

# Foreign Trading Companies during the Period of the Opening of China

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It has been said and believed that a few foreign private trading companies monopolized the China's foreign trade before around eighteen seventies when so called the Traffic Revolution, that is the opening of the Suez Canal in 1869, the establishment of the cable between London and China in 1871, and improvement of steamship transportation, made that monopoly end and it possible that even small and middle size companies partook in, and therefore many foreign small and middle size companies began to proliferate like mushrooms. Thence many researchers oriented their interest to the biggest house, that is Jardine, Matheson & Co., and assumed it's activity was *typical*. But if we take statistical approach, we can realize that there were quite a lot of small and middle size firms even from 1840's to 60's and they had high shares in some articles in trade. So I say not only they were typical, but also their small capital character gave grate influence into the relations and competitions with Chinese merchants.