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The Hokkiens in early modern Hoi An, Batavia, and Manila: Political agendas and selective adaptations

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This article focuses on how political agendas and existing societal circumstances in three Southeast Asian regions impacted the early history of immigrant Hokkiens, one of the most prominent Chinese ethnic groups. The article argues that different Hokkien actions and their outcomes were shaped or highly influenced by the prevailing agenda and political struggles of local rulers and/or colonial powers, resulting in selective adaptive behaviour as 'challengers' or 'cooperators'. There were prominent immigrant Hokkien challengers to the status quo in Manila and elsewhere in the Philippine Islands, but both cooperators with the prevailing status quo and challengers to it were common in Hoi An, Vietnam. By contrast, cooperators were conspicuous in Batavia and in the colonial Dutch East Indies.

The study of the overseas Chinese and their communities in early modern Southeast Asia has drawn considerable scholarly attention for some time. One area still needing further inquiry is the question of precisely how these segregated immigrant communities sought to survive and thrive by developing their own special agencies to suit local political agendas, and how they thereby helped reshape host societies. The present article analyses how the selective adaptations of Hokkien sojourners evolved to different degrees as a result of their interaction with three Southeast Asian host communities, based in, but not restricted to, the port cities of Hoi An in central Vietnam, Batavia in Java, and Manila in the northern Philippines.[1] These

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1 On the commercial success of the overseas Hokkiens, see James K. Chin, 'Junk trade, business networks and sojourning communities: Hokkien merchants in early maritime Asia', *Journal of Chinese*

three cities, where non-agent or agent systems (that is, kapitan/lieutenant under the Dutch or gobernadorcillo under the Spanish), and monarchic or colonial systems overlapped, provide comparative data for the present study.

This article focuses on how the varied local circumstances in these three hubs of early modern Southeast Asia influenced the activities and responses of the immigrant Hokkiens economically, militarily and politically. Economically, there were fiscal and currency demands versus wealth-seeking and accumulation and commercial network building. Militarily, rival or weak rulers and foreign trading powers and colonisers alike sought support for the defence of their regimes along with strategic port development to some degree. Hokkiens also fought in various wars for various considerations, for example, in the Tay Son rebellion in late eighteenth century Vietnam. Politically, using the Hokkiens and other overseas Chinese groups to explore new territories and respond to diplomatic issues were good options for foreign and local trading powers alike, given the importance of the trade with China. Throughout this period, various Hokkien individuals and groups adapted differently to the fluid geopolitics in the region.

By examining how local agendas influenced these selective adaptations, we can gain insight into these selective adaptations themselves, by uncovering more accurately the critical influences affecting the varied fates of Hokkien communities. The kind of adaptation did not depend solely on the behaviour of any one party; it could also be the result of a mutual interdependence or the dynamics between local and immigrant communities and external powers.

Here, I try to examine how certain unique situations influenced different Hokkien roles and responses, from directly dealing with or fighting against power in a variety of ways, or cooperating with rulers as agents or middlemen.[2] The present article also shows how the Hokkiens, in some cases, even helped to reshape local agendas and societies in early modern Vietnam, Java and the Philippines. In all cases, a critical factor seems to have been whether there was: a monarchic non-agent system with accessible channels for the migrants to rise, a colonial agent system involving the majority of the elite, or a colonial non-agent system without institutionalised channels for communication.

Overseas 6, 2 (2010): 157–215. On their native-place associations, land purchases, temple (*kelenteng*) construction, along with daily rituals, and the economic interdependence created by supplying daily necessities, see Boyi Chen, 'Beyond the land and sea: Diasporic South Fujianese in Hội An, Batavia, and Manila, 1550–1850' (PhD diss., Washington University in St. Louis, 2019).

2 Earlier scholars like Wang Gungwu and Leonard Blussé offer different views on the failures or successes of the Chinese in Southeast Asia, and arrive at contrasting historical explanations. Wang thinks that the Dutch 'were much stronger than the Spanish and more determined to expand quickly. They welcomed Chinese cooperation and tried to woo them, wherever possible away from the Portuguese and the Spanish'. See Wang Gungwu, 'Merchants without empire: The Hokkien sojourning communities', in *The rise of merchant empires: Long distance trade in the early modern world 1350–1750*, ed. James D. Tracy (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1990), pp. 409–10. Wang attributes this limitation to the fact that, compared to the highly-supported and well-organised Western colonialists, they were not supported by a strong home state. Blussé refuted the dichotomy of a compliant or aggressive Overseas Chinese, arguing that the Chinese played their roles well and had great success in the Dutch East Indies.

Questions

Chinese, including Hokkien and Teochew (Chaozhou) natives who had settled in Vietnam, became involved in the Tay Son rebellion in the late eighteenth century. This rebellion forms one of the two events discussed here. In 1774, the Trinh lord of northern Vietnam ordered his troops, stationed at the recently captured capital of the Quang Nam regime in central Vietnam, to advance southward.[3] For the northern regime, it was a great chance to 'unify' the southern regime, by using the excuse of putting down a rebellion.

During the advance, the Vietnamese general, Hoang Ngu Phuc, encountered a group of armed men led by a Qing Teochew merchant named Jiting (Tap Dinh). The group was unexpectedly formidable, according to the Vietnamese records:

> Tap Dinh's mercenaries were all people from Guangdong (the majority were Teochew), and they wore red cloths wrapped around their heads. They were adorned with gold and silver paper, and were armed with rattan shields and broadswords. They broke through [General Hoang's troops], stripping half-naked to fight more vigorously.[4]

General Hoang's army had to fight hard, ultimately winning due to the advantage of their cavalry. The results of this key battle changed the course of the civil war in Vietnam. The rebel leader Nguyen Nhac surrendered to the northern lord, while his partner, another Chinese leader, turned away to stand at the side of the southern lord, Nguyen Phuc Thuan.

Jiting was also known as Li Aji. He was a native of Teochew, the main Hokkien-speaking region. His partner, Li Cai (Ly Tai, or Li Azhi), was also a Hokkien native who had moved to Hoi An (Faifo) in Quang Nam during the Qianlong reign (1736–96) to earn a living, leading another force to stir up the situation. Jiting had migrated to Quy Nhơn before 1759, married a local woman, and connected to a group of immigrant Chinese.[5] Jiting played a major role in instigating domestic conflict in Vietnamese national politics by assisting the Tay Son rebel army to go against the southern lord, capturing and taking Lord Phuc Duong and his army to Hoi An, before the northern invasion.[6] Jiting himself was defeated by General Hoang's forces, escaped back to China, but was in turn captured by the Qing court. Although Jiting failed to manipulate politics further, this overseas Chinese leader had played an influential role in Quang Nam's affairs. Li Cai, through

3 See Li Tana, 'An alternative Vietnam? The Nguyen kingdom in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries', *Journal of Southeast Asian Studies* 29, 1 (1998): 111–21.

4 Phan Thanh Giản, *Khâm Định Việt Sử Thông Giám Cương Mục* (Taipei: Guoli zhongyang tushuguan, 1969), 44: 23a.

5 Li Shiyao, 'Zou wei nahuo zai fan zishi Hong Ahan, Li Aji deng gefan zunzhi fenbie shenni shi', *Junjichu lufu zouzhe*, 04-01-01-0347-038, First Historical Archives of China, Beijing (henceforth FHA). This memorial is also collected in Zhongguo shehui kexue yuan lishi suo, ed., *Gudai Zhong-Yue guanxi shi ziliao xuanbian* (Beijing: Chinese Academy of Social Sciences, 1982), pp. 654–6, but the date given for it there is incorrect. Li Aji's case is also seen in three other memorials in the FHA, 'Zoubao xuhuo Liu Amei dengren ji chachu Li Aji jiacai shi', 03-1419-001; Li Shiyao, 'Zou wei shenni Li Aji deng zai yang qiangduo shaoren yian Zhong zaishi renfan zhongzui qingni fengzhi shenchi xie'en shi', 04-01-01-0361-020; Yang Jingsu, 'Zouqing jiang Li Aji qi Chenshi deng liuming fenshang Jiangning dengchu zhufang bingding shi', 03-1360-041.

6 FHA, no. 04-01-01-0347-038.

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his continuing alliance with the Tay Son army, had an even greater impact on Vietnamese 'national' politics. In this sense, the diasporic Chinese/Hokkiens played a special part in this period of Vietnamese history. The question is: which adaptations resulted in their special status in Vietnam, compared to their situations in other host societies, especially in Batavia and Manila?

The Hokkiens in all three regions had emigrated from the same places in South China as Jiting and his soldiers: mostly from southern Fujian and eastern Guangdong provinces, from the same macroregion defined by William Skinner.[7] But if we look for a corresponding military leader in the Dutch East Indies or the Philippines, two other places where the Hokkiens settled in large numbers, it is hard to find such a figure.[8] Rather, the influential Hokkien leaders in the Dutch East Indies acted as agents, and enjoyed great economic and political privilege, instead of broad military influence. In the Philippines, wealthy community leaders such as Eng Kang (Joan Bautista de Vera) did not side with the Hokkiens rebelling against the Spanish authorities, although he played a double game to try to utilise the conflict for his own purposes.[9] Who, then, in the Dutch East Indies and the Philippines, could be considered equal in position to Jiting in Quang Nam?

