why and how the work was produced. Sometimes there is also a substantial amount of calligraphy or poetry on these maps. Biographical information on the cartographer and/or his associates is often appended to the document. A good example of this type of paratextual evidence would be the 541-character preface to the *Haijiang yangjie xingshi tu* 海疆洋界形勢圖 (Strategic Map of the Maritime Frontier), a sea chart produced during the Qianlong emperor’s reign (1735–1796), towards the end of the eighteenth century (Fig. 2).<sup>5</sup>

Luckily, the remaining section of the Dunn Map is richly illustrated and in reasonably good condition. From a historical point of view, the map has layered meanings. It is a piece of valuable archival evidence in light of its rarity, informativeness, textuality, and artistry. Undeniably, it serves as an exceptional example of cartography that sheds considerable light on Chinese and Asian cartography as a field. In this article, I closely examine the Dunn Map to probe

3 Cams (2024), 142.

4 Hearn (2008), 5–7.

5 For a detailed study of the *Qisheng yanhai tu*, see Po (2016).

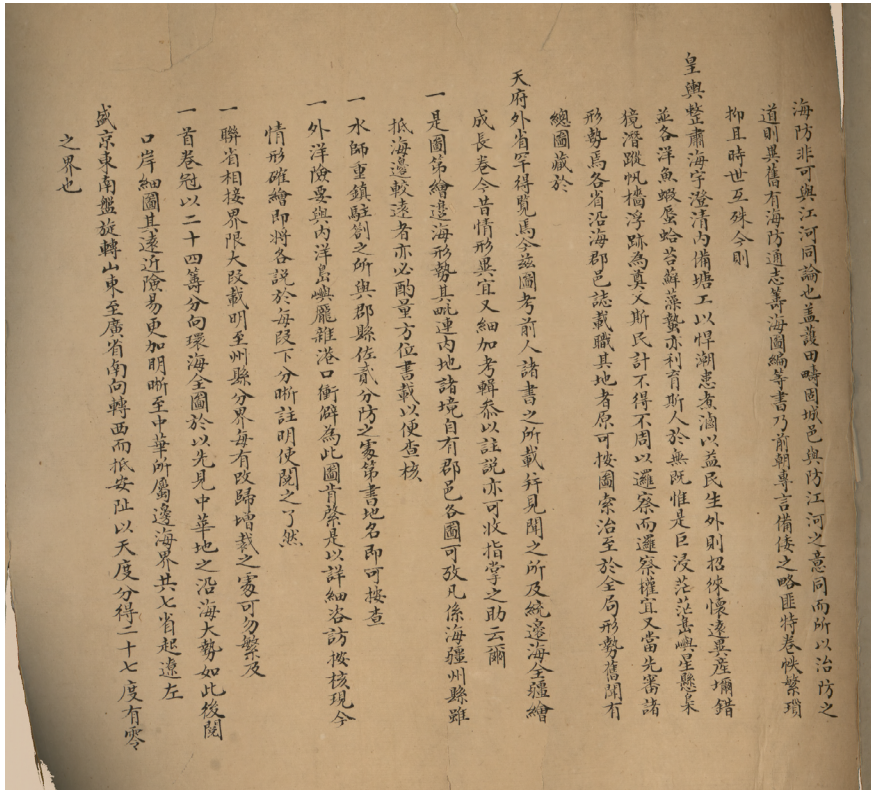


FIGURE 2 *Haijiang yangjie xingshi tu*, c.1787–1801

SOURCE: LIBRARY OF CONGRESS, GEOGRAPHY AND MAP DIVISION  
(G7822.C6A5 1801 .H3 VAULT SHELF), [HTTPS://LCCN.LOC.GOV/GM71005021](https://lccn.loc.gov/GM71005021)

a set of questions on Fuzhou's maritime culture and the coastal scenario of the city as one of the five ports that had opened up to foreign trade and residence under the Treaty of Nanjing (29 August 1842). I also investigate what the map tells us of coastal defence and maritime engagement as the Qing court conceptualised it during the nineteenth century. Furthermore, the Dunn Map provides a deeper insight into the narratives concerning Sino-American relations during the age of high imperialism (c.1850–1900), a period during which China was dominated, disciplined, and humiliated by various European and Pacific powers. I suggest that the Dunn Map is not only rare and delicate, but its production could be a kind of collaborative effort between Chinese and Western cartographers or artists in visualising maritime Fuzhou. This map is the first of its kind as scholars had not yet put forward any similar image, at least of this artistic and cultural nature.

Fuzhou has long been a focus of research on Chinese maritime history. Long before the Treaty of Nanjing was signed, the city had already been exporting silk and tea via foreign traders; however, the city of Guangzhou (Canton) soon rose to prominence after the “Canton system” was implemented in 1759.<sup>6</sup> After the Triad Rebellion of 1854, Guangzhou’s tea supplies were moved to Fuzhou for export, hence reorienting the city’s importance in the international tea market.<sup>7</sup> By 1860, the “tea trade in Fuzhou accounted for 80 percent of Fujian’s total export value”.<sup>8</sup> Apart from its prominence in the tea trade, the city was also an infamous hub for opium smuggling,<sup>9</sup> the headquarters of the Qing Southern Fleet that had been established during the 1870s,<sup>10</sup> and an important centre of Protestant missionary work in China.<sup>11</sup> Although studies of Fuzhou have been consolidated and diversified over the past decades, the emphasis is primarily on the city’s economic, military, and religious aspects. In visualising the seascape of Fuzhou, this article inserts at least a footnote to the existing literature on the city, supplying more evidence that helps us comprehend its changing importance over time. In other words, the Dunn Map is more than a cartographic and artistic production, it offers a much-needed artistic and visual perspective on the history of coastal China, an approach that has conventionally been relegated to a marginal category of Chinese maritime studies.<sup>12</sup>

In addition to the city of Fuzhou, the American Thomas Dunn will also be featured prominently in subsequent sections. I adopt the name “Dunn Map” for two reasons: the map was part of the a collection that was donated to the Library of Congress by Thomas Dunn, and Dunn’s own life history intersected with this notable discovery in multiple ways. Dunn’s collection consisted of

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6 Liu (2007), 72–73.

7 Gray (2002), 81.

8 Howell (2005), 141.

9 Thilly (2022), Ch. 2.

10 Elman (2009), 183.

11 Dunch (2001).

12 Although the sea was considered a special kind of space in imperial China, it had not been regarded as a particular theme in the artistic creations of the Ming and Qing dynasties, the golden era during which Chinese traditional paintings at court, in temples, and in the marketplace flourished. See Yang (1997), 197–250; Nie (1997), 251–298. By contrast, in the Euro-American context, marine art has always been marked by the tension that exists between humans and the natural world. We can see, from the huge collection of high-quality maritime paintings preserved in almost every gallery and museum across Europe and America, that the sea was not only a place associated with great danger in the transport of people and goods but it was also a cultural basket that could fill and stimulate the imagination. For details, see Giltaij and Kelch (1996), 37–38; Unger (1991), 75–94; Martin and Weiss (2022).

more than one hundred documents and has been preserved at the Library of Congress since 1956. The following year, the *Library of Congress Quarterly Journal of Current Acquisitions* described the collection as a “small group of papers of Thomas Dunn ... [which] has been received as a gift from Miss Ann C. Dunn”.<sup>13</sup> The collection mostly consists of textual documents, ranging from correspondence and reports to governmental and personal records. This might explain why librarians and archivists did not pay much attention to the Dunn Map until they reorganised the collection in 2011.<sup>14</sup> Although it has its own call number and an incomplete entry in the catalogue, no one noticed this hidden gem until the library retrieved it from among a set of old files. The Dunn Map is not only an exceptional artefact, it was also a long-forgotten one.

