A Preliminary Study on Tangshan Chinese Carpenters' Migratory Routes in Taiwan During the Japanese Period (1910~1928): Using Xidi Carpenters from Quanzhou County as a Case Study

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Abstract
Based on census records during the Japanese period, oral interviews and literature reviews, the migratory routes of Quanzhou carpenters in Taiwan between 1910 and 1928 were traced. Population structure and networks, interactions between the related carpentry guilds and their job scopes were carefully analyzed. Results show that the carpentry skills inherited by the Quanzhou Xidi carpenters were actually the outcome of a gradual fusion between the essence of Ming dynasty development and the accumulation of temporal wisdom passed down from their patrilineal societies. Upon arrival in Taiwan, the migration trend of the Tangshan carpenters gradually evolved from single nodal concentration (staying within their own clans or villages) to inter-state (township and/or county-level) migration through inter-referrals. Eventually, patrilineal skill-imparting practices could no longer sustain the ever-changing socio-economic trend, and thus led to the collapse of the traditional system. In-land migration brought about geographical and subsequently, temporal transmission of carpentry skills, which led to the creation of locally distinctive styles. The initial intention of outsourcing overseas skilled carpentry teams had not only indirectly revealed the essence of 'foreign' traditional carpentry in the local environment, but had also led to the unique fusion of ethnic, geographical and construction skill integration in Taiwan.

Keywords: census record during the Japanese period; Xidi Master Carpenter; temporary migration; skill transmission

1. Introduction
'Tangshan carpenters', as it relates to Taiwan, refers to the traditional carpenters from the Quanzhou and Zhangzhou counties of Fujian Province in China (Lin, 1978:512). The carpenters frequently traveled to-and-from Taiwan via trading ships or junks to carry out construction of traditional buildings. Such regional transitions had become a typical cyclic migration trend in Taiwan.

As noted by Chen (1991), social tension between different sub-ethnic groups of the Han race in Taiwan seemed to have been gradually resolved by 1865, and prior to the Japanese regime (1895), the local Han people learned to live harmoniously within a common settlement for the following three decades. During this period, temples or ancestral halls within towns or villages usually functioned as the centre for social networking, periodic meetings and arbitrations. As different sub-ethnic groups developed trust with each other, they became more liberal-minded and welcomed the idea of inviting traditional carpenters and artisans from China to construct temples and ancestral halls in Taiwan.

During the Japanese period, for reasons of national security, stringent immigration rules were imposed in 1897, thus putting an end to the historic influx of people from China who were responsible for populating most of the island (Barclay, 1954:102). Restrictions were imposed on both the Chinese and local Han people traveling to and from Taiwan.

At this point, it would be worthwhile to clarify the usage of words like 'Taiwanese' and 'Chinese' in the following sections. In order to closely monitor the population, clarification of the nationality of the different groups of people in Taiwan was necessary. As a result, four principal groups arose: "Taiwanese" (Han Chinese race locally born in Taiwan), Japanese, Koreans and mainland Chinese (or "Aliens") (Barclay, 1954:10).
During the early periods of colonization, workers were heavily in demand as numerous national development projects were in the midst of operation. Recognizing that short-term mobility during periods of rapid economic change would help to adjust labor supply and demand on a regional or even national basis (Goldstein, 1987:86), Policy number 74 was issued on the 18th of July 1899. Although the Chinese workers were allowed to enter Taiwan, their mobility was highly restricted and mingling with the permanent Taiwanese residents was prohibited (Barclay, 1954:103). Detailed census data and registration statistics of each Chinese worker including immigration records, employers' details, job scope details and locations and all residency addresses, etc, were meticulously recorded.

Due to the unusually comprehensive and detailed records of the Chinese workers during the Japanese reign (Barclay, 1954; Chang & Meyer, 1963; Ho, 1975; Goldstein, 1987), research interest into the Chinese Xidi carpenters was triggered. Barclay (1954) observed that although one of the earliest registries of the Japanese population was incomplete, the rules regarding nationality were conscientiously recorded as they provided the first basis for distinguishing ethnic groups in the population.