Coming from the same region in southern Fujian, Jan Con (Gonthay), a compatriot and fellow trader, but not as powerful as Jiting, served the Dutch East India Company (VOC) loyally until his death. He was in charge of the construction of Batavia city for the Dutch in 1630s, but he died in debt, which shocked the VOC. Jan Con was also sent to Bantam (Banten), the Company's enemy, one that fought with the VOC for years, to seek peaceful negotiations.[10] Jan Con was not unique in this regard; other Chinese leaders in the Dutch East Indies played similar roles.[11]

7 G. William Skinner, *Marketing and social structure in rural China* (Ann Arbor, MI: Association for Asian Studies, 2001).

8 We do know a little about the rebel leader Si-pánjang (Khe Pandjang/Oie Panko), who fled to East Java and led a group of Chinese in resisting Dutch suppression after the 1740 'Batavia Massacre' (*Chinezenmoord*, 'Murder of the Chinese'), alongside a Javanese coalition led by Sultan Pakubuwono II (ruler of Mataram), but he was just a lower-class Hokkien with little prestige. See Thomas Stamford Raffles, *The history of Java*, vol. 2 (London: John Murray, 1830), pp. 232–47. Pan Hewu, who led a rebellion in Manila in the late 16th century, was also a lower-class labourer. See Zhang Tingyu et al., *Ming shi* (1746) (Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 1974), p. 323: 8370–75; Zhang Xie, *Dong xi yang kao* (1617) (Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 1981), pp. 89–91.

9 Antonio de Morga, *Sucesos de las Filipinas*, in *The Philippine Islands, 1493–1803* [henceforth *TPI*], ed. Emma Helen Blair, James Alexander Robertson and Edward Gaylord Bourne (Cleveland, OH: A.H. Clark Co., 1903–09), vol. 16, 1609, pp. 33, 292. H. de la Costa, S.J., *The Jesuits in the Philippines, 1581–1768* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1961), p. 209.

10 The chief of Bantam refused to see him, since he could not supply any certification to prove his 'official' status. See Leonard Blussé, 'Testament to a towkay: Jan Con, Batavia and the Dutch China trade', *Itinerario* 9, 2 (1985): 3–41; Leonard Blussé, *Badaweiya huaren yu Zhong-He maoyi* [The Overseas Chinese in Batavia and the Sino-Dutch trade], trans. Zhuang Guotu et al. (Nanning: Guangxi renmin chubanshe, 1997), p. 211.

11 Leonard Blussé, 'Inpo, Chinese merchant in Pattani: A study in early Dutch–Chinese relations', in *Proceedings of the Seventh IAHA Conference*, ed. William Warren, Pensri Duke and Prapin Manomaivibool (Bangkok: Chulalongkorn University Press, 1977), pp. 290–309. When the 1740 Chinese rebellion in Batavia broke out, the Chinese leader, Kapitan Ni Hoekong, was stuck at home and could do nothing. See Hsu Yun-Ts'iao, 'Kaiba lidai shiji jiaozhu', *Nanyang xuebao* 9, 1 (1953): 42; Leonard Blussé, 'Batavia, 1619–1740: The rise and fall of a Chinese colonial town', *Journal of Southeast Asian Studies* 12, 1 (1981): 159–78.

As to the Philippines, as we will see, only the Hokkiens Pan Hewu and Juan de San (Eng Kang's adopted son) may be viewed as such kinds of heroic figures.

Thus, our quandary is evident. There is no doubt that Jiting and the 'Ten Great Elders' in southern Vietnam, Si-pánjang and Jan Con in Java, and Eng Kang and Pan Hewu in northern Philippines were leaders of great ability, but why did they play such different roles and follow such different paths? They were successful merchants and refugees, and, by and large, politicians. They were not the only overseas Chinese who played such roles, but were certainly the most famous in those three regions. What, then, were the factors that resulted in their varied fates, for instance, whereby they dealt with the controlling powers in a variety of patterns, or cooperated as agents? Did the differences between a more continental monarchic Vietnamese state, a more insular Dutch East Indies, and a non-agent colonial system in the Philippines, shape the local political ecologies as well as the Hokkiens themselves, who were restricted by but also affected the agenda? Indeed, the Hokkiens caused trouble as well as cooperated with the dominant powers in all three regions; however, the different adaptations that led to the various outcomes have been less discussed.

Earlier scholarship has indicated that the activities of overseas Chinese differed from country to country, and we know that the composition of Chinese sojourners and settlers also varied from region to region.[12] But in what ways did their adaptations work and how? An examination of their different experiences will contribute to an understanding of how these historical diasporic communities adapted in different contexts and regions.[13]

This article briefly examines the status and activities of those I will term 'cooperators' and 'challengers' to the status quo by analysing Hokkien communities in three early modern host societies of Southeast Asia. In contrast to the law-abiding civilians in Hoi An and Batavia, the Hokkiens in Manila acted more as restive sojourners. This phenomenon implies a potential difficulty in the Philippines.

There were, to be sure, Hokkiens who were involved in armed conflict in Quang Nam, and perpetrators of violence in the Dutch East Indies, both regions where the Hokkiens not only enjoyed a certain dominance in commerce, but were also involved in political or even military affairs. They were, however, not seen as so broadly cooperative and participatory in Philippine affairs before the late eighteenth century, especially in the diasporic centre of Manila. Hokkiens in the Philippines forged a particular diasporic path that was neither a full involvement nor participation in an agent system, as in the Dutch East Indies before the late eighteenth century, where many Hokkiens served as community leaders and councillors. Beyond the two groups, were three broad categories: merchant, armed individual, and pirate, any of which

12 Leo Suryadinata, ed., *Chinese adaptation and diversity* (Singapore: Singapore University Press, 1993); Ng Chin-Keong, *Boundaries and beyond: China's maritime southeast in late imperial times* (Singapore: NUS Press, 2017).

13 This question also echoes the discussions of Chinese migrants as 'essential outsiders' in the Malay Archipelago, and the discourse on the 'Chinese Problem' (*Masalah Cina*), and the labelling of the descendants of Chinese as 'non-natives', when nationalism appeared in the twentieth century. See Anthony Reid and Daniel Chirot, eds., *Essential outsiders: Chinese and Jews in the modern transformation of Southeast Asia and Central Europe* (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 1997); Siew-Min Sai and Chang-Yau Hoon, eds., *Chinese Indonesians reassessed: History, religion and belonging* (London: Routledge, 2013).

could roughly include cooperators and challengers. These categories sometimes overlapped.

By merchants, I mean those who manipulated the transregional intra-Asian bulk shipping trade or sojourners who preferred to develop their businesses in host societies where most of their activities were sanctioned; by armed individuals, I mean those who identified as rebels or soldiers, or who chose to resist the dominant regime, or as aliens, sent to fight; by pirates, I mean armed individuals who were active at sea, conducting raids, and searching for gain. Based on the fact that similar kinds of groups participated in distinctive forms of rebellion or cooperation, I further argue that the different activities and status outcomes of the heterogeneous Chinese under the same labels of merchants, armed individuals, or pirates, were directed or highly affected by the monarchic agenda in Quang Nam, or the colonial agendas in the Dutch East Indies and Philippines. Indeed, both cooperation and rebellion were dependent on the ruling agenda, but the Hokkien responses also reshaped local politics in turn. Problems between Hokkiens and local Southeast Asians, and ruling powers, only existed to the extent that the Hokkiens did not fit in with the local agenda, or when they could not adapt to the dominant power. Taking these factors into consideration is useful when reviewing the effectiveness of their immigrant adaptations.

Quang Nam

From the second half of the seventeenth to the first half of the eighteenth century, during the Trinh–Nguyen War (1627–73), Vietnamese history was marked by a continuing North–South split, and southern expansion. This split supplied opportunities for Hokkiens to engage in both trade and conflict for their own benefit. The Hokkiens sought both gain and shelter in Quang Nam, which helped the rise of the port of Hoi An. The internal political situation in Vietnam suited them and facilitated their activities. Both the northern and southern Vietnamese regimes engaged in overseas trading for profit, but the southern regime encouraged trade to a greater degree.[14] Against a background of competition with the north, and the need to resist northern pressure, the Nguyen lords encouraged overseas trading in general and, at the same time, expanded the trade further south. Their economic agenda — fiscal strengthening and southern expansion — provided a base for the Hokkiens.[15] Hokkiens settled down in their new space and were taxed. At the same time, the state tried using them to develop new sources of revenue.

The North–South split provided commercial opportunities for these foreign merchants. The Nguyen rulers did all they could to recruit Hokkien merchants, who gradually moved south after facing restrictions in Tonkin (Hanoi). Zhang Xie, a Hokkien

14 The northern regime did not always have its best interests in mind in trade policy. As late as 1624, when the northern regime established official relations with Japan, it maintained an arrogant attitude toward the Japanese emperor. This caused the Tokugawa Bakufu to forbid Japanese from sending ships to northern Vietnam. See Hayashi Akira (Fukusai), ed., *Tsūkō ichiran* (1853) (Tōkyō: Kokusho kankōkai, 1912–13), pp. 172: 493–5.

15 Li Tana has pointed out the impact of the famines of 1559–1608 and 1681–1740s on the southern migrations of the Chinese, and thus stresses the need for us to note the logic of Quang Nam's overseas trading. See Li Tana, *Nguyễn Cochinchina: Southern Vietnam in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries* (Ithaca, NY: SEAP, Cornell University, 1998), pp. 18–36.