The name Dunn Map invokes potential comparisons with the Selden Map, which was produced in the early seventeenth century and is currently housed in the Bodleian Library at the University of Oxford. Timothy Brook, Robert Batchelor, and many others have argued that the Selden Map is significant for its representation of maritime trade dynamics between Southeast Asia, China, and the rest of the East Asian Sea. It is an invaluable resource for various academic disciplines, including history, geography, cartography, and cultural studies.<sup>15</sup> Drawn on a piece of paper measuring approximately 1.6 metres in height and 53 centimetres in width, the Selden Map showcases an intricate network of rivers, harbours, and port cities, along with illustrations of mountains and cultural landmarks. One distinctive feature of the Selden Map is the presence of navigational lines, known as rhumb lines or loxodromes, which were used by sailors for calculating direction and distance. These lines indicate potential trade routes and highlight the importance of maritime commerce during the early modern era.

While both the Selden Map and the Dunn Map are preserved as treasured artefacts and testaments to historical significance of Asian maritime history, their focuses are very different in nature. The Selden Map was apparently used for purposes related to trade and navigation, while the Dunn Map was likely to a certain extent designed for military use as it provided vital information for military planning and defence strategies, an aspect on which I will further

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13 Staff of the Manuscript Division (1957), 122.

14 Patrick Kerwin, the librarian who has overseen the Asian and Chinese collection at the Library of Congress for many years, confirmed that the map had been overlooked for a fairly long time in email correspondence with the author on 22 December 2020.

15 Brook (2013); Batchelor (2014).

elaborate in due course. It is highly probable that the Dunn Map was produced for the use of naval commanders, administrators, or diplomats, as the map could provide them with a glimpse into the strengths and vulnerabilities of the coastal areas and natural surroundings, facilitating the identification of key defensive positions and planning of effective strategies against potential invasion or attack. Having said that, however, this is not to suggest that the Dunn Map could not be viewed as a tool to assist navigation along the coastline and waterways of Fuzhou. Some coastal features such as reefs, sandbars, and offshore islands, which could pose risks to ships and sea trade, were identified and signposted. Thus mariners could also rely on the map to plan their routes and ensure the safety of their vessels and cargos. After all, a map could be used in various ways and serve a wide range of purposes, from navigation to geographical visualization. Yet, comparatively speaking, the navigational information contained in the Selden Map, including the mapping out of port cities and transportation networks, is evidently more comprehensive than that of the Dunn Map.

Another commonality of the two maps is that their exact origins are still uncertain, as their precise production dates and the identities of their original cartographers remain subjects of ongoing study and speculation.<sup>16</sup> What can be affirmed is that both maps were in the possession of various owners throughout their respective histories; in other words, Dunn and the English legal scholar and maritime theorist John Selden, after whom the Selden Map was named, are only the principal figures in the complex histories of the two maps. The two artefacts are also distinctive in their explicitly maritime focuses. Both reflect cartographic traditions that paid considerable attention to the significance of coastal features for trade, fortification, and navigation. These features, considered collectively, align with the historical significance of China and Southeast Asia as an important hub or motor within a broader maritime context either in the early seventeenth or the late nineteenth centuries. Moreover, both maps exhibit a certain degree of artistic quality, which contributes to their visual appeal and showcases the skill and craftsmanship of

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16 I will examine the origins of the Dunn Map in the subsequent section. As for the Selden Map, according to the Bodleian Library, “recent scholarship suggests that it was probably produced in the early seventeenth century by a Chinese, as Chinese sources are used for the placenames on the Map and also the shipping routes; the compiler was probably based in Southeast Asia, as the Map’s depiction of that area was to remain the most accurate for another two centuries. It is elaborately decorated with landscapes and plants and was almost certainly produced for reference in the house of a rich merchant rather than for use at sea”. See <https://seldenmap.bodleian.ox.ac.uk/>.

their creators. Cities, landscapes, seascapes, floral motifs, waves, and decorative borders are rendered with care, precision, and accuracy. Different shades and hues are employed to differentiate landmasses, bodies of water, and other geographic features, creating visually engaging and aesthetically pleasing compositions. As such, these artistic representations not only serve as visual cues but also add visual interest and provide a sense of place and context.

Speaking of the artistic side of the Dunn Map, an initial impression of it is that it looks fairly similar to traditional Chinese landscape paintings (*shanshui hua* 山水畫). From the way the images were depicted to how the colour was applied, the style combines fine-line delineations of forms while placing an emphasis on contours, but it also includes some shading that employed dye washes. However, on closer inspection, this is not a typical *shanshui hua*: it notes the locations of strategic islands, anchorages, shipyards, and coastal fortresses, as well as depicting various types of warships and trading junks, sensitive information related to coastal defence that was rarely seen on a landscape painting. Such information could only be found on official sea charts or coastal diagrams (*haijiang tu* 海疆圖) that coastal officials and naval generals would generally use when patrolling the sea. A *haijiang tu* was a type of military map that depicted the contours of the coastal regions and the immediate sea spaces that were under the control of the Qing empire. They usually included key places, such as cities and islands along and off the coast, and provided some brief hydrological remarks that were intended to aid naval patrolling and seaborne shipping. However, the Dunn Map also does not look like a typical *haijiang tu* from the Ming or Qing. Judging from its style, design, pattern, perspective, focal point, and the crops and compositions that hold the viewers' attention, the map portrays a seascape that would have been very uncommon to Qing viewers.

In addition to the above-mentioned features, a typical Qing-era *haijiang tu* usually provides a few paragraphs of paratextual information (or a colophon). And there are other characteristics worthy of our attention. The *Zhejiang Taixieying yanhai kouan tu* 浙江台協營沿海口岸圖 (Military Map of Taizhou Brigade) (Fig. 3) and the *Zhejiang haifang tu* 浙江海防圖 (Map of Maritime Defence in Zhejiang) (Fig. 4), both completed in the Daoguang era (1820–1850), are two standard *haijiang tu* that provide key strategic details of the coast of Zhejiang province. Although they appear to have been roughly compiled, these maps have proved to be effective and practical in delivering a sense of the coastal conditions that its users patrolled or administrated. However, not all *haijiang tu* were rough or sketchy. The *Jianghai quantu* 江海全圖 (A Comprehensive Map of the River and Sea) (Fig. 5), a fairly famous sea chart produced in the 1850s, clearly portrays a range of features, including sea-going vessels, the Great Wall, and a series of coastal fortifications. Yet compared with



FIGURE 3    *Zhejiang Taixieying yanhai kouan tu*, c.1820  
SOURCE: BRITISH LIBRARY (ADD. MS. 16358 (H)), [HTTP://EXPLORE.BL.UK/  
PRIMO\\_LIBRARY/LIBWEB/ACTION/DLDISPLAY.DO?DOCID=BLL01004985876](http://explore.bl.uk/primo_library/libweb/action/dldisplay.do?docid=BLL01004985876)



