

holders, the monarchy and its literati officials. Learning to prosper in a position of derived or delegated authority was important training for Chinese merchants, some of whom would find themselves in foreign lands where political power was closely held by colonialists or local royalty and where Chinese of any class had even less chance to share it. Outside China, the headmen of local Chinese communities were not literati, who seldom emigrated, but merchants, of whom many had risen from farmer or artisan origins yet could draw on an ancient commercial culture of self-respect and social responsibility.²⁴

Regional differences, too, limited the power of government to enforce migration policy throughout the empire. Although all local officials were appointed by the central government, their jurisdictions differed widely in customs, resources, and modes of livelihood. From the dry-farming plains of north China to the humid, irrigated “land of fish and rice” in the Yangtze valley to the mountain-bound maritime provinces of the south and southeast coast, the centralized state confronted a mosaic of local customs and economies. Particularly in the southern coastal provinces (Zhejiang, Fujian, and Guangdong), there prevailed eight speech groups, including within them six mutually unintelligible dialects. And none of these speech groups was easily intelligible to speakers of the dominant language, Mandarin. An ecological feature of that region was reliance on sea-borne commerce to make up for its scanty agricultural land, and that special ecology made bans on maritime trade and emigration hard to enforce. Local elites, whether literati or merchants, had their own compelling interests in private maritime trade, and government efforts to ban it completely were never entirely successful. And because emigration was linked to maritime trade, the government was not able to stop it either. Local elites, with their commercial interests and their influence in public affairs, helped regional societies resist national policies that harmed their interests: by ignoring them, bending them, and occasionally defeating them. If the emperor’s officials valued their reputations and career prospects, they could not ignore the special needs of the provinces they governed.

Whatever the policy behind particular maritime bans, one force lay behind the eventual failure of them all: the need of families for

the income from basic human needs business niche: inevitable niches for or even facilitate whatever Beijing the maritime tr

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The farmer family.” For att Chinese familili continuum of north China fessarily mean la family (in the compromised 11 miles away. Ar compound but

in trade and migration. Historically, goods that fill needs cannot long be denied through regulation. In the imperial salt monopoly was always a profitable or smugglers. Similarly, there have always been profiteer people—including state officials—willing to ignore smuggling, black markets, or migration. As a result, Hong Kong's security or ideological priorities, emigration and trade on which it depended were never fully stopped.

The Social Structure of Migration

In the 1910s, a Japanese social scientist visited a north China farmer about the Chinese system of equal division in the family.²⁵

If, for example, the youngest brother went to Manchuria to find work and earned 200 yuan, with which land was bought, whose land would

the eldest brother splits off [and forms his own family unit], can he stand with him, saying it is his?

There are three brothers, of whom the eldest is a hard worker and the youngest either a do-nothing or a minor. Suppose also that, before the old split, the father, with the money earned by the eldest, died. Would he, as a special favor, give the land alone to the second? I have heard of such a case.

I was describing the basis of “the spatially extended family” at least the past five centuries and probably longer, and have lived in both a continuum of space and a continuum of time. The space continuum meant that, as in the family just described, “living together” did not necessarily mean living in the same physical locality. Living “in” the sense of one’s obligations and expectations) was not necessarily because one was living 100, 1,000, or even 10,000 miles away, and living “separately” might mean living in the same town but cooking on a separate stove.

The time continuum meant that every male inheritor was linked to his patriline over the long term by ritual and by work. The ritual of paying homage to ancestral spirit tablets ("ancestor worship") signified both the upward link to one's forebears and the downward link to one's heirs (through their eventual homage to his and his wife's own spirit tablets). Work forged the economic link between generations, each generation providing sustenance and preserving the means of livelihood (land, dwelling, and commercial establishment) for its own members and their progeny.

Migration has been enabled by these two traits of Chinese family structure, which provided material and psychological support for sojourning away from home and encouraged the long-term bottom line that justifies the self-sacrifice that most migrants endure. It is also possible not only that migration has been furthered by these traits but also that migration in turn has shaped the development of family structure to serve this common survival strategy.