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literatus, described the special situation in South Vietnam.[16] The Jesuit, Chanseaume, also reported from Macau that Tonkin and Cochinchina competed with each other over commodity taxes, but that officials would collaborate with lords to take the expensive commodities without paying, so that only common and cheap goods were left on the market.[17]

The Chinese were so successful in Quang Nam that the Dutch had to consider avoiding competition with them. When the Dutch learnt that the Japanese government forbade its ships from sailing to northern Vietnam, they decided to invest in Tonkin.[18] The Dutch were aware that because the Chinese and the Japanese were still trading in Quang Nam, they 'could get hardly any profits', 'only encounter difficulties again, nothing more'.[19] Their establishment of trade relations with Quang Nam and Tonkin 'was partly in quest of Chinese goods'.[20]

Political rivalries between the North and South provided mechanisms for large numbers of Hokkien merchants to adapt and secure their greatest gains in the south. In the late sixteenth century, they moved southward to sell their commodities, if they could not earn enough profits in Hue.

For example, in 1577, a ship belonging to the Hokkien merchant Chen Binsong, reached Hue, but found that there was an oversupply of trade commodities there. Hence, Chen decided to hire small boats on the spot in Jiaozhi (Giao Chỉ), northern Vietnam, to transfer his goods to Quang Nam, then under the control of Nguyen rulers. Chen's boats were attacked by Japanese pirates on their way. Together with their crews they were hijacked to Satsuma, southwestern Japan.[21] Despite such risks, the Hokkien merchants never stopped moving to Quang Nam, and there they came to dominate commerce over the next one-and-a-half centuries, especially in Hoi An. In this context, it was the rise of Hoi An, and the southern expansion of the Vietnamese state, that shaped the economic ecology of Quang Nam.

The Hokkien settlers contributed much to the rise of Hoi An as a port. This accorded with the goals of its Nguyen lords. The prominent Hokkien merchants and their leaders, such as 'Ten Great Elders' and 'six surnames', helped to maintain an orderly community.[22] Charles Wheeler has discussed the purpose of the Nguyen

16 *Dong xi yang kao*, p. 20.

17 Charles le Gobien, Jean-Baptiste du Halde, Nicolas Maréchal, Louis Patouillet et al., *Lettres édifiantes et curieuses, écrites des missions étrangères, par quelques missionnaires de la Compagnie de Jésus*, trans. Zheng Dedi et al., *Yesuhui shi Zhongguo shujian* (Zhengzhou: Daxiang chubanshe, 2001), vol. I, p. 54.

18 *Dagh-register gehouden int Casteel Batavia vant passerende daer ter plaetse als over geheel Nederlandts-India*, trans. Guo Hui, *Badaweiya cheng riji* (Taipei: Taiwan sheng wenxian weiyuanhui, 1989), vol. 2, p. 331.

19 *De Dagregisters van het Kasteel Zeelandia*, trans. Chiang Shu-sheng, *Relanzhe cheng rizhi* (Tainan: Tainan shi zhengfu, 1999), vol. 1, pp. 179, 342.

20 Om Prakash, 'The Portuguese and the Dutch in Asian maritime trade: A comparative analysis', in *Merchants, companies and trade*, ed. Sushil Chaudhury and Michel Morineau (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999), p. 185.

21 Hou Jigao, *Quan Zhe bingzhi kao* (1593) 2, Appendix, 'Jin bao wo jing', collected in *Siku quanshu cumu congshu* (Jinan: Qilu shushe, 1996), *Zibu* 31. See also Iwao Seiichi, *Nan'yō Nihon-machi no kenkyū* (Tōkyō: Nan'a bunka kenkyūjo, 1940), p. 17; Fu Yiling, *Ming-Qing shidai shangren ji shangye ziben* (Beijing: Renmin chubanshe, 1956), p. 121.

22 Chen Chingho, 'Shiqi, ba shiji zhi Hui'an Tangren jie jiqi shangye', *Xin Ya xuebao* 3, 1 (1957): 271–332, esp. 296–7; Ching-ho Ch'en, *Historical notes on Hội-an (Faifo)* (Carbondale: Center for Vietnamese

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regime in opening the port, but we also need to notice that Hoi An's rise was first out of political and military considerations. Economic benefits were secondary.

Missionary Buddhists among the merchants, and the Minh Huong (refugees from the Ming dynasty) also served the southern expansion.[23] Li Qingxin's study of the Minh Huong shows how the diasporic Chinese in Vietnam after the seventeenth century conducted their business, thereby making the economy prosper.[24] Other studies have also demonstrated the contributions of the Chinese to Vietnam's southward expansion, including showing how Hokkien merchants actively competed with Cantonese merchants in the southern borderlands.[25]

The reigning Nguyen lords tolerated these Hokkiens, and utilised them for financial support. In addition, they also came to rely on some Hokkiens for basic diplomacy with foreign trading powers, for example, helping to restore relations with the VOC in 1651.[26] In addition, some Chinese merchants were generous when the regime met with difficulties. When the Nguyen faced rebellion in the eighteenth century, 'a Qing merchant named Xi assisted [us] by his hundreds of millions of properties, boosting the military morale'.[27] Last but not least, the demand for artillery stimulated overseas trade, hence, the lords allowed the opening of the port of Hoi An in order to trade with Portuguese arms dealers in South China.

Getting enough artillery was crucial to the survival of the Nguyen regime given the Trinh army's superior infantry, and the demand for artillery was another key reason that the Nguyen lords needed knowledgeable and experienced Hokkiens as intermediaries. The power of artillery was demonstrated in the first half of the seventeenth century in northeast China, when Ming troops utilised their advanced artillery to resist Manchu cavalry, and killed Aisin Gioro Nurhaci in 1626.[28] The Nguyen lords might not have learnt this lesson right away, but they must have been aware of the usefulness of the technology involved, and would not have ignored such a potent weapon.[29] Using modern artillery to improve military capability became increasingly

Studies, Southern Illinois University, 1974); Jiang Guoxue, *Yuenan nanhe ruanshi zhengquan haiwai maoyi yanjiu* (Guangzhou: Guangdong shijie tushu chuban gongsi, 2010), pp. 24–5, 46, 56, 59–60.

23 Charles Wheeler, 'Missionary Buddhism in a post-ancient world: Monks, merchants, and colonial expansion in seventeenth century Cochinchina (Vietnam)', in *Secondary cities and urban networking in the Indian Ocean realm, c.1400–1800*, ed. Kenneth Hall (Lanham, MD: Lexington, 2008), pp. 205–31; Charles Wheeler, 'Interests, institutions, and identity: Strategic adaptation and the ethno-evolution of Minh Hương (Central Vietnam), 16th–19th centuries', *Itinerario* 39, 1 (2015): 141–66.

24 Li Qingxin, *Shiqi, shiba shiji Huaren nandu yu Yuenan shehui*, National Social Science Program, unpublished (2013).

25 Nola Cooke and Li Tana, eds., *Water frontier: Commerce and the Chinese in the Lower Mekong Region, 1750–1880* (Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield), pp. 1–17.

26 Li Tana, *Nguyễn Cochinchina*, p. 74.

27 Trương Đăng Quế et al., *Đại Nam thực lục tiền biên* (1844), Viện Nghiên cứu Hán Nôm, NLVNPF-0143-04/R.777, 12: 7b.

28 *Ming Shilu* (*MSL*) (Taipei: Academia Sinica, 1962) [References to *MSL* and *Qing Shilu* (*QSL*) are in the form: reign name, volume, reign title and year (date in Chinese calendar), p. no.], *Xizong shilu* 68 TQ 6/2 *bingzi*, p. 3218: 'killed a big head'. *MSL*, *Xizong shilu* 76 TQ 6/9 *wuxu*, p. 3690; Jin Guoping and Wu Zhiliang, 'Nuerhachi siyin zhenxiang xinzheng', *Aomen yanjiu* 27 (2005): 134–42.

29 Sun Laichen, 'Military transfers from Ming China and the emergence of northern mainland Southeast Asia', *Journal of Southeast Asian Studies* 34, 3 (2003): 495–517; 'Chinese-style firearms in Southeast Asia: Focusing on archaeological evidence', in *New perspectives on the history and historiography of Southeast Asia*, ed. Michael Arthur Aung-Thwin and Kenneth R. Hall (London: Routledge,

universal during this period. In 1627, the Nguyen army used artillery to inflict heavy losses against the Trinh, and it was this superiority that allowed an armed force which was only one-fourth the size of the Trinh army to achieve a balance against its northern opponent and survive.[30]

The Nguyen lords had reasons and, at the same time, European models to draw upon in strengthening the regime, although there were technical access issues as well. Since the Tokugawa Shogunate forbade Japanese Red-Seal Ships (*Shuin-sen*) from carrying firearms for export, and the Qing government also strictly controlled the technology after taking over China, the Nguyen lords could only rely on the Portuguese in Macau, considering the lords' very bad relations with the Dutch, who had even allied with the Trinh regime against them.[31]

This maritime route was partly influenced by the Hokkien merchants, especially after Zheng Chenggong (Koxinga) took control of South China Sea routes in the mid-seventeenth century. Most of the Nguyen's 1,200 cannons were built between 1650 and 1660, the heyday of Zheng's power.[32] Hence, the lords could not refuse Hokkien help. In addition, some Zheng supporters also promoted Vietnam as an offshore base for the Sino–Japanese trade.[33]

The adaptation worked in this way: at first it was just individual Chinese merchants who brought silk to Vietnam for their 'international trade', but such exchanges year after year finally encouraged a group of them to settle down to ease this interchange. A French observation in 1615 reveals some details:

> [There is] a very detrimental stopping site in Cochinchina, because the Chinese there carry a lot of silk, that the Japanese buy, and bring in their junks to Japan, and there is no shortage of Portuguese navigators who will operate these junks for the lure of salary.[34]

After the Japanese stopped visiting Hoi An, Hokkien merchants eventually took over and restored the symbolic Japanese Covered Bridge (Chua Cau/Lai Vien Kieu). They built a shrine inside to worship the god, 'Emperor of the North', while preserving the Japanese architectural style at the same time.[35] This example not only indicated the good relations between the Japanese and Chinese merchants, but also a crucial adaptation of the Hokkiens in the host society: they accepted local authority, and local Chinese elders and administrators cooperated with the Nguyen regime.[36] In this process, they also changed the character of this host community.