FIGURE 4    *Zhejiang haifang tu*, c.1840  
SOURCE: BRITISH LIBRARY (ADD. MS. 16363 (F)), [HTTP://EXPLORE.BL.UK/  
PRIMO\\_LIBRARY/LIBWEB/ACTION/DLDISPLAY.DO?DOCID=BLL01004985855](http://explore.bl.uk/primo_library/libweb/action/dldisplay.do?docid=BLL01004985855)



FIGURE 5 *Jianghai quantu*, c.1812–1843  
SOURCE: LIBRARY OF CONGRESS, GEOGRAPHY AND MAP DIVISION (G7822.C6 1843 .J5  
VAULT SHELF), [HTTP://HDL.LOC.GOV/LOC.GMD/G7822C.CT003425](http://hdl.loc.gov/loc.gmd/G7822C.CT003425)

the Dunn Map, the *Jianghai quantu*'s aesthetic details are not as artistic and refined. Visually, the former has its own distinctive design in that it is stylish and complete unto itself, independent of its cartographic functions.

All of this gives us the idea that the Dunn Map is not a typical *haijiang tu* but a singleton. It is, however, quite similar to other Western paintings or sketches that captured the coastal scenery of nineteenth-century China, such as the watercolour *Gezicht op Fuzhou* (View of Fuzhou), preserved at the Rijksmuseum in the Netherlands (Fig. 6), which is a work that is also anonymous but is thought to have been produced between 1670 and 1700. Showcasing the city's prominent landmarks, fortified walls, gates, temples, pagodas, and bridges, this painting portrays Fuzhou as a bustling and vibrant commercial centre. Although the Dunn Map contains more specific details of Fuzhou than the Dutch example, from Figure 1 and Figure 6 we can see that both paintings are comparable as they each provide a panoramic view of the city of Fuzhou and its coastline. Furthermore, both of them depict the diverse array of ships and junks that sailed the Min River. Such maritime scenes reflected the role of Fuzhou as a vital trading port, connecting Fujian province and the rest of China and beyond.



FIGURE 6 *Gezicht op Fuzhou*, c.1670–1700

SOURCE: RIJKSMUSEUM (NG-1988-13), [HTTPS://WWW.RIJKSMUSEUM.NL/NL/ COLLECTIE/NG-1988-13](https://www.rijksmuseum.nl/nl/collectie/NG-1988-13)





FIGURE 7 *Fukushu nandai no zu*, 1884

SOURCE: LIBRARY OF CONGRESS, GEOGRAPHY AND MAP DIVISION (G7824.

F8G46 1884 .S3 VAULT), [HTTP://hdl.loc.gov/loc.gmd/G7824F.CT003708](http://hdl.loc.gov/loc.gmd/G7824F.CT003708)

In the Library of Congress catalogue, the Dunn Map is placed under the category of Asian pictorial maps, alongside other maps produced around the same era, such as the aforementioned *Qisheng yanhai quantu*, the *Fukushu ryakuzu* 福州略圖 (Sketch Map of Fuzhou), and the *Fukushu nandai no zu* 福州南台之圖 (Map of Nantai, Fuzhou) (Fig. 7), both of which were compiled in nineteenth-century Japan. The *Fukushu ryakuzu* is more or less a sketch of Fuzhou's coastline, while the *Fukushu nandai no zu* is a cadastral map of Fuzhou. Although the Library of Congress categorises the Dunn Map as a map,<sup>17</sup> I contend that it is more than a typical map, sea chart, or coastal diagram. This *quantu* not only contains geographical knowledge and cardinal directions but it also opens our *vista* by more properly visualising the seascape of Fuzhou, thereby imbuing it with meanings that are different from those of traditional mapping projects of late imperial China.

In addition, the map's artistic value should also be highlighted. Focusing on the painting's artistic representation of fishing vessels, war junks, beacons, walled shipyards, naval bases, and so forth enables us to bring an artistic

17 The Library of Congress control number of the *Fusheng quantu* is "gm71002477". For more details, please refer to <https://www.loc.gov/item/gm71002477/>.

dimension to the existing scholarship on the history of maritime China, which has mostly relied on textual sources. While, the Dunn Map is hardly a masterpiece of great artistic value as it lacks the finesse and rich colours normally associated with works of noteworthy artists, its maritime depictions and designs are sophisticated enough to represent the seascape of Fuzhou and the respective geopolitical realities of the region, as expressed through its brushwork, while the stories behind the painting may also appear as historical anecdotes or chronicles of the vicissitudes of the sea. In a way, the Dunn Map somehow attains a realism beyond that of a typical sea chart or coastal map, despite the fact it is neither extensive nor precise enough to rival impressive maritime paintings that have been created in the West. Nonetheless, it is a visual attestation that preserves the detailed local knowledge that existed among the coastal communities of Fuzhou during the time, ranging from maritime practices to other aspects of seafaring intelligence. That these have since been eclipsed only speaks to techniques that have improved with the passage of time.

The concept of “artistic value” can be subjective and multifaceted, as it varies depending on personal interpretation and cultural context. Robert Stecker emphasises the artist’s ability to create something unique and original,<sup>18</sup> Howard Risatti argues that the level of technical skill and craftsmanship displayed in an artwork contributes chiefly to its artistic value.<sup>19</sup> I am more inclined to employ Risatti’s definition in the present article as I would suggest that the artistic value of the Dunn Map is closely intertwined with the accuracy of its depiction. Put more precisely, the artistic value of the Dunn Map derives from its truth claims, which is to say, the elements of its production that make it visually convincing, that help persuade the viewer of its accuracy. As a result, the artistic value of the Dunn Map is not only derived from the visual or sensory pleasure deriving from its composition, use of colour, texture, form, and overall aesthetic qualities, but also the technical and conceptual aspects of the map *per se*.<sup>20</sup>

New perspectives on the history of maritime China are worth exploring. The field of the maritime history of the Ming and Qing eras has advanced considerably since the 1960s, building on earlier pioneering scholars in both China

18 Stecker (2010), 224.

19 Risatti (2009), 168.

20 This paragraph was inspired by Stephen Whiteman in one of our email correspondences dated 28 May 2023. I would like to thank Stephen for pointing me in the direction of examining the artistic value of a map or painting.

and the West.<sup>21</sup> However, relatively few historians work with pictorial materials, compared with those who work within repositories of written sources. In some cases, while images are discussed, such evidence is used to reinforce arguments the author had already formulated by other means. Nonetheless, using non-textual sources to compile maritime and global history is not a new approach. We can benefit a lot from studies that show us how to make effective use of non-textual primary materials, such as paintings, maps, artefacts, stone carvings, images, and photographs.<sup>22</sup> We have not yet fully maximised the potential of non-textual sources in the field of Chinese maritime history. While Western historians have produced an impressive body of literature that examines the connections between sea charts and marine paintings and political, economic, military, cultural, and even gendered histories,<sup>23</sup> few substantial studies adopt a similar approach to late imperial China. As a result, one of the underlying objectives of this article is to bring closer attention to illustrated materials, thereby providing an example of how to apply them as historical evidence to re/deconstructing the history of maritime China.