As a survival strategy, migration was characteristic adaptive behavior in China's early modern era and remains so today. A land-short and still growing population has depended on it. Hardy and nutritious New World crops enabled every cranny of marginal land to be utilized. Cash crops brought higher returns to farmers in some regions. New ways of using family labor helped too: the proliferation of local markets made possible the intensive use of every pair of hands (women's and children's in particular) for non-agricultural work such as cotton spinning and weaving.

With respect to migration, labor was an additional salable resource for a family with too many males and too little land. Millions left home to work for wages, whether in the next town, the next province, or more distant places. The unskilled looked for work as farmhands, as goods haulers, or as laborers on public works. Skilled workers (such as miners) were at an advantage, and many trekked into the hills to open and operate mines. Yet not all who sought work found it. Roving peddlars and beggars became a common sight on China's roads. By the 1740s, great crowds of unemployed men ("excess mouths") were gathering near public works sites where "they could be gathered by a single shout."²⁶ Cities were thronged by wanderers who had dropped out of the job market:

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form dense crowds; by night, they know not where to themselves,” wrote an observer in Beijing.²⁷ Migrants were poor, nor was leaving home always a land shortage. Substantial merchants moved around in search of opportunities for investment and profit. Inely poor areas with few local opportunities specialized of entrepreneurial men. For example, a mountain-
e in the province of Anhuei was famous for weaving de network of “Huizhou merchants”—a specialized up with colonies in many cities. Shansi province nkers specializing in long-distance transfer of funds. efecture exported clerks to government offices. Mer- rning in distant places and sending funds home were part of the migrant scene. Besides the export of male ration of whole families was common by the 1700s. By temporary writers recognized that China was experiencing of migration: caused not by natural disasters, war, nt oppression but by pressure of population on land.²⁸ seen, Sichuan attracted migrants from all over south China. Manchuria in the northeast attracted migrants ang and Hebei. From Fujian and Guangdong, migrants he islands of Taiwan and Hainan and into the river iangxi. Hundreds of thousands moved out of crowded alleys into the hills, where as “shed people” (squatted) by raising yams and maize and by selling forest se reasons—the search for new opportunities, commer- es, or simply to make up for land shortage—internal y the turn of the eighteenth century, had become an part of Chinese life. Millions were on the move. Be- and 1776, the population of Sichuan rose from 2.3 to of whom some 3.4 million were immigrants. By 1776, a polyglot society of migrants from seven provinces. end, the province had tipped from an abundance of ritage.²⁹ The southwestern province of Yunnan had re- e early nineteenth century at least 1.3 million peasant d some 1 million miners.³⁰

Settlement of the frontiers by Chinese migrants was hastened by imperial conquests in inner Asia. Inner Mongolia and the vast northwest region of Xinjiang came under the dynasty's military control, and the old Manchu homeland in the northeast drew hungry peasants despite sporadically enforced bans by the government. By 1776, around 900,000 had settled in the two Manchurian prefectures of Fengtian and Jinzhou. By 1908, Fengtian (now established as a province) had received 5 million.³¹ The island of Taiwan, another sparsely populated frontier, had only about 100,000 inhabitants by the mid-seventeenth century. By 1811, a census revealed 1.9 million.³² Nor were frontiers the only venues. Hilly uplands of inland regions also attracted migrants from the overpopulated river valleys and deltas. By the late eighteenth century, many counties in central and southern regions reported proportions of immigrants among the population in the 10 to 20 percent range, which was probably an undercount.³³ Internal migration generated conflict between newcomers and older settled groups; hostilities grew not only from economic competition but also from cultural and linguistic differences. One migrant dialect group in particular, the Hakka ("guest people"), were periodically in conflict with surrounding communities.

In this vast migratory process, people of the southern littoral provinces were destined to play a special role. Separated from the interior by mountain ranges, these coastal dwellers' survival strategy looked not inland but outward toward the sea. The seafaring populations of the south and southeast coast added a special dimension to the geography of migration: their regional trading systems had far-reaching spatial extensions overseas. Their hinterlands included trading ports either elsewhere on the China coast or in Southeast Asia. Instead of being a boundary, the seacoast was a connection.

Ecologies of Dialect Groups and Their Homelands

The coastal provinces of the south and southeast were (and still are) China's epicenters of emigration. The region embraced parts of three provinces making up two physiographic zones: the Southeast Coast and Lingnan macroregions.³⁴ The physiographic macroregions of China (as revealed by G. William Skinner) are

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