

# Translation as the Imperial Gaze: The *Macau News* (1839–1840)

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## **Abstract**

Adopting the approach of conceptualizing translation with metaphors, this study metaphorizes the *Macau News* 澳門新聞紙 as the Qing Empire's imperial gaze. The *Macau News* is a translation project initiated and organized by Lin Zexu 林則徐, who was designated by the Daoguang Emperor 道光帝 as an imperial envoy to stem the tide of opium circulating in Canton in 1839. Lin conducted this project to learn about Britain for use in instituting countermeasures to the opium trade. In this process, Lin as well as the Qing government behind him started to look at the world seriously; for this reason, Lin was dubbed “the first person of modern China to gaze at the world.” Such a gaze relied largely on Lin's translational and intercultural practices and may represent a general way of how the Qing looked at the foreign. To examine this looking relation, the *Macau News* as one of Lin's translation projects is investigated with the aid of the existing scholarship of the gaze. Moreover, exemplified by the case study of the *Macau News*, the gaze is proven of potential to be integrated into translation studies.

## **Keywords**

The *Macau News*, Lin Zexu, translation and metaphor,  
the imperial gaze