I do not attempt to advocate excessively for the use of visual materials. Similar to many other primary sources, they can also be biased, incomplete, or too subjective. As a result, it is prudent to use such sources skilfully alongside other materials, either textual or non-textual, so that we can develop more thorough answers to our historical enquiries. I hope that the present study will show that it is possible to integrate selected pieces of artwork such as the Dunn Map into our historical analyses.

### The Dunn Map

At 59 centimetres by 97 centimetres, the Dunn Map is relatively small compared with the grand mapping projects that were conducted or supervised by the imperial court, such as the *Wanli haifang tu* 萬里海防圖 (Map of Maritime Defence for Ten Thousand Li) (Fig. 8) or the *Qisheng yanhai tu*, but it is larger than those regional *haijiang tu* listed earlier. With regard to its tone, the Dunn

21 See, for instance, impressive studies that have been conducted by the following scholars since the 1960s: Rawlinson (1967); Hunt (1983); Leibo (1985); Pong (1994); Chu and Liu (1994); Gardella (1994); Dunch (2001); Wang (2003); Ng (2017); Hutters (2017).

22 In addition to the studies of Burke and Brook, as mentioned earlier, I also benefitted greatly from the following two monographs: Didi-Huberman (2005); Armstrong (2016).

23 For example, see Keyes et al. (1990); Hughes (2016); Russett (2011); Cusack (2016); Finamore and Barron; Bailly (2021).





FIGURE 8 *Wanli haifang tu*, 1725  
SOURCE: LIBRARY OF CONGRESS, GEOGRAPHY AND MAP DIVISION (G7821.R4 1725 .W3 VAULT SHELF), [HTTPS://LCCN.LOC.GOV/GM71005020](https://lccn.loc.gov/GM71005020)

Map's artist/cartographer relied mainly on cold and cool colours, as he used a proper balance of greys, blacks, whites, sandy yellows, browns, and dark greens, all of which project a general harmony pervading the whole landscape. Landscape painters in the Ming and Qing often applied these cool colours,<sup>24</sup> while most *haijiang tu* were likewise tinted, arguably rendering these paintings more capable of giving a true representation of the natural scenery, compared to the more specific technique of chiaroscuro.<sup>25</sup> These six colours are also pleasing and attractive, although their use was never based on a universal principal but only as matter of personal taste. Occasionally red or bright green are also used as secondary colours, as opposed to their use as primary and predominant ones in Qing coastal diagrams.

The Dunn Map has been stored in suitable temperatures and its condition and general appearance are satisfactory. Yet, as discussed earlier, the right-hand side of the map is missing, which makes it incomplete. According to the Library

24 Cheng et al. (2018), 85–86.  
25 For readers interested in the history of chiaroscuro in imperial China, see Fong (1976).



FIGURE 9 The Pagoda Anchorage. Extract from the Dunn Map

of Congress, the Dunn Map is thought to have been produced between 1842 and 1884, but I suggest that it was produced between 1872 and 1884 for the following reasons. First, the Pagoda Anchorage (*Luoxingta* 羅星塔) (Fig. 9), which is prominently featured close to the middle of the painting, was destroyed in the Battle of Fuzhou in August 1884, a military encounter that is considered to have been the opening engagement of the sixteen-month Sino-French War.<sup>26</sup> Second, in the painting, there is a Western-style battleship anchored in calm water close to the Pagoda Anchorage. The appearance of this ship implies a deceptive simplicity. At a glance, it might be confused with a gunboat designed in the Euro-American style, serving as a façade for a harsh truth: the West's intimidation of the Qing. On closer inspection, however, this supposed Western warship, named the *Yangwu hao* 揚武號, was in fact the flagship of the Southern navy (Fig. 10).

While we may be familiar with the *Jingyuan* 靖遠 and the *Laiyuan* 來遠, two armoured cruisers of the late Qing Northern Seas Fleet (*Beiyang shuishi* 北洋水師), other gunboats also existed along China's southern coast, such as the *Yangwu hao*. Built in 1872 at the Fuzhou Arsenal, the *Yangwu hao* was the largest war junk among the nineteen vessels that had been planned during the

<sup>26</sup> Shao (2022), 93–94.



FIGURE 10 A painting of the *Yangwu hao*

SOURCE: WIKIPEDIA, [HTTPS://EN.M.WIKIPEDIA.ORG/WIKI/](https://en.m.wikipedia.org/wiki/File:Bombardment_of_Foutcheou.jpg)  
FILE:BOMBARDMENT\_OF\_FOUTCHEOU.JPG

Qing's shipbuilding programme of 1868–1875. During its early career, this vessel was a training ship under British command, but it later acted as the flagship of the Southern Fleet. However, shortly after the start of the Battle of Fuzhou, in 1884, the *Yangwu hao* was damaged by a spar torpedo that caused a huge explosion and the loss of most of the crew. Shortly afterwards, it encountered French cannon and was shot and sank.<sup>27</sup> The *Yangwu hao* was only in service for twelve years, however it provides us with a clue that the Dunn Map was

27 Ma (2009), 555; Fuzhou shi weiyuanhui wenshi ziliao gongzuozu (1984), Vol. 3, 23.

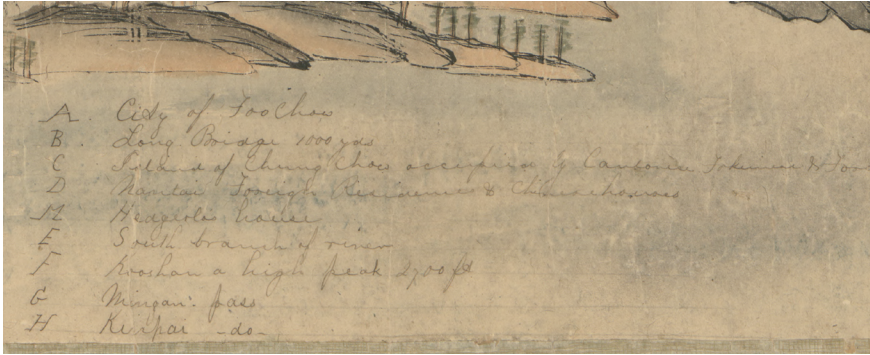


FIGURE 11 Extract from the Dunn Map

probably produced sometime during the twelve years after the *Yangwu hao* was launched and before it was destroyed in battle.

The other striking feature of this *quantu* is that English text is written all over it. This text is not a translation of the Chinese characters on the map but is written in thin script to indicate a particular river mouth, a pass, and the distances between certain geographical locations (Fig. 11). It is not unusual to see English inscribed on nineteenth-century Chinese maps; but in most cases these inscriptions served as translations. It is therefore notable to see paratextual information specifically penned in English on this *quantu*. The English descriptions on the map might make readers wonder whether it had been in fact a Euro-American production. Foreign powers had already begun to observe and survey the coast of China long before the Dunn Map was produced. Over the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, for instance, various British ministries had gradually developed archives of information and a continuity of experience that enabled them to consolidate their empire's power in the Far East. For diplomats and ministries to plan and act effectively, they relied on experts, agents, and explorers, including military intelligence officers, naval surveyors, and cartographers, to provide them with precise and comprehensive details about the military capacities of their own and other nations. Most of these agents generated extensive information on the respective countries they either explored or conducted diplomatic relations in, such as China and India. They regularly reported to their superiors about their perceptions of these places.<sup>28</sup> These individuals were

28 The following studies deal with the interrelationship between information gathering, social communication, and imperialism: Vicziany (1986); Bayly (1996); Drayton (1998); Hevia (2012).