2011), pp. 75–111. In the Vietnamese Veritable Records, it is not hard to find evidence that the lords took artillery seriously. See *Đại Nam thực lục tiền biên*, NLVNPF-0143-03/R.773, 7: 18b, 7: 19b; Trịnh Hoài Đức, *Gia Định thành thông chí* (1820), collected in Dai Kelai and Yang Baoyun, eds., *Lingnan zhiguai deng shiliao sanzhong* (Zhengzhou: Zhongzhou guji chubanshe, 1991), p. 203.

30 Li Tana, *Yuenan ruanshi wangchao shehui jingji shi* (Beijing: Wenjin chubanshe, 2000), p. 38.

31 Le Gobien et al., *Lettres édifiantes et curieuses*, v. I, p. 55.

32 Li Tana, *Nguyễn Cochinchina*, pp. 35–40.

33 Naoko Iioka, 'Literati entrepreneur: Wei Zhiyan in the Tonkin–Nagasaki silk trade' (PhD diss., National University of Singapore, 2009), pp. 169–74, 216–34.

34 Léon Pagès, *Histoire de la religion Chrétienne au Japon depuis 1598 jusqu'à 1651* (Paris: Charles Dounil, Libraire-Éditeur, 1870), vol. 2, p. 165.

35 In the 16th year of the Gia Long reign (1817), and the 28th year of the Tự Đức reign (1875), the diasporic Chinese community in Hoi An marked their contribution again by carving an inscription on the crossbeams inside the top of the bridge. Author's fieldwork in Hoi An, 8 Apr. 2014.

36 Chen Chingho, 'Guanyu "Mingxiang" de jige wenti', pp. 145–56; Trịnh Thị Lệ Hà, *Làng Minh*

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The Nguyen lords not only used the Chinese merchants to achieve their political agenda, but needed Chinese armies as well, in particular for southern expansion, as mentioned. The Nguyen were successful in their continued assimilation of former Cham-ruled lands, but also more effective exploitation of the southern territories.[37]

When Chen Shangchuan (Tran Thuong Xuyen), the Southern Ming commander-in-chief of Gaozhou, Leizhou and Lianzhou, failed to resist the Manchu army, and fled with 3,000 soldiers to Quang Nam, with his vice-commander Chen Anping (Tran An Binh), the Nguyen lord found a good opportunity to use a Chinese military force to exploit the south, as well as to resist the Khmer inhabitants of the Cambodian region.[38] Hence, Chinese mercenaries were asked to settle in the Khmer sphere of influence, which the Vietnamese called Nam Ky, literally meaning 'Southern Border'. Vietnamese documents record this process in a different way: the cultivation of the land by diasporic Chinese.[39]

These Chinese were settled in isolated villages along the southern border to exploit the uncultivated lands there. Afterwards they were considered representatives of the orthodox Ming dynasty. During the era of southward expansion, as a high-ranking official of Gia Dinh City described it in the early 1800s, 'Hoa people (indigenised Chinese Vietnamese, including the Minh Huong), the diasporic Chinese, and the Khmers lived mixed with each other.' They had businesses in many towns in southern Vietnam (in the southernmost coastal towns such as Kampot, even Malay sojourners joined in).[40] In any case, all these groups were prompted to settle down in certain regions after conquest, in what were called Minh Huong villages. From the perspective of the Nguyen regime, the establishment of these Chinese villages was an accommodating adaptation. From the perspective of the diaspora, it was also a selective adaptation, to involve themselves in Vietnam's national politics, and not just a matter of forcible registration and localisation.[41]

The third type of Hokkien or Chinese in these areas, the pirate, is a more ambivalent figure; nonetheless, status as 'pirate' shows even more strongly how political agenda influenced selective adaptation.[42] Such individuals could switch back and forth between multiple roles and identities, as they wished or as the situation

Hương của người hoa ở Khu vực lớn (cuối thế kỷ XVII–giữa thế kỷ XIX) (TPHCM: Luận văn thạc sĩ khoa học Lịch Sử, 2010), p. 121, quote from Chien An-Chih, 'Zhongzu bianjie de xinggou yu zai xinggou', paper presented at the ISSCO *Chinese diaspora from South to South*, Universidad de Panama, 6–9 Aug. 2014, p. 15; Trần Văn An, Nguyễn Chí Trung, and Trần Ánh, *Xã Minh Hương với Thương Cảng Hội An thế kỷ XVII—XIX* (Di tích Quảng Nam: Trung tâm Bảo tồn Di Sản, 2005), pp. 35, 37.

37 Chen Chingho, 'Qingchu Zheng Chenggong canbu zhi yi zhi Nanqi' (1), *Xin Ya xue bao* 5, 1 (1960–3): 436–60; (2), *Xin Ya xue bao* 8, 2 (1968): 413–84.

38 Trịnh Hoài Đức, *Gia Định thành thông chí* (1820) 3, in *Lingnan zhiguai deng shiliao sanzhong*, pp. 121–2.

39 *Đại Nam thực lục tiền biên*, 7: 14a–b.

40 *Gia Định thanh thông chí*, 2: 77, 2: 82, 2: 102, 2: 110.

41 *Đại Nam thực lục tiền biên*, NLVNPF-0143-02/R.5917, 6: 5a–6b; *Gia Định thành thông chí*, 6: 224–5; Trần Trọng Kim, *Việt Nam Sử Lược* (Outline history of Vietnam), trans. Dai Kelai, *Yuenan shilüe* (Beijing: Shangwu yinshuguan, 1992), pp. 241–3.

42 For an excellent reflection of how the Nguyễn lords depended upon littoral inhabitants to exploit the south, see Charles Wheeler, 'Re-thinking the sea in Vietnamese history: Littoral society in the integration of Thuận-Quảng, seventeenth–eighteenth centuries', *Journal of Southeast Asian Studies* 37, 1 (2006): 123–53.

demanded. They could be merchants, soldiers, pirates, and so on. For instance, Jiting was largely a pirate, but he had been a sojourner first, and then a mercenary leader, as was Li Cai. Their activities show how the Hokkiens were involved in Vietnamese domestic conflicts.

In early 1776, the Qianlong Emperor of China indicated with his red brush that Jiting so and so should 'be executed immediately' for the crime of 'robbing and killing people overseas', 'causing trouble in the barbarian area [that is, Quang Nam]', and 'accepting an illegal official position'. He did so after reading the memorial that recorded Jiting's last confession in prison.[43] The Tay Son rebellion supplied a stage for Jiting to show his abilities, and the potential power of the overseas Chinese.[44] Having surveyed why and how the Hokkiens went to Quang Nam, and how and why they became involved in the Trinh–Nguyen power struggles, and in the southern expansion, it is time to return to how and why they engaged in another brutal Vietnamese domestic conflict mentioned earlier — the Tay Son Uprising.[45]

Various Hokkien-speaking groups were utilised by the local powers in this civil war. During the Tay Son years, many overseas Chinese supported the Nguyen lords, which helped restrain their opponents. These Chinese, mostly 'pirates', were lower-class migrants, as is revealed in the Qing interrogation records. That is, except for Li Cai's band, and the *Heyi* army. He Xiwen led his band, along with Liang Wenying, Zhou Yuanquan, Zhang Baguan, and some other pirates, to serve the Quang Nam regime in 1786, as auxiliary forces in its navy. According to the Vietnamese official history: '[He Xiwen] manages and leads the Chinese soldiers, follows their expedition, and has many battle achievements.'[46]

Despite this, most of the lower-class pirates joined the Tay Son side, no doubt due to their similar economic status and social background. For example, when Nguyen Nhac decided to make use of Lord Phuc Duong, Jiting and Li Cai led the mercenaries in pursuit of Phuc Duong, and forced him to return with them to Hoi An.[47] Dian H. Murray has studied late eighteenth and the early nineteenth century pirate activity along the South China coast, and concludes that it was the Tay Son regime that supplied them with a warm bed to breed.[48] As a result most of the pirates were connected to Tay Son power, and so developed their organisation, strongholds, and weapons.[49]

43 FHA, No. 04-01-01-0347-038, No. 04-01-01-0361-020; *Gudai zhongyue guanxi shi ziliao xuanbian*, p. 656; *QSL, Gaozong shilu* 999, QL 12/40 *renxu* (Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 1986), 21: 360b.

44 For a detailed study of this movement, see George Edson Dutton, *The Tay Sơn Uprising: Society and rebellion in eighteenth-century Vietnam* (Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 2006).

45 Cheng Swag-Ming has provided many examples of how overseas Chinese engaged in the new Vietnamese civil war ('the fighting between New and Old Nguyễn') as mercenaries, and played key roles in 1773–1802. See Cheng Swag-Ming, 'Shi lun Yuenan huaren zai xin jiu Ruan zhi zheng zhong suo banyan de juese', in *Yuenan, Zhongguo yu Taiwan guanxi de zhuanbian*, ed. Shiu Wen-Tang (Taipei: Academia Sinica, 2001), pp. 1–36.