In-depth research was often hampered when tracking the Chinese carpenters' movements in Taiwan, mainly due to the limited data on-hand to confirm their in-land migratory histories. This could be due to two reasons: (1) lack of detailed classification of occupation listings and (2) incorrect reporting of the occupation fields by the Chinese migrants. In the first instance, as observed by Barclay, occupation listing found in the census data were mainly grouped into eight categories: 'Agriculture', 'Fishing', 'Mining', 'Manufacturing', 'Commerce', 'Transportation', 'Government and Professional' and 'Other'. The Chinese were mainly found in the 'Other' category working as laborers in smaller manufacturing enterprises and as dockworkers in the 'Manufacturing' and 'Transportation' categories. Therefore, even if some of these Chinese workers were carpenters, the occupation listings did not provide a relevant entry for them to report correctly. In the second case, there exists a possibility that the incorrect reporting might be a deliberate act as most of these carpenters usually entered Taiwan with the help of lumber or transportation companies acting as their sponsors, thus it would seem logical to list them as 'laborers' in general. The area of research fell within the 'southern' regions of Taiwan, spanning from the Jiayi to Pingdong areas where more detailed listings of the carpenters 'working histories' could be found.

Previous research (Li, 1996:34) found that Xidi male descendants, upon reaching adulthood, would undergo apprenticeship whereby carpentry skills would be imparted to them via the patrilineal system. After passing the apprenticeship, they were obligated to continue with carpentry and contribute much of their earnings periodically to the clan as a form of 'payback scheme' and also to secure the benefits of future retirement care by their patriarchal clans.

During the early periods of the Ming dynasty, Chinese locals often suffered from frequent pirate and bandit attacks and raids; hence, military forces were brought into the City to protect the people and to control the local economy, education, land property and all related resources. Some groups of locals residing outside of the City wall made a living by constructing warships and other related defense constructions for the military (Shi, 2000:23). These workers gradually accumulated sufficient carpentry skills and were able to work as carpenters for the imperial government. Eventually, this led to the development of specialized patriarchal clan groups of carpenter villages. However, with the opening up of the coast to trade with foreign merchants in 1684, coast guard defense was no longer important to the government; and, employment opportunities for the carpenters were drastically reduced. Forced to move outside of their comfort zones for job opportunities, many Chinese carpenters came to Taiwan to build temples, ancestral halls and residential buildings. While in Taiwan, the Chinese Master Carpenter and his team usually stayed within their own circle and the job scope was generally defined as the Chinese being the main players while the Taiwanese served in secondary roles to the building teams.

2. Research Objectives and Methods

In view of the above findings, the aim of this research is to examine the effects of Japanese colonial administration in Taiwan on the geographical transmission of carpentry skills of the Xidi carpenters between 1910 and 1928. It aims to answer the following questions: (1) Were the Chinese carpenters able to maintain the patrilineal skill imparting system exclusively within their group throughout their stay in Taiwan? (2) Is there a possibility that the working relationship between the locals and Chinese was in the form of cooperation and mutual experience exchange, and that skills transmission was imparted through a non-conventional way?

Research methods are generally summarized into two steps. Firstly, historical records of the census data compiled by the Japanese and all related literature were thoroughly reviewed and analyzed (Table 1.). Secondly, based on the above literature reviews, oral interviews were conducted with existing 'Xidi-sect' carpenters in Taiwan and the Huian County of Fujian province to ascertain their actual living modes and perceptions of the past social events in Taiwan during the Japanese period.
Table 1. Census Records During the Japanese Period

| No. | Record Type | Household head | Place of Origin | Original Residence |
|-----|-------------|----------------|-----------------|-------------------|
| 1   | Lodging records | Xijiadong Village, Xijiadong Northern Fort, Jiayi Municipal | No. 264, Guanziling, Baihe Village, Xining District, Tainan Prefecture | 1913 (27) |
| 2   | Lodging records | Xiji Village, Hui County, Quanzhou Prefecture, Fujian Province, China | No. 152, Tandi, Dain Village, Jiayi District, Tainan Prefecture | 1915 (29) |
| 3   | Domicile records | Xiji Village, Hui County, Quanzhou Prefecture, Fujian Province, China | No. 179, Tandi, Dain Village, Jiayi District, Tainan Prefecture | 1915 (29) |
| 4   | Domicile records | Xiji Village, Hui County, Quanzhou Prefecture, Fujian Province, China | No. 61, Dain, Dain Street, Jiayi District, Tainan Prefecture | 1916 (23) |
| 5   | Domicile records | Xiji Village, Hui County, Quanzhou Prefecture, Fujian Province, China | No. 49, Dain, Dain Street, Jiayi District, Tainan Prefecture | 1917 (36) |
| 6   | Domicile records | Xiji Village, Hui County, Quanzhou Prefecture, Fujian Province, China | No. 264, Guanziling, Houbi Village, Xining District, Tainan Prefecture | 1918 (36) |

Notes and Sources: Census Records from Baihe District, Dalin Township, Minsyong Township; Information has been reclassified into the above categories.