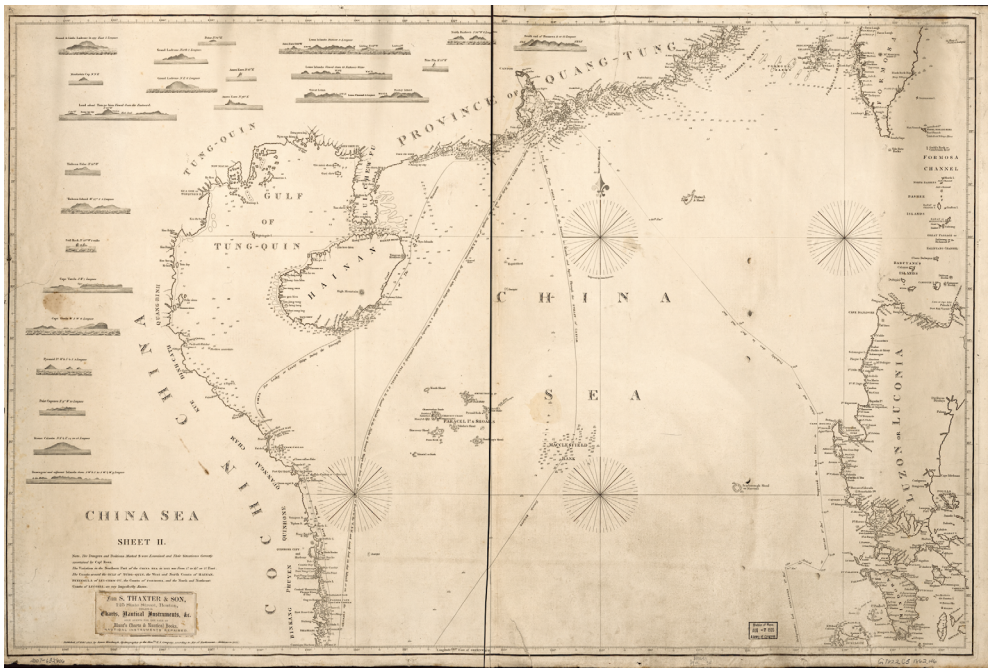


FIGURE 12 China Sea, sheet II, 1823  
SOURCE: LIBRARY OF CONGRESS, GEOGRAPHY AND MAP DIVISION (G7822.C5 1823 .H6),  
[HTTP://HDL.LOC.GOV/LOC.GMD/G7822C.CT005435](http://hdl.loc.gov/loc.gmd/G7822C.CT005435)

considered conquering architects who offered their respective sovereignties inclusive, abstracted images of other imperial realms.

Numerous surveys and sea charts were compiled by British observers, such as James Horsburgh (1762–1836), William Jardine (1784–1843), and Sir Richard Collinson (1811–1883), especially during those crucial years prior to the dawn of the First Opium War in 1839.<sup>29</sup> These surveys and charts proved to be instrumental in assisting the British in preparing sophisticated plans for their conquests along coastal China. As figures 12 and 13 show, China’s coastline had been carefully surveyed, with most of the key harbours and cities being plotted and named and the number of nautical miles between the shore and islands also clearly measured, apparently for use in military campaigns or operations at sea. Meanwhile, it is worth remembering that the Europeans were not the only imperialists who attempted to survey the coast of China in the so-called

29 Grace (2014), 131–160.



FIGURE 13 Chart of the eastern coast of China, 1835

SOURCE: LIBRARY OF CONGRESS, GEOGRAPHY AND MAP  
DIVISION (G7821.C6 1835 .J2 VAULT), [HTTP://HDL.LOC.  
GOV/LOC.GMD/G7821C.CT004072](http://hdl.loc.gov/loc.gmd/G7821C.CT004072)

age of global rivalry. The Japanese also conducted similar projects, targeting Southeast China in particular, apparently with similar ambitions (Fig. 14).

Foreigners coming from afar were not only interested in charting the coast of China out of military and intelligence concerns, some of them were also attracted by the beauty of the “Oriental” seascape. One example is William Speiden Jr. (1835–1920), a purser’s clerk on the US frigate *Mississippi*, who kept a regular diary of the events transpiring around him. Speiden boarded the



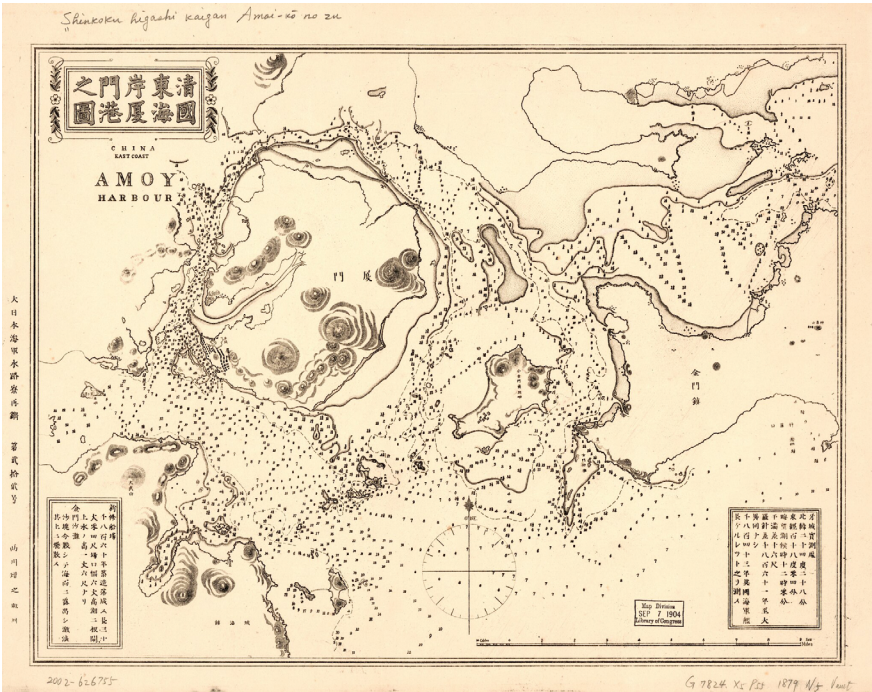


FIGURE 14 *Shinkoku higashi kaigan Amai-ko no zu*, 1872–1876  
SOURCE: LIBRARY OF CONGRESS, GEOGRAPHY AND MAP DIVISION (G7824.X5P55 1872 .J3 VAULT), [HTTP://HDL.LOC.GOV/LOC.GMD/G7824X.CT004727](http://hdl.loc.gov/loc.gmd/G7824X.CT004727)

*Mississippi* in Philadelphia, in 1852, to begin work as an assistant to his father, William Speiden Sr. (1805–1861). Young Speiden later became an eyewitness among the officers travelling to China and Japan with Commodore Matthew Perry’s East India Squadron. In his two-volume journal Speiden Jr. made notes of his shore visits at several ports of call as well as of his experiences at sea. Throughout his journey, he also began drawing and collecting pith paintings of Chinese figures, vessels, and seascapes to provide illustrations for his journal.<sup>30</sup> His collection later became a useful source for understanding the China coast from a Westerner’s point of view, although the paintings were not particularly delicate by the standards of watercolours.