46 Nguyễn Trọng Hợp et al., *Đại Nam chính biên liệt truyện sơ tập* (1889), Viện Nghiên cứu Hán Nôm, NLVNPF-0137-07/R614, 28: 1a–2a.

47 *Đại Nam thực lục tiền biên*, 12: 4a–b.

48 Dian H. Murray, *Pirates of the South China Coast, 1790–1810* (Palo Alto, CA: Stanford University Press, 1987).

49 *QSL*, *Renzong shilu* 50 JQ 4/8 *xinchou*, 28: 624b; 89 JQ 6/10 *xinyou*, 29: 172b; 102 JQ 7/8 *jiachen*, 29: 361a–b; 106 JQ 7/12 *bingchen*, 29: 427a–b. *Ming–Qing shiliao geng bian* (Taipei: Academia Sinica, 1960), 3: 211–2. *Gudai Zhong-Yue guanxi shi ziliao xuanbian*, pp. 577–87.

These Chinese pirates who supported the Tay Son power, and other Hokkiens who helped the Nguyen lords, stirred up Vietnamese domestic politics with their military forces. After general Tong Phuoc Hiep died, Li Cai felt that it was unsafe to remain on the Quang Nam side because the Eastern Mountain High General, Do Thanh Nhon, did not like him, and therefore prevented the Nguyen lord from making use of him. Bullied and humiliated by Do's Eastern Mountain force, and partly trying to avoid the pitiful fate of Jiting, Li Cai rebelled again in 1776: '[He] added members of the Chinese community to his army and mobilised them, to produce an army that was over 8,000 … [he] even recruited and captured some Minh Huong and some Tỉnh Thua people and other rascally villains.'[50] Li Cai's additional troops were, without doubt, mostly Teochew, Cantonese and Hokkien, and they defeated Do's Quang Nam force, who 'lost innumerable soldiers'. Then Li Cai advanced his army, and finally forced the Nguyen lord to abdicate and turn over the crown to Nguyen Phuc Duong.[51]

This internal conflict severely damaged the Quang Nam regime. Its reliable Eastern Mountain Army suffered heavy losses, and this gave the Tay Son army the chance to attack.[52] Since the Hokkiens had so strongly supported the Quang Nam regime, the Tay Son army massacred the Chinese when it captured the last Nguyen stronghold of Gia Dinh in 1776.[53]

In short, the third type of Hokkien, the pirates, played a crucial role in Vietnamese history, especially during the years of the Tay Son Uprising. Some merchants also supplied capital to sustain the pirates.[54] Thus, the pirates possessed some of the same characteristics as the merchant and armed groups, but the latter group performed differently.

Compared to the professional merchants, the 'pirates' played more obvious roles during abnormal periods, and most of them had a much lower economic status than the 'merchants'; compared to escaped soldiers, they were also not 'professional' and behaved more like bandits. They involved themselves so deeply in Vietnamese domestic issues that they came to be seen not as aliens, but as local residents. Unlike the 'merchants' and armed groups, most of the pirates did not meet happy ends. In any case, it is crucial to reflect on what factors shaped the respective activities of these three varied 'groups'.

The Dutch East Indies

In Quang Nam the Hokkien community played multiple roles. Those in the archipelagic Malay world showed much the same variety of roles. Before the Dutch colonised the Indonesian islands, all three categories of Hokkiens had played some role in that world: as merchants, armed individuals, and pirates. All had engaged in military settlement and trading. The structural sequence of these three types in

50 *Gia Định thành thông chí*, 6: 221.
51 *Đại Nam thực lục tiền biên*, 12: 14a–b.
52 Ibid., 12: 16b–17a. See also *Gia Định thành thông chí*, 2: 80.
53 Norman G. Owen, *The emergence of modern Southeast Asia* (Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 2005), p. 113.
54 Charles Wheeler, 'Identity and function in Sino-Vietnamese piracy: Where are the Minh Hương?', *Journal of Early Modern History* 16, 6 (2012): 503–21.

society, however, represents a social ecology different from that of Quang Nam, a differential adaptation, one might say.

The merchant also had another function; a good example shows how merchants connected Quang Nam and the Dutch East Indies. On 6 September 1661, a relatively large Quinam (Quang Nam) junk ship reached Castle Zeelandia in southern Taiwan. The superiors on board reported that before the ship had left Quang Nam, a junk belonging to a Chinese kapitan of Batavia, Bingam, had arrived safely, bringing a letter from the governors-general of the VOC to the Nguyen lord. Since there were no gifts accompanying the letter, the (court) translator had not dared hand it over to the king.

When another Chinese junk with a Dutch pilot on board from Batavia, en route to Zeelandia, was damaged in a storm close to Quang Nam, and sought help from the Nguyen lord, the interpreters at last showed the original letter, which they had kept hidden, to the king. The king was 'mightily pleased' and ordered the junk to be repaired. He asked the Dutch pilot to inform the Dutch governor-general that he could henceforth freely send one or two ships to Quang Nam.[55] As stated earlier, the relationship between Quang Nam and the VOC was quite bad, hence the overseas Chinese acted as middlemen, especially after relations were cut off in 1641.[56]

Merchants, of course, remained the major Hokkien category, gathering in host societies such as Semarang, Gresik and Surabaya.[57] The Malay world was dotted with vigorous commercial sites before the Dutch came in 1596, and seized Batavia (Jakarta) in 1619. By then the Hokkiens had already established their status and developed local networks.

What we will see also elsewhere in the Malay Archipelago reminds us of the existence of more complex local societies, and a local political ecology with regard to the Hokkiens. In some cases Chinese seized places by force, or negotiated with the local chiefs to control harbours, or both sides used each other for mutual gain. By the end of the sixteenth century, Chinese trading centres appeared at Surabaya, Turban, Gresik, Bantam, and other places, not only in Java, but also in Sumatra and Western Borneo. These Chinese mostly came from Fujian and Guangdong.[58] When the Dutch entered Java, they found these ports were famous for their Chinese communities.[59]

The selective adaptation to commerce of the Chinese in the archipelago took place well before Dutch colonisation. As Anthony Reid indicates, 'the Chinese in

55 *Relanzhe cheng rizhi*, vol. 3, pp. 249, 251.

56 Hoàng Anh Tuân's work uses VOC sources in an original manner and deserves to be noticed. See Hoang Anh Tuan, *Silk for silver: Dutch–Vietnamese relations, 1637–1700* (Leiden: Brill, 2007).

57 See Kwee Huikian, *The political economy of Java's northeast coast c. 1740–1800: Elite synergy* (Leiden: Brill, 2006).

58 Wolfgang Franke, Claudine Salmon and Anthony Siu, eds., *Chinese epigraphic materials in Indonesia* (Singapore: South Seas Society; Paris: Ecole Française d'Extrême-Orient; Association Archipel, 1997). Van Leur also mentions that Guangdong and Fujian merchants immigrated to Indonesia after the 15th century. See J.C. van Leur, *Indonesian trade and society: Essays in Asian social and economic history* (The Hague: W. van Hoeve, 1955), p. 193.

59 William Skinner, 'Java's Chinese minority: Continuity and change', *Journal of Asian Studies* 20, 3 (1961): 353–62. Many rich Cantonese merchants lived there, some even converted to Islam. See W.J. Cator, *The economic position of the Chinese in the Netherlands Indies* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1986).

Bantam were willing to do any kind of work to make money, but when they "turned Javanese" by adopting Islam, cutting their hair and changing their dress, they were "every whit as proud and as loftie as the Javans".'[60] The source Reid quotes was an observation from 1606, which reflects the time when the Chinese were powerful.[61] As can be seen over the next three centuries, many Hokkiens adapted to another local way of doing things, the Dutch style and rules, exactly as had their predecessors to other systems.

These groups of Hokkien merchants also further confirmed the central position of Java in regional trade, and together with the natives they confirmed their own superior position in several central commercial centres.[62] The economic structure then was quite different from after Batavia rose in the seventeenth century, when merchants would move to the new colonial centre.