Table 2. Record B Census Data (Chinese Workers in Taiwan)

| No. | Place of Origin | Occupation | Entry Date (Age) | Moving Out Date | Departure Date | Total Stay Period/years (in Taiwan) |
|-----|----------------|------------|-----------------|-----------------|----------------|-----------------------------------|
| 1   | Xidi, Hui County | Senior carpenter | 1910 (27) | 1948 | 39 |
| 2   | Quandian township Jinjiang County | Carpenter | 1913 (22) | 1919 | – |
| 3   | Xidi, Hui County | Carpenter | 1913 (29) | 1918 | – |
| 4   | Xidi, Hui County | Carpenter | 1913 (27) | 1916 | 4 |
| 5   | Dongpei town, Huan County | Carpenter | 1913 (23) | 1916 | 4 |
| 6   | Xidi, Hui County | Carpenter | 1913 (25) | 1915 | – |
| 7   | Xidi, Hui County | Carpenter | 1913 (14) | 1915 | – |
| 8   | Xidi, Hui County | Carpenter | 1913 (14) | 1925 | 13 |
| 9   | Xidi, Hui County | Carpenter | 1914 (25) | 1915 | 2 |
| 10  | Xidi, Hui County | Blank | 1915 (13) | 1916 | – |
| 11  | Xidi, Hui County | Blank | 1915 (32) | 1918 | – |
| 12  | Kenghuang town, Huan County | Blank | 1915 (29) | 1916 | 2 |
| 13  | Sukeng town, Hui County | Senior carpenter | 1915 (35) | 1916 | 2 |
| 14  | Xidi, Hui County | Carpenter | 1917 (21) | 1920 | 4 |
| 15  | Xidi, Hui County | Stone mason | 1918 (24) | 1919 | 2 |
| 16  | Xidi, Hui County | Blank | 1918 (28) | 1925 | 8 |
| 17  | Xidi, Hui County | Blank | 1919 (17) | 1923 | 5 |
| 18  | Xiamen, Siming County | Housekeeper | 1919 (60) | 1920 | 2 |
| 19  | Cangxia town, Huan County | Blank | 1920 (36) | 1923 | 4 |
| 20  | Xipo town, Hui County | Blank | 1921 (25) | 1925 | 5 |
| 21  | Qianpo town, Hui County | Blank | 1921 (19) | 1922 | 2 |
| 22  | Xidi, Hui County | Housekeeper | 1921 (25) | 1924 | 4 |
| 23  | Quandian town Jinjiang County | Blank | 1922 (14) | 1929 | 8 |
| 24  | Xidi, Hui County | Master carpenter | 1922 (36) | 1928 | – |
| 25  | Xidi, Hui County | Housekeeper | 1922 (28) | 1928 | – |
| 26  | Xidi, Hui County | Housekeeper | 1928 (1) | 1928 | – |

Notes and Sources: Census Records from Baihe District, Dalin Township, Minsyong Township; Information has been reclassified into the above categories.

*Stands for brother relationship; **Stands for couple and children relationship; ***Second time returnee but staying at a different place in Taiwan

3. Migration and Relocation Histories of Chinese Carpenters in Taiwan

Due to the limited data to confirm the Chinese carpenters' in-land migratory histories, this study uses the quantitative statistical approach when analyzing the household census records.

3.1 Effects of Chinese Population Structure

From the census data, it is found that of the 26 members listed as household members in Table 2, 17 were from Xidi village, two were from Jinjiang and one each were from the rest of the villages. In addition, previous oral interviews with existing carpenters revealed that in the past, Xidi household heads owned either lumber companies or transportation companies.