In the nineteenth century, it was not exceptional to see Westerners sketching the seascape of China, either for military purposes, out of curiosity, or for pure pleasure. However, if we go back to the Dunn Map, I do not suggest that it was merely a European production, despite the fact that there is English

30 See Ranzan et al. (2013).

written everywhere on this work of art. Fundamentally, the style, presentation, skills, and techniques of producing this map differ from those of the examples shown above. It is very likely that the painter of the Dunn Map was Chinese. The English remarks on this painting could have been added by the owner after it had been drawn and compiled, but it might also be possible that the painter had been asked to append those English remarks during the production process. If the latter were the case, then the Dunn Map could then be regarded as an illustrative example of a collaborative production between East and West. But we still need more evidence to draw a clearer conclusion.

Although we do not know who wrote the English text, we can come up with four possibilities. First, Thomas Dunn could have been the person who commissioned this *quantu*. Second, Dunn could either have purchased this *quantu* for reasons of the information contained therein, because it was not surprising to see Euro-American captains, diplomats, surveyors, and merchants collecting first-hand, up-to-date information about Qing China, ranging from textual records to images, in the second half of the nineteenth century, and then bringing it back to their home country.<sup>31</sup> Third, he could have come across it in Fuzhou by accident. Fourth, he could have received the map as a gift either from a Chinese or Westerner. In any event, we are certain that Thomas Dunn is a key figure in the history of the Dunn Map. Although it is highly unlikely that Dunn was the uncredited cartographer, he is nevertheless an essential character to piecing the puzzle together. Yet the question remains, who was Thomas Dunn?

### An American in Fuzhou

We know that Thomas Dunn spent a significant period of time in China during the late nineteenth century. Surprisingly, however, historians are yet to adequately examine his journey in Asia. His name is only mentioned in one or two sentences in some secondary sources. For example, in Ellsworth C. Carlson's classic *The Foochow Missionaries, 1847–1880*, the author tells us only that Dunn “served as an American consul” in Fuzhou.<sup>32</sup> There is yet to be a detailed and comprehensive study about this nineteenth-century American who resided in Qing China. In the *Genealogy of the Rodman Family, 1620–1886*, compiled by Charles Henry Jones in 1886, an entry reads as follows: “Thomas Dunn of Foo Cho [Fuzhou], China, son of Dr. Theophilus C. Dunn of Newport, R.I., and

31 See Hevia (2012), 53–72.

32 Carlson (1974), 44.

Elizabeth Potter his wife. He was b. in Newport R.I., Oct 10, 1835”.<sup>33</sup> This brief record at least provides a glimpse of Dunn’s family background and where he was born. More importantly, the entry confirms the fact that Dunn had indeed spent some time in Fuzhou. In a report in a newspaper titled *The Tablet* dated 19 February 1870, we discover that Thomas Dunn had a sister, Elizabeth, who was married to Robert John Gainsford, a member of a highly respectable Catholic family in the United States.<sup>34</sup> However, these findings are not sufficient for us to reconstruct the life and times of a man who supposedly lived in China for at least fifteen years.

Fortunately, more about Thomas Dunn was recorded in a tribunal record dated 15 February 1871, and then reprinted in the *North China Herald*:

Thomas Dunn, sworn, said – I have lived at Foochow since 1856, and have been engaged in shipping as a proprietor of cargo boats transhipping cargo for and from steamers. I have shipped and landed for Chinese. The practice with I think all the cargo I have shipped has been to hold the mate’s receipt [*sic*]. I used to ask them whether they wanted bills of lading, but it is general custom now not to take them. Steamers now come up to Foochow, but some years ago they used to lie at the Pagoda Anchorage. The goods were then sent down in boats, taking 3 to 4 hours on an ebb tide, and coming up perhaps in two with favourable wind and tide. When the steamer loaded at the Anchorage she started at once, dependent on the state of the tide; and the agents always resided at Foochow itself. From my experience I should say it was undoubtedly the duty of the shipper to apply for bills of lading. It would be very difficult for owners or agents to pursue shippers and get them to give up their mate’s receipts for bills of lading.<sup>35</sup>

Dunn had been asked to be present in court and to share with the judges his reflections on conducting business in Fuzhou, obviously due to his extensive experience working in the city. From the above quotation, we understand that Dunn was familiar with the practice of cargo loading, in addition to the handling of bills of lading. He also showed that he had worked with the Chinese and was well acquainted with the areas where business was conducted. More importantly, the above extract provides us with the specific year (1871) in which Dunn began working in Fuzhou as a “proprietor of cargo boats transhipping cargo for and

33 *Genealogy of the Rodman Family*, 201.

34 *The Tablet*, 19 February 1870, p. 244.

35 “Chung Chin Lien v. Jardine, Matheson and Co.”

from steamers". Yet this document fails to tell us anything about Dunn having served as the American vice-consul at the time. Would it be possible for there to have been two Thomas Dunns living in China during the 1850s? This would have been possible as Thomas and Dunn were not rare first and last names and a considerable number of Americans sailed across the Pacific to China and East Asia in search of profit, opportunity, survival, and adventure around this time.<sup>36</sup> We must rely on other primary materials to clear up this confusion.

In 1957, it was recorded in the *Library of Congress Quarterly Journal of Current Acquisitions* that

A small group of papers of Thomas Dunn, who was associated with Hedge & Co. in China for a number of years and served for a time as vice-consul of the United States in Foochow, has been received as a gift from Miss Ann C. Dunn. Dated between 1859 and 1917, the papers consist of 45 letters, mainly concerned with the management of Dunn's property in Foochow, and 4 letter books for the years 1858–64 and 1872–73. Of special interest is the letter book for 1863–64, which includes a fount of information on various phases of life in China at that time, as well as an account of riots against foreign missionaries and other violence connected with the Taiping rebellion.<sup>37</sup>

This piece of evidence is worth noting because it not only provides details on when and how Dunn's papers entered the Library of Congress but it also shows us that Dunn had been associated with Hedge & Co. – one of the twelve *hongs* 行 (Western trading companies) permitted to operate in Fuzhou in the nineteenth century – for quite a few years and, above all, that he had served for a time as the vice-consul of the United States in Fuzhou. From this we are able to conclude that he was the only Thomas Dunn living in Fuzhou at the time who was both a businessman and a diplomat.

It is also evident that Dunn was knowledgeable about the hydrological and geological conditions of Fuzhou. When the American geographer Albert S. Bickmore (1839–1914) visited the city in 1866, he observed that the Min River did not subside as fast as other rivers in China that flowed out through low deltas and he was puzzled by this. He then consulted Thomas Dunn and was inspired by the "corroborative facts" he provided. Bickmore even recorded Dunn's explicit answer in his 1868 study titled *Geological Changes in China and Japan*.<sup>38</sup> From this specific encounter between the two gentlemen, we learn that Dunn was an experienced foreigner who knew Fuzhou well. As such, one could speculate that

<sup>36</sup> Norwood (2022), 1–3.