The Ming Dynasty records in the sixteenth century show that the 'Chinese merchants are also coming and going without cease' at these commercial centres in Java.[63] This economic structure did not change too much under Dutch colonisation. Leo Suryadinata has pointed out that the Dutch authorities used the Chinese both as contract labourers, and as intermediate traders, putting them in a position that served their political agenda, running the colonial economy and handling the natives.[64] The Hokkiens were at the centre of the archipelago's economy: their key role in providing finance and credit in Java and maritime Southeast Asia has been demonstrated.[65]

The case of the Hokkiens in Bantam shows how local political agenda and Hokkien adaptation matched perfectly. Bantam was the centre of commerce, as well as the main opponent of Batavia in the early seventeenth century. Its trade was controlled by four Chinese entrusted by the local chief. At the end of the sixteenth century, the Hokkien population of Bantam reached 3,000–4,000.[66] Considering that the total population of Batavia was only 9,406 (3,679 of whom were Chinese) in 1699, the Bantam figures are astonishing.[67] The Chinese gathered in 'Chinese Street', surrounded by a hard fence and moat, and their houses were the most beautiful stone structures in Bantam.[68]

Why the Bantam Sultan used Chinese to manage trading issues is a fascinating question. One reason may have been that the old kapitan, Lim Lacco, was a

60 Anthony Reid, *Southeast Asia in the age of commerce, 1450–1680*, vol. 2 (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1995), p. 122.
61 Edmund Scott, 'An exact discourse of the subtilties, fashions, pollicies, religion, and ceremonies of the East Indians, as well Chyneses as Javans, there abyding and dweling' (1606), in Sir William Foster, ed., *The voyage of Henry Middleton to the Moluccas* (London: Hakluyt Society, 1943), p. 174.
62 *Dong xi yang kao*, pp. 82–7.
63 *Ming shi*, 324: 8405.
64 Leo Suryadinata, 'The state and Chinese minority in Indonesia', in *Chinese adaptation and diversity*, pp. 84–6.
65 Kwee Hui Kian, 'Money and credit in Chinese mercantile operations in colonial and precolonial Southeast Asia', in *Credit and debt in Indonesia, 860–1930: From peonage to pawnshop, from kongsi to cooperative*, ed. David Henley and Peter Boomgaard (Leiden: KITLV Press, 2009), pp. 124–42.
66 Iwao Seiichi, 'Xiagang (Wandan) tangren jie shengshuai bianqian kao', *Nanyang ziliao yicong* 2 (1957): 108–19.
67 Blussé, *Badaweiya huaren yu Zhong-He maoyi*, p. 73.
68 Victor Purcell, *The Chinese in Southeast Asia* (London: Oxford University, 1951).

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Chinese Muslim. But generally speaking the reason must be that those Chinese had the ability to keep the market prosperous, and thus create the wealth which the local chiefs required. It is also a question of local politics: in the Sultanate of Mataram, the king personally chose Chinese to manage the ports because they were members of an external social group. In this arrangement, he would be little influenced by the traditional complicated social structure of an agricultural state with respect to tax issues.

Hokkiens in the Malay world were never lacking in experience of military settlement and agriculture. Although they cooperated with the Dutch, it was by no means merely a matter of obedience. Before the coming of the Western colonialists, Chinese mercenaries and pirates had controlled some sites, either with a small military force, or through negotiation with local chiefs, showing the same sort of political and military capacities as their successors in Quang Nam several centuries later.

Early Mongol and Chinese raids had a deep influence on Javanese history, and even altering the regional political structure, introducing perhaps as much change as the arrival of the Dutch later on.[69] Evidence of other forms of cultivation or plantation agriculture, advanced by the armed individuals, not just in western Borneo but also in the Riau archipelago, have also been found, including where the Hokkiens replaced Teochew gambier-producers.[70]

Unrest in eastern Java occurred occasionally even under Dutch rule, continuing into the nineteenth century. Nonetheless, in most of the Dutch East Indies, for much of the time, the overseas Chinese maintained their peace. In terms of VOC policy, warfare and cooperation with landed rulers were just two sides of the same coin.[71]

In terms of the special agent system, the Dutch and the Hokkiens worked together in peace. The special adaptation of the Hokkiens, mainly as merchants, and as quasi-politicians, was obviously attractive to the incoming colonial power in the Indies. This system was formed through negotiations between the VOC and local leaders. Once the Dutch decided to extend their rule to the whole of the East Indies, they needed to develop a less expensive way to deal with the multiple ethnicities throughout the vast archipelago. Nearly two-thirds of the land was controlled directly by the Company, while another third was comprised of protectorates (including the four most famous sultanates: Jogjakarta, Solo, Cirebon, and Bantam). The latter were forced to supply fixed amounts of specified crops as a form of tax.

In the directly controlled lands, it was not necessary to follow the Sultans' way of appointing Hokkiens to manage commercial issues, but considering that the

69 Kertanagara's son-in-law, Raden Wijaya (Nararya Sanggramawijaya), took the opportunity to lead Yuan Chinese troops astray in 1293, to take revenge for the Mongol overthrow of Jayakatwang. See David Bade, *Of palm wine, women and war, the Mongolian naval expedition to Java in the 13th century* (Singapore: Institute of Southeast Asian Studies, 2013). On 2 November in the same year, Raden Wijaya established the Majapahit Empire. See Kenneth R. Hall, 'Ritual networks and royal power in Majapahit Java', *Archipel* 52 (1996): 95–118; Aoyama Toru, 'Jingasari=Majyapahito Ōkoku', in Ikehata Setsuho et al., *Tōnan Ajia shi 2: Tōnan Ajia kodai kokka no seiritsu to tenkai* (Tōkyō: Iwanami Shoten, 2001), pp. 197–230.

70 Ng Chin-Keong, *The Chinese in Riau: A community on an unstable and restrictive frontier* (Singapore: Institute of Humanities and Social Sciences, Nanyang University, 1976).

71 See W.G.J. Remmelink, *The Chinese War and the collapse of the Javanese state (1725–1743)* (Leiden: KITLV Press, 1994).

Hokkiens controlled the shipping and trading routes connecting Java and China, acquiring them as agents was a good choice.[72] Hence, the positions of kapitan and lieutenant were instituted to handle the Chinese communities. This system, originating in a Portuguese arrangement for choosing the representatives of a Chinese enclave, also led the Dutch and Chinese to mutual reliance, as 'others'.

The Hokkien adaptation to local systems brought prosperity and an economic boom; however, with the development of the colonial plantation economy, the regional divide between cities and rural areas intensified. In 1740, the 'Batavia Massacre' occurred. Declining sugar prices and rumours that the Dutch were planning to deport the poor pushed many Hokkiens to rebel. The Dutch purged them in response. The authorities encouraged the Chinese to report on each other, and some Chinese did cooperate: for example, one Liu Chu 'informed the government of what was going on among his countrymen'.[73] High-status Chinese advisers had warned the Dutch of the impending uprising, but the head of the VOC's military, Bartholomeus Visscher, just ignored them. A Hokkien leader in Batavia, Kapitan Ni Hoekong, was stuck at home because of the riots and could do nothing. After the massacre, he was even accused of neglecting his duty of managing the Chinese. This Chinese revolt appears to be more class-based, and does not reflect the general living conditions of the Hokkiens throughout the East Indies at the time.

The leader of this unrest, Si-pánjang, was not recognised as the Hokkiens' principal representative. When a Chinese-Javanese coalition besieged Semarang, the Hokkiens inside the city walls did not support them.[74] Also, most of the rebels moved to East Java without changing the political structure of Batavia. Although this Javanese-Chinese-Dutch War changed politics in Java greatly, it did not change the colonial political structure, or challenge Dutch power. Some Dutch historians such as Johannes T. Vermeulen argue that the war did impact eighteenth-century Dutch colonialism; Leonard Blussé, by contrast, shows that it indirectly led to the expansion of Batavia, and confirmed a structure of dichotomy between the Chinese and other natives, which lasted into the twentieth century.[75]

If the rebellious case of Vietnam was abnormal in the context of Mongol expansion, and it was accidental that Chinese soldiers ended up being left behind, by contrast, the following cases in the Malay Archipelago involved active seizure by pirates and armed individuals. The Majapahit Empire attacked Srivijaya (Palembang) in 1377 due to a 'rebellion', and ended the Srivijaya kingdom, bringing chaos to the latter state, without fully occupying and controlling it. However, this situation offered opportunity to a Chinese fugitive named Liang Daoming. The *Ming shi* sums up what happened: 'emigre Chinese (*huaren liuyu zhe*) often rose up and occupied it (Palembang)'.[76] According to a Ming record, Palembang was permanently occupied

72 Blussé, *Badaweiya huaren yu Zhong-He maoyi*, pp. 43–4. Peter Carey, 'Changing Javanese perceptions of the Chinese communities in central Java, 1755–1825', *Indonesia* 37 (1984): 1–48.
73 Raffles, *History of Java*, p. 234.
74 Merle Calvin Ricklefs, 'The crisis of 1740–1 in Java: The Javanese, Chinese, Madurese and Dutch, and the fall of the court of Kartasura', *Bijdragen tot de Taal-, Land- en Volkenkunde* 139, 2 (1983): 268–90.
75 Blussé, 'Batavia, 1619–1740'.
76 *Ming shi*, 324: 8408.

by a group of armed diasporic Chinese; there are many other similar records about Chinese armed individuals and pirates operating in Java and Sumatra before the first Dutch arrived in the late sixteenth century.

Having failed to get a foothold on the Chinese coast, the VOC had to move to Dayuan (Tayouan) in southwest Taiwan.[77] In the south, they needed to create another counter-fort to resist Bantam, which was controlled by the local chief at first, and finally chose Batavia.[78] The Dutch preferred to clear out most of the Hokkien fighters, and utilised some allied pirates, and most of the merchants to that end. As Philip Kuhn summarises, in the case of those Chinese settlements, 'self-governing, armed territorial regimes set up by outlaws or political refugees' disappeared because the colonial power eliminated them; although, by contrast, 'middlemen in commerce' survived and flourished.[79]

As for the merchants, they attracted Chinese commercial leaders into joining their side to develop the new fort and set it up as a base to resist Bantam. Inpo, Bencon, and Jan Con were the most famous leaders who joined the Dutch side, and contributed a lot to transregional commerce and colonial construction. Earlier Chinese maritime challengers such as the descendants of the Zheng He fleet were also incorporated into this colonial system; they enjoyed and supported this maritime order, as shown by the famous seventeenth-century *kelenteng* Ancol on Java's north coast.[80]

In short, the Dutch shaped a new maritime order in the archipelago, and only its maritime supporters (but not the challengers) survived, while the Batavia authorities per se also needed to rely on these supporters. Thus the Chinese in the Dutch East Indies were granted more freedom of action, especially in commerce; however, the Dutch also imposed many restrictions, especially in terms of curbing Chinese influence on the natives.[81] The overall political agenda and ecology influenced the evolution and adaptations of the Hokkiens over centuries; their adaptations would affect the local and colonial political agendas in turn.