Among all of the carpenters, only Xidi carpenters continued to maintain clan affiliation even when they were abroad. With reference to the above findings, the Chinese migratory practice in Taiwan during...
the second quartile of the Japanese period (1910 to 1928) presented two interesting observations. Firstly, Xidi carpenters, who accounted for 65% of the total, preferred to stay together with the clan when in foreign land because new immigrants usually followed the same occupations as friends and relatives who had preceded them, with the result that in any one place abroad those with the same occupation tended to have come from the same place in China (Crissman, 1967:186). Secondly, the remaining 35% represented themselves as independent individuals who were not very particular about staying with their common clan people. This phenomenon might be due to the weakening effect of clan influence in the original village while an individual was based abroad. Feeling foreign in an unknown territory and bearing little or no affiliation burden, this group of 'single individuals' is more receptive towards re-establishing new bonds and networks with the local prefecture and municipal-level towns or villages.

3.2 Effects of Migration on the Chinese Migrants

Working Arrangement

Regarding census record book reference B to D (Table 1.), a trend is clearly seen: Xidi carpenters, upon arrival in Taiwan, stayed and worked in the same industry and place (Dalin). Having worked for a certain period, these carpenters would segment into two routes: (1) retained the status quo with the current employer (household head) and departed from Taiwan upon job completion; (2) re-assigned to another employer upon completion of previous work and then relocated to another work place.

In the first status quo scenario, it was found that most of the Xidi migrants arrived and stayed in Jiayi between 1913 and 1922 (Table 2.) to work as carpenters. This period coincided with the establishment of the Alishan forestry office by the Japanese government and the initiation of timber logging and wood processing works in the Jiayi region (Liu, 1967:5). In addition, from Record B Census data, the registered household head ran a fir timber company, which not only specialized in selling lumber and semi-processed wooden materials, but also provided timber building construction and secondary wood products services. From Table 2., it is found that the departure and/or moving out trend fell between 1915 and 1916, thus implying that the working period of the job usually lasted three to four years, and that the carpenters generally came to Taiwan for short-term projects.

In the second scenario, six workers (No. 2, 3, 6, 7, 9 and 11 from Table 2.) migrated to another household to work, implying a trend in relocation of professional skills. By cross-referencing Tables 3. and 4., three observations could be drawn. Firstly, the previous site

Table 3. In-land Migration Data of Xidi Carpenters in Taiwan (Moving out Dalin Village)

| Data reference | Moving period | Relocated address (in the Japanese period) | Present Address (in Current times) |
|----------------|---------------|-------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| Record Member No. | In Out | Regional | | |
| B 2 | 1913 1919 | No. 225, Ahou Street, Gangxichung Village, Pingdong City, Pingdong County | Ahou Municipal |
| B 3 | 1913 1918 | No. 322 Gu, Daliwu Village, Daliwu Fort, Dounan town, Yunlin County | Jiayi Municipal |
| B 6* | 1913 1915 | No. 321, Ahou Street, Gangxichung Village, Pingdong City, Pingdong County | Ahou Municipal |
| B 7* | 1913 1915 | No. 321, Ahou Street, Gangxichung Village, Pingdong City, Pingdong County | Ahou Municipal |
| B 11 | 1915 1918 | No. 225, Ahou Street, Gangxichung Village, Pingdong City, Pingdong County | Ahou Municipal |
| B 9*** | 1914 1919 | No. 264, Gu, Guanziling Village, Baihe district, Tainan City | Douluoguo Dongxia Fort, Jiayi Hall |

Notes and Sources: Census Records from Baihe District, Dalin Township, Minsyong Township; Information has been reclassified into the above categories.

*Stands for brother relationship; **Stands for couple and children relationship; ***Second time returnee but staying at a different place in Taiwan

Table 4. In-land Migration Data of Xidi Carpenters in Taiwan (Moving into Dalin Village)

| Data reference | Moving period | Relocated address (in the Japanese period) | Present Address (in Current times) |
|----------------|---------------|-------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| Record Member No. | In Out | Regional | | |
| C 1 | 1926 1928 | No. 197, Xiaochuantou, Keelung City, Taipei Prefecture | Zhongzheng District, Keelung City |
| D 1 | 1930 1932 | No. 258, Xiaoying, Xiaoying Village, Zengweng District, Tainan Prefecture | Xiaying village, Tainan City |
| D 15 | 1942 1942 | No. 42, Hinokicho Sanchome, Jiayi City | East District, Jiayi City |
| D 18 | 1935 1935 | No. 92, Xizhou, Xizhou Village, Qishan District, Kaohsiung Prefecture | Qishan town, Kaohsiung City |

Notes and Sources: Census Records from Baihe District, Dalin Township, Minsyong Township; Information has been reclassified into the above categories.
(Dalin) where the Xidi carpenters worked spans across the current Yunlin County Dounan town, Jiayi City East zone, Tainan City Baihe and Xiaying districts, Kaohsiung City Qishan district and Pingdong City, with Tainan as their main working area. Secondly, the 'moving-in' and 'moving-out' periods present a possible historical link over time. In Table 3., Xidi carpenters moved into Dalin for a period of three years (1913 to 1915) and moved out of Dalin to another site to continue working for another four years (1915-1919).