<sup>37</sup> Staff of the Manuscript Division (1957), 122.

<sup>38</sup> Bickmore (1868), 215.

he was involved in the preparation of the Dunn Map, a project that would have been within his area of expertise. Even though foreigners were not supposed to have maps of China, due to the potential danger of strategic information being spirited away, it does not mean that they never produced their own charts or discreetly obtained coastal maps for particular purposes. It would have made sense for Dunn to have been involved in or to have obtained the Dunn Map, given his multiple roles in Fuzhou, as a vice-consul of the American consulate and an employee of Hedge & Co. However, assembling the full picture requires resolving two issues. First, we need to know when Dunn became the American vice-consul. In his letter to Samuel Wells Williams (1812–1884), dated 27 October 1857, Dunn is clear on his role in Fuzhou:

I have the honour to inform you that I have been appointed United States vice-consul for this port, and that I have entered upon my official duties. I am in receipt of instructions from the Department of State directing me to keep you well apprised of all subjects of public interest that may occur within my consular jurisdiction.<sup>39</sup>

It is also apparent that Dunn assumed his official duties as vice-consul in October 1857 and that his superior was Samuel Wells Williams, a linguist, missionary, Sinologist, and the *chargé d'affaires* in China at the time. This evidence shows that Dunn received his post one year after he arrived in Fuzhou and that he also remained employed at Hedge & Co. Another directory, titled *America's Diplomats and Consuls of 1776–1865*, records that Dunn served as the vice-consul from 1857 to 1860. He probably resigned from his post and left office in 1860, given the fact that there is no other documentation suggesting he had been promoted to the role of consul either in Fuzhou or in another treaty port in China.

What about his relationship with Hedge & Co.? In what capacity did he work for this company? And what exactly was Hedge & Co.? According to *The Chronicle and Directory for China, Japan, and the Philippines for the Year 1869*, released by the Daily Press Office in Hong Kong, Thomas Dunn was a merchant affiliated with Hedge & Co., alongside T. B. Cunningham, W. S. Morrissey, Geo Geere, and Thomas Santiago.<sup>40</sup> This document also provides the company's Chinese name: Yili 義利 (E-lee). The following illustration titled "Map of Foochow" (Fig. 15), which is part of a collection named "Maps from the Treaty Ports of China and Japan in 1867" that belonged to William Frederick Mayers (1831–1878) and Nicholas Belfield Dennys (1839–1900), identifies the location of Hedge & Co. as being next to the Min River and close to the Pagoda Anchorage

<sup>39</sup> "Dunn Letter to Wells Williams", 32–33.

<sup>40</sup> *The Chronicle and Directory for China, Japan, and the Philippines*, 82.

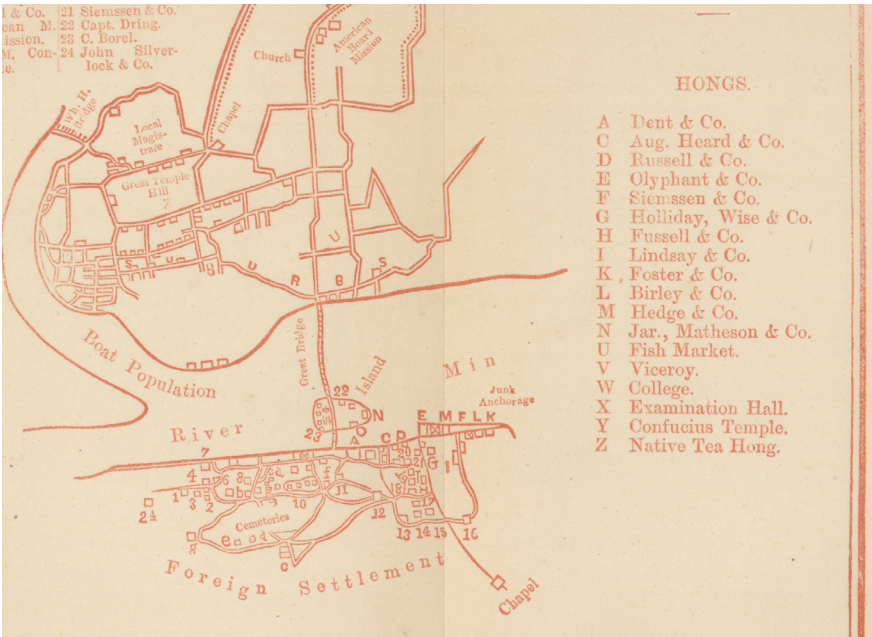


FIGURE 15 “Map of Fochow”  
SOURCE: MAPS FROM THE TREATY PORTS OF CHINA AND JAPAN IN 1867,  
PERRY-CASTAÑEDA LIBRARY MAP COLLECTION, THE UNIVERSITY OF TEXAS  
AT AUSTIN, [HTTPS://MAPS.LIB.UTEXAS.EDU/MAPS/HISTORICAL/TREATY  
\\_PORTS\\_CHINA\\_JAPAN\\_1867/TXU-PCLMAPS-OCLC-8700968-MAP-OF  
-FOOCHOW.JPG](https://maps.lib.utexas.edu/maps/historical/treaty_ports_china_japan_1867/TXU-PCLMAPS-OCLC-8700968-MAP-OF-FOOCHOW.JPG)

and the Great Bridge (*Da qiao* 大橋). Together with the other eleven *hongs*, Hedge & Co. was situated within the principal area of a foreign settlement called Nantai 南台. It should be noted that the space where foreign entities could locate in the treaty ports, including Fuzhou, was not predetermined.<sup>41</sup> Upon arrival in any of these ports, foreign consuls, mercantilists, and missionaries all had to negotiate with the Qing court and local governments for residential and commercial property. For Westerners, these opportunities were very much limited, while “symbolic spatial elements of the city” were always “the focus of debate”.<sup>42</sup> Disputes over locations resulted in foreign enclaves being situated on urban margins, normally on land that was distant from the city centre. For instance, the foreign settlement in Xiamen 廈門 (Amoy) was assigned to Gulangyu 鼓浪嶼, a small island off the coast, while the settlement

41 Cartier (1991), 116.  
42 Cartier (2001), 120.



in Ningbo 寧波 lay on a piece of sedimentary land inside the confluence of the Yong 甬 and Yuyao 餘姚 rivers.

The Cultural and Naval Seascape of Fuzhou

No foreign settlements can be found on the Dunn Map; while some might have been included in the missing part of the image, we will never know unless the omitted segment reappears. For now, even though the map is incomplete, we have to appreciate its stunning accuracy. Understandably, there are still variabilities of scale on the Dunn Map that make it far from perfect, let alone spaces between demarcated locations that are too large or too small, but the outline of Fuzhou’s coastal scene is very much truthfully transcribed onto paper. Furthermore, the names of local landmarks of Fuzhou, such as the *Jingang tui* 金剛腿 (Golden Feet) and the two islands Nangui 南龜 (Southern Turtle) and Beigui 北龜 (Northern Turtle), are deliberately indicated and identified, while some iconic structures, such as the Stone Tower (*Shita* 石塔) and White Tower (*Baita* 白塔), are also clearly portrayed (Fig. 16). These precise features and the visual accuracy reinforce my earlier proposition that the Dunn Map was likely produced by a local Chinese painter/cartographer who resided in Fuzhou. Possibly, this anonymous painter knew Thomas Dunn.

