



The Fisher Folk of Late Imperial and Modern China: An Historical Anthropology of Boat-and-Shed Living (The Historical Anthropology of Chinese Society Series)

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Although most studies of rural society in China deal with land villages, in fact very substantial numbers of Chinese people lived by the sea, on the rivers and the lakes. In land villages, mostly given to farming, people lived in permanent houses, whereas on the margins of the waterways many people lived in boats and sheds, and developed their own marked features, often being viewed as pariahs by the rest of Chinese society. This book examines these boat and shed living people. It takes an "historical anthropological" approach, combining research in official records with investigations among surviving boat and shed living people, their oral traditions and their personal records. Besides outlining the special features of the boat and shed living people, the book considers why pressures over time drove many to move to land villages, and how boat and shed living people were gradually marginalised, often losing their fishing rights to those who claimed imperial connections. The book covers the subject from Ming and Qing times up to the present.

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