As previously mentioned, as the initial 'moving in' trend coincides with the establishment of the Alishan forestry office and the logging industry, does the 'moving out' trend then correlate with the rise and fall of the Alishan logging industry or is the trend due to other reasons? These historical data call for future reconfirmation. Lastly, the short-term working practice of the Xidi carpenters justifies the explanation that Xidi carpenters were used to following their predecessor's path and networks and hence, the 'overseas company' (in the Taiwan context, the lumbering and transportation companies) became the unofficial headquarters for employing common clansmen or occupational communities.

### 3.3 Interaction Between Xidi Carpenters Concerning Construction Organization

Member number 9 (Table 3.) is found to be the only second-timer who had been recorded to be residing at different places throughout his stay in Taiwan, thus signifying the continual trend of transmitting Xidi carpentry skills during his stay. His second visit to Taiwan began on the 15th of October, 1914 where he worked at Jiayi until the 1st of June, 1915 before returning to China. Three months later, he came back to Taiwan to work for the same employer for about six months before relocating to another address. He stayed at the second address until the 19th of September, 1919 and then moved on to the Daxian Temple site located at Jiayi Municipal Guanziling village. At Daxian Temple, he worked as an assistant for nearly two years before leaving Taiwan with the rest of the team on the 25th of September, 1921.

A local carpenter, Yu Chan, who was based at a nearby site, often visited the Daxian Temple site to lend assistance and to learn more carpentry skills through hands-on experience from the Chinese carpenters. Eventually Yu acquired the Xidi carpentry skills indirectly from the Xidi team during practical site experience, rather than through the conventional apprenticeship. After the Xidi carpenters returned to their hometown and upon completion of his job at another location, Yu joined the Daxian Temple site on the 25th of July, 1922 where he continued to work with his team until 29th of February, 1923. Yu became a local carpenter in Taiwan after inheriting Xidi carpenter technology.

### 4. Conclusion

With reference to historical records of the late Qing dynasty, the Japanese period census records and oral interviews with existing Xidi carpenters, this paper explains the occupational transformation of the Quanzhou Xidi people from the Ming to Qing periods in China. Also, the geographical transmission of Xidi carpentry skills in Taiwan is described by examining the interactions between their population structure, construction activities and organization during the second quarter of the Japanese period (1910 to 1928).

Based on the above findings, the following conclusions are drawn:

1. Due to Huian's special geographical environment, the coastal Xidi residents underwent an occupation transition to become the imperial government's carpenters for the construction of warships and other defense-related constructions. The acquired carpentry skills eventually led to the development of specialized patrilineal occupation villages at Xidi.

2. Drastic declines in employment forced the carpenters to move offshore to build temples, ancestral halls and residential buildings in the late 19th century. Furthermore, with the Japanese re-opening policy, Chinese immigrants entered Taiwan to provide labor support for the numerous national development projects, thus giving rise to more Chinese carpenters coming to Taiwan. However, only Xidi carpenters continued to maintain clan affiliation, even when they were abroad.

3. Due to the ever-changing socio-economic trend, the Xidi carpenters could no longer sustain their patrilineal skill imparting system, which ultimately led to the collapse of the traditional system.

4. From the census records, carpenters showing signs of frequent relocation signified a continual trend of transmitting Xidi carpentry skills in Taiwan during their stay. Such mobility allowed for indirect and temporal transmission of carpentry skills to local Taiwanese carpenters and to the subsequent creation of locally distinctive styles in Taiwan.

### Acknowledgement

This research was supported by the National Science Council "By Using 3D Scanner on the Evolution of Traditional Chuandau Frames in Tainan—Case Study of the Local Carpenter Yu-Chan Works" (Project No. NSC95-2622-E-006-023-CC3).

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