One more startling feature of this *quantu* is its refined portrayal of Fuzhou’s naval seascape. Apart from featuring the Western-style battleship *Yanwu hao*, other facets relevant to Fuzhou’s naval condition are delineated quite clearly, ranging from the various types of warships, “water castles” (*shuizhai* 水寨), and batteries (Fig. 17) to the locations of strategic islands and shipyards.



FIGURE 16 Extract from the Dunn Map



FIGURE 17 Extract from the Dunn Map

Although they are not rendered in full detail, these provide relatively sensitive information that could have served as clues by which viewers could locate the respective military outposts and infrastructure in the region. It is unlikely that an ordinary painter would have had this sensitive information to hand. Some readers might argue that these military landmarks were portrayed only because they were well known, representative, if not touristy, places for visitors and travellers to explore. In a way, this would not have been sensitive information of military value. However, I would argue that while sagacious locals who resided in Fuzhou might have already known about these naval stations and beacons, it would be tendentious to conclude that this painting was nothing but a tourist map. Judging from the many naval stations and characteristics revealed in the painting, I lean more towards the conclusion that the painter of the Dunn Map deliberately depicted Fuzhou's naval seascape. After all, as is shown in the *Gazetteer of Fuzhou* (*Fuzhou fuzhi* 福州府志), the city offered many other tourist attractions the cartographer could have included if he had intended to produce a guide map for recreational and leisure purposes. In a nutshell, I contend that this *quantu* had been produced with careful attention being paid to strategic locations, distance, and direction, where it meant to reveal the naval setting of a critical port city visually and effectively.

Finally, the artistic value of this *quantu* should not be overlooked. Although determining the value of an artwork varies “across time, space, culture, and

sub-culture”, it is essential to be aware of the “aesthetically relevant properties of the work itself, which ground the attribution of artistic value and constitute the particular forms of value the work exemplifies”.<sup>43</sup> We should also identify the Dunn Map’s artistic uniqueness by comparing it with other similar productions of the same era. In terms of design and technique, the Dunn Map’s depiction of the coastal scenery of Fuzhou contrasts with one contemporaneous map of Xiamen held by the British Library (Fig. 18). Both maps are well drawn, but it is evident that the Dunn Map is more refined in terms of its intent and content. In retrospect, the painter of the Dunn Map was determined to create a work



FIGURE 18 Map of Xiamen, c.1825  
SOURCE: BRITISH LIBRARY (ADD. MS. 17722), [HTTP://EXPLORE.BL.UK/PRIMO\\_LIBRARY/LIBWEB/ACTION/DLDISPLAY.DO?DOCID=BLL01004985788](http://explore.bl.uk/PRIMO_LIBRARY/LIBWEB/ACTION/DLDISPLAY.DO?DOCID=BLL01004985788)

43 Budd (2020), 591.





FIGURE 19 Nangui and Beigui rendered as turtles. Extract from the Dunn Map

of subtle, if not considerable, beauty, featuring the seascape of Fuzhou with its vessels, harbours, shoals, islands, and trees, as well as the occasional whimsical detail, most noteworthy being *Nangui* and *Beigui* as two (very large) turtles resting in the sea. (Fig. 19). Moreover, it is apparent that the Dunn Map does not adopt a bird's eye perspective, as did most other *haijiang tu* or coastal diagrams. Rather, it adopts a perspectival orientation, in which objects in the foreground appear closer and larger, while those in the background recede and appear more distant, creating a sense of spatial relationships and perception of depth within the composition, which is extremely rare in the history of sea charts produced in late imperial China. In a way, the Dunn Map has more dimensionality than other coastal paintings, maps, or diagrams composed by Chinese painters or cartographers that I have seen so far. It offers a unique perspective that evokes a sense of grandeur, dynamism, and intrigue, captivating viewers and inviting them to explore the seascape of Fuzhou from an overarching vantage point.

### Conclusion

The story of the Dunn Map is more detailed and intricate than I expected it to be when I first examined it. Fundamentally, the Dunn Map itself complicates

its own story by having travelled across the Pacific Ocean and ended up among spectators who view it differently than the man who painted it would have. It is more than just an ordinary sea chart or a coastal diagram (*haijiang tu*), it is a fine cartographic production that reveals much about the time and place in which it was created. Additionally, the mapmaker who completed this *quantu* acknowledged long-established Chinese traditions of how to draw and depict what he saw or imagined. He also pictured the seascape in a manner that did not exactly follow the fashion and style of other Chinese artists or cartographers of his time. Arguably, the Dunn Map is a one-off among the many *haijiang tu* that were produced during the late Qing. It is with much regret, however, that we are not able to uncover all of the hidden details of this artefact, given the lack of evidence and sources. Nevertheless, we have managed to get closer to uncovering some of the messages of the Dunn Map that could further complicate our understanding of the coastal and naval history of Fuzhou in the second half of the nineteenth century. At the very least, we have managed to overcome the fact of its anonymous and undated production by restoring to it some of the history it deserves.

Meanwhile, the many stories that revolve around this *quantu* are of value to the fields of Chinese maritime history, cartography in Chinese art history, the history of visual representation, and Sino-foreign relations. In particular, its connection with Thomas Dunn is crucial. By the time Dunn arrived in China, hundreds of thousands of foreigners had been on the move in search of various opportunities, while at the same time commodities produced in both China and America were reshaping economies at both ends of the globe.<sup>44</sup> Against this background, Gustav Detring (1842–1913), the German politician, was acting as the private adviser of Li Hongzhang 李鴻章 (1823–1901); Captain William Lang (1843–1906) was serving the Northern Ocean Fleet to help China build a modern navy; and Hosea Ballou Morse (1855–1934) was helping Sheng Xuanhuai 盛宣懷 (1844–1916) manage the China Merchants' Steam Navigation Company. Thomas Dunn was among this crowd, living a full life in Fuzhou, running his business and working for the American consulate in China. Apart from his official duties and occupation, he was also keen to preserve his writing and the materials he possessed in the Far East to ensure the survival of his personal experiences and adventures. We have to thank him for preserving the Dunn Map, and his daughter Ann C. Dunn for bequeathing it to the Library of Congress.

It might be the case that the Dunn Map was only able to survive because it disappeared into a library overseas, as with many other valuable maps and paintings produced in late imperial China. Although it is not entirely sure

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44 See Frank (2011); Zheng (2012), 207–244; Christman, (1984); Fichter (2010), 47–55.

whether Dunn was involved in the production of the map, it definitely was in his possession. Without his efforts to keep this valuable curio in his private collection, we would not have known that such a map had even existed. Whether Dunn showed the *quantu* to either his supervisors in the consulate or to his friends in Fuzhou or the United States is also not known. It seems that it was not widely circulated during the quarter-century in which China was a conspicuous target of the Euro-American powers. Had this not been the case, the Dunn Map could have come to light earlier and would not have been forgotten until its rediscovery in the present century.

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