The Philippines

On the northeastern edge of the Malay Archipelago, the commerce of the Philippine Islands was prosperous due to the appearance of large numbers of

77 Tonio Andrade, 'The Company's Chinese pirates: How the Dutch East India Company tried to lead a coalition of pirates to war against China, 1621–1662', *Journal of World History* 15, 4 (2005): 415–44. Even pirates were invited by the Dutch to live in those Chinese villages.

78 See further Blussé, 'Batavia, 1619–1740'; Wu Jianyong, 'Qing qianqi Zhongguo yu Badaweiya de fanchuan maoyi', *Studies in Qing History* 3 (1996): 31–4.

79 Philip Kuhn, *Chinese among others: Emigration in modern times* (Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield, 2008), p. 56.

80 Claudine Salmon and Denys Lombard, *Les Chinois de Jakarta: Temples et vie collective* (Paris: Editions de la Maison des Sciences de l'Homme, 1977), pp. 86–97; H.J. De Graaf and Th.G.Th. Pigeaud, *Chinese Muslims in Java in the 15th and 16th century: The Malay Annals of Sĕmarang and Cĕrbon*, ed. M.C. Ricklefs (Clayton, Vic.: Monash University, 1984), pp. 8–9; Franke et al., *Chinese epigraphic materials*, vol. 2, I, p. 23; Johannes Widodo, 'A celebration of diversity: Zheng He and the origin of pre-colonial coastal urban pattern in Southeast Asia', in *Admiral Zheng He and Southeast Asia*, ed. Leo Suryadinata (Singapore: ISEAS, 2005), pp. 94–123.

81 David Bulbeck, ed., *Chinese economic activity in Netherlands India: Selected translations from the Dutch* (Singapore: ISEAS, 1992), pp. 2–3.

Hokkien merchants there in the sixteenth century, along with the Spanish maritime networks. Places like Luzon and Moluccas developed a relatively thriving commercial association with the Hokkiens. Luzon was depicted by a Ming Chinese scholar-official as a place where

> at the beginning it was the Hokkiens who found it close [to southern Fujian] and wealthy, hence the numbers of Hokkien merchants there, numbers that attained more than ten thousand. They generally had lived there for a long time and did not return home to the extent that they raised their descendants there.[82]

Since they did not have any political or economic conflicts with the local people, they were treated quite well. Even in Hemaoli in central Philippines, according to the Chinese official record, 'when Chinese people go to their country, the natives do not dare to bully and humiliate them, and trade there is the fairest'.[83] In the southern Philippines, the Sultanate of Sulu, Muslims also welcomed them, although somehow they forced them to keep on trading: 'When the ships want to go back, the natives will detain several [Chinese] as 'hostages', expecting [their Chinese partners] will come back again.'[84]

The Hokkiens lived in Chinese enclaves called 'Parián', where they developed their businesses. It took several decades to stabilise the prosperous trade between the Spaniards and the Hokkiens.[85] The Spanish authorities in Manila needed both the silver from South America and the commodities made in China to operate their newly established colony, while the Hokkien merchants were attracted by the galleon trade's silver, and joined the exchange by crossing the sea in great numbers.[86] Although there were complaints of the discontented, the Manila authorities and the Hokkiens developed a mutually dependent economic relationship in terms of daily utilities, food supply and currency exchange.[87] This status quo enabled the Parián to regenerate when they were destroyed.

Cooperation could lead to harmony as well as to conflict and tragedy. It could work relatively well under an agent system such as that established in the Dutch East Indies, or under a non-agent system such as that found in Quang Nam. Or, it could work relatively badly under the kind of non-agent system existing in the Philippines under the Spanish. The diasporic ecology was highly influenced by the agenda of the dominant power. What is known about the history of other incoming groups/careers proves that. Compared to the kapitan agent system in the Dutch East Indies, the 'agency' of merchants in daily life in the Philippines seems to have been very superficial and unstable.

82 *Ming shi*, 323: 8370.
83 Ibid., 323: 8374.
84 Ibid., 325: 8423–4.
85 For the statistics of the Philippine trade, see Pierre Chaunu, *Les Philippines et le Pacifique des Ibériques (XVIe, XVIIe, XVIIIe Siècles): Introduction Méthodologique et Indices d'Activité* (Paris: S.E.V. P.E.N., 1960).
86 Qian Jiang, '1570–1760 nian Zhongguo he Lüsong maoyi de fazhan ji maoyi e de gusuan', *Zhongguo shehui jingji shi yanjiu* (1986): 69–78.
87 Chen, 'Beyond the land and sea', pp. 157–73.

After the Pan Hewu (1567–1622) rebellion in 1593, and the case of Zhang Yi searching for the golden mountain at Cavite in the name of the Ming court in 1603, the Spaniards, very few in number in the Phillipines, feared Chinese rebellion and suspected that the Hokkien merchants would assist the Ming government in a takeover. Mutual distrust and a lack of communication channels brought disaster.[88]

Since the Hokkiens in Manila had no chance to develop community defence in their settlements, which were located outside the city walls, violent killings seemed inevitable. They recurred in different shapes.[89] This political ecology, then, together with the reality of short-term trade and the role of the Hokkiens in everyday commerce, in turn, influenced certain selective adaptations by the community.

We may also review how armed individuals contributed to such selective adaptations in the Philippines. In the case of Pan Hewu, the killings were the result of growing mutual mistrust and suspicion. Pan, a Hokkien sojourner from Jinjiang County, led labourers to assassinate Governor Dasmariñas and kill his soldiers.[90]

The incident began when Chinese labourers were forced to make an expedition to the Moluccas, the Spice Islands. In the 1580s, Governor Vera thought that the Filipino natives were too foolish and lacked the strength to manipulate the galleys, so he tried, instead, to recruit 300 Chinese jack-tars (at two pesos per month, supplied by the treasury), in exchange for waiving their tribute taxes. Interestingly, Governor Vera also regarded the Chinese in general as lacking in sailing skills and thought them just as weak as the natives:

> They are of little use, because of the lack of men skilled in managing and sailing with lateen sails, and the scarcity of rowers. I have tried to keep up its crew by hiring men; but the natives are so despicable a people that they are of little use for this purpose, nor do they have sufficient strength for rowing … I have selected three hundred Chinese, who are stronger, and who, if allowed liberty to quit the work, and exemption from tribute, will bind themselves to serve on the galleys. But although earnest endeavors have been made to teach them, they row very badly, and have as little energy as the natives of these islands have.[91]

The shortage of skilled sailors and labour was never resolved. Despite his reluctance, in the 1590s, Dasmariñas ordered officials to recruit 250 Chinese sailors. Hence Alonso Sauyo, the governor of the Sangleys (as the Spanish called the Chinese), had to call in the Chinese leaders to discuss the plan.[92] The final decision was that

88 Geronimo de Salazar y Salcedo, 'Three Chinese mandarins at Manila' (Manila, 27 May 1603), *TPI*, vol. 12, 1601–04, pp. 83–97. Miguel de Benavides, 'Letters (from Benavides) to Felipe III' (5 & 6 July 1603), *TPI*, vol. 12, 1601–04, pp. 101–27. Pedro de Acuña and others, 'Relations with the Chinese' (Manila, 4 & 5 July 1605), *TPI*, vol. 14, 1606–09, pp. 38–52. Pedro de Acuña, 'Letters to Felipe III' (1–15 July 1605), *TPI*, vol. 14, 1606–09, pp. 53–77.

89 Wen Xiongfei, *Nanyang huaqiao tongshi* (Shanghai: Dongfang yinshuguan, 1929), pp. 93–7; Hsiao Shi-ching, *Zhong-Fei waijiao guanxi shi* (Taipei: Zhengzhong shuju, 1995), pp. 14–19.

90 For the Spanish records of this case, see Antonio de Morga, *Sucesos de las Filipinas*, *TPI*, vol. 15, 1609, pp. 25–287; vol. 16, 1609, pp. 25–209; Bartolome Leonardo de Argensola's *Conquista de las Islas Malucos*, *TPI*, vol. 16, 1609, pp. 211–317.

91 Santiago de Vera, 'Letter from Vera to Filipe II' (26 June 1588), *TPI*, vol. 7, 1588–91, pp. 56–7.

92 Alonso Sauyo seemed to be the responsible official at that period, see Francisco Tello and others, 'Military affairs in the Islands' (Manila, 12 July 1599), *TPI*, vol. 10, 1597–99, p. 213.

the Spanish would recruit one in every ten Chinese. The Chinese boycotted the order. The shops were closed and food supplies stopped. Given the situation, the Chinese in the Philippines chose to passively resist, at first.

The Governor then claimed that the Chinese were planning to rebel and arrested 50 people, sending them to work as jack-tars. He ordered that another 200 people had to be provided to reach the original goal of 250. The Chinese then pooled 20,000 pesos to recruit 200 volunteers to participate in the expedition. Dasmariñas divided these 250 people into five teams and assigned five Chinese Catholics to lead them. He also gave the leaders slingshots and catans (Japanese swords), asking the teams to practice on a regular basis.[93] Eventually, Dasmariñas forcibly recruited another 150 Chinese.[94]

The Hokkien sailors were over-exploited, maltreated, and forced to man the galley day and night. It was then that tragedy occurred. They had received almost no pay, and resentment grew. Adding the stipend issued by the treasury to the 20,000 pesos for recruiting, each volunteer would in theory receive 80 pesos. However, most of the 20,000 pesos for recruiting were taken by the Chinese team leaders. Little of it was paid to the sailors. They had suffered too much. Pan told them it would be better to fight to the death rather than 'die for treason, or hanging or stabbing, or wait to die'. As a result, they plotted and rebelled, killing the governor and the other Spaniards one night, and taking over the galley off the coast of Luzon 24 leagues from Manila. Only two Spaniards, Juan de Cuellar (the governor's secretary), and Franciscan Father Montilla, survived by remaining in their cabins amidships.[95]

The rebels then seized items of value (jewels, money, etc.) and set out to sail back to China. Instead, the galley was conveyed by the winds and ocean currents to Quang Nam, where all valuable items were confiscated by the lord. Although the Ming court was sympathetic, and tried to help Luis Pérez Dasmariñas, son of the governor, to take revenge and capture the rebels, its efforts were limited. The Ministry of War replied, 'Slay the criminals, and enormously reward the envoys.'[96] The Fujian Governor-General also 'sent ships to recruit Chinese who had lived in Luzon for a long time'.[97]

This case reinforced the Spanish government's mistrust of the Chinese. According to a Ming literatus, 'from that time on, there has been enmity [between the Chinese and their hosts]; [the Spaniards] feared each day [that the Sangleys] would rebel, and hence they enslaved us further'.[98] Unfortunately, the Spanish–

93 Bartolome Leonardo de Argensola, *Conquista de las Islas Malucos* (Madrid, 1609), *TPI*, vol. 16, pp. 251–2.
94 Ibid., pp. 256–8.
95 Antonio de Morga, *Sucesos de las Filipinas*, *TPI*, vol. 15, pp. 25–287; vol. 16, pp. 25–209; De Argensola, *Conquista de las Islas Malucos*.
96 In the second year (1594), the Ministry of War again confirmed that '[we] kill the captured-criminals, and enormously reward the envoys of the chiefs (Spaniards in the Philippines), to strengthen their vested faith and detect the situation with respect to Japan'. See *MSL, Shenzong shilu* 278, WL22/12, *dingwei*, p. 5136.
97 *Dong xi yang kao*, pp. 89–96.
98 Ibid., p. 91. Xu Fuyuan, the General-Governor of Fujian, also admitted that 'after killing the chief, and taking his fortune, [Pan et al.] escaped to the south of Jiaozhi (Vietnam). Our people are really malevolent'.

Hokkien enmity that this literatus envisioned provided a context for no less than five outbreaks of violence between 1603 and 1762.

In short, the 'armed individuals' were not necessarily rebels, as was the case in Quang Nam. They could also be competitors, as in the Dutch East Indies. In the Philippines, especially in Manila, by contrast, the armed individuals in question were just rebels, and revolts and violent killings were endemic. Compared to the other regions, some mechanism must have been missing in the Philippines. The rebel could be cooperator as well as challenger; so could the pirate, the maritime supporter or the challenger.

As a colonial power with gunpowder and an armada, the Spanish also needed to face pirates, who generally played the role of maritime challengers in the Philippines. Initially, the Ming court had noticed the establishment of connections between the Hokkiens and the Spaniards, but they were not too concerned since those informants saved by Governor Legazpi had confirmed a friendly image of Spaniards.[99]

Prosperity generated by increased commerce attracted more Hokkien immigrants to settle in Manila, something which became a problem for the Spaniards. In 1574, Lin Feng (Limahong), a Teochew pirate, heard that Manila was a new and relatively unprotected settlement.[100] Seizing the opportunity to capture Manila, Lin Feng led nearly one hundred ships and around 4,000 companions in an attack on the city. They killed the Spanish commander Martín de Goiti in a surprise raid at the beginning of the battle, but were later defeated by Spanish reinforcements. The Spanish fear of allowing any further Chinese settlement appeared after this.[101]

After Lin Feng's attempted conquest, the Spaniards became very suspicious of the Chinese diaspora. 'It seems that in the kingdom of China this corsair, Limahon, has done much damage,' writes Governor Francisco de Sande.[102] In 1603, the Spaniards suppressed the so-called Sangley Rebellion, killing many Chinese in Manila when they found out that some of them were trying to take over the Philippines.

Because of the disproportionate numbers of Chinese casualties, the merchants referred to this event as the Massacre of 1603.[103] To eliminate the Chinese living in

99 Gaspar de san Agustín, O.S.A., *Conquistas de las Islas Filipinas (1565–1615)* (Manila, 1571), libro 2, capítulo VIII, pp. 359–60, in *Taiwan yu Xibanya guanxi shiliao huibian* [The historical sources collection of Taiwanese–Spanish relations], vol. I, ed. Lee Yu-chung (Nantou: Guoshi guan Taiwan wenxian guan, 2008), pp. 119–21.

100 Andrew Wilson, *Ambition and identity: Chinese merchant elites in colonial Manila, 1880–1916* (Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 2004). For a general description of Lin's uprising and its legacy, see Cesar V. Callanta, *The Limahong Invasion* (Quezon City: New Day, 1989); Teresita Ang See, 'Limahong: Pirate, rebel or hero?', in *Chinese in the Philippines*, vol. 4 (Manila: Kaisa Para Sa Kaunlaran, 2013), pp. 290–302. The Spanish archives describe Lin's attack, see De San Agustín, *Conquistas de las Islas Filipinas (1565–1615)*, libro 2, capítulo XVI, pp. 401–5; capítulo XXI, p. 435, in *Taiwan yu Xibanya guanxi shiliao huibian*, pp. 145–9.

101 Wilson mentions Lin's attack, and also confirms that '[t]hroughout this period the Spanish were understandably suspicious of *sangleys* … For much of the late sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries, the Spanish feared a Chinese invasion'. See Wilson, *Ambition and identity*, pp. 37–8.

102 Francisco de Sande, 'Relation of the Filipinas Islands' (Manila, 7 June 1576), *TPI*, vol. 4, 1576–82, p. 45.

103 Edgar Wickberg, *The Chinese in Philippine life, 1850–1898* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1965), pp. 10–11, 40–41, 211. John A. Larkin, *The Pampangans: Colonial society in a Philippine province* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1972), p. 49; José Eugenio Borao, 'The massacre of 1603: Chinese perception of the Spaniards in the Philippines', *Itinerario* 23, 1 (1998): 22–39.

the Philippines, the Spaniards worked with the native Filipinos and the Japanese community from the Paco district of Manila. These groups competed economically with the Hokkien merchants, and thus had an interest in aiding the Spaniards. Interestingly enough, the merchants in question were not associated with the Chinese government, or any piracy, but the Spaniards still believed that they should not be underestimated as potential threats. In the end, the perception of a threat resulting from a series of unrelated incidents, and the Spaniards' reaction in expelling the Hokkien merchants, changed the trading status quo between Fujian and the Philippines.

In short, the selective adaptation that the Hokkiens evolved in Manila, whereby they were involved in the supply of everyday items such as woollens, bells, perfumes, iron, tin, and coloured cotton cloths, and currency exchange in a concentrated market, was not that successful. The Chinese were easily suspected, and were viewed as an aggressive and intractable group. As a result of Spanish political agenda they were also more likely to be categorised as mercenaries or even pirates, despite the evidence of their relative weakness. 'Rebellion', then, was a major theme with regard to the diasporic Hokkien community, showing again that the local political ecology was highly influenced or driven by the agenda of the dominant power.

Conclusion

In conclusion, we can see that the Hokkiens adapted broadly, militarily, politically, and economically, to their various host societies in Southeast Asia. Their adaptations were influenced by the political agendas they encountered in each region. Thus the challengers were dominant in Manila and elsewhere in the Philippines, while both cooperators and challengers were common in Hoi An and Quang Nam, and cooperators stood out in Batavia and other settlements in the Dutch East Indies. In all three regions, the Hokkiens adapted differently. The presence or absence of agent systems was not the central issue in the evolutions, apparently. Nonetheless, it was not easy for the dominant or ruling power to communicate with the Hokkiens or wider Chinese diaspora without a system of Chinese agents, leading to the rise and accumulation of discontent and mutual suspicion. But below the tip of the iceberg more complex mechanisms were at work. In Quang Nam, the paths for mobility and promotion for the Hokkiens compensated for the shortcomings of a non-agent system; however, in the Philippines, neither this type of channel nor other compensatory adaptations emerged. Hence, the response was often unavoidable violence.

This article is intended to enhance our understanding of the diverse Chinese diasporic adaptations underlying their historical relationships with host societies in Southeast Asia. It explores under what conditions a diasporic 'specialness' was established. As the case studies show, there were always both cooperators and challengers (namely merchants, armed individuals, and pirates) among the diasporic communities. The commercial prosperity of the Hokkien community was a feature of Hoi An, as well as Batavia and Manila. Nonetheless, the Hokkiens gradually developed in quite distinctive ways in Quang Nam, the Dutch East Indies, and the Philippines.

I argue that the different actions and outcomes of the heterogeneous Hokkien communities under similar circumstances were driven or highly influenced by either

monarchic or colonial agendas, and only under specific local conditions did the diaspora encounter or create problems in host societies. This was partly the result of the selective adaptations of Hokkiens in different host societies, which also helped to reshape local political agendas and ecologies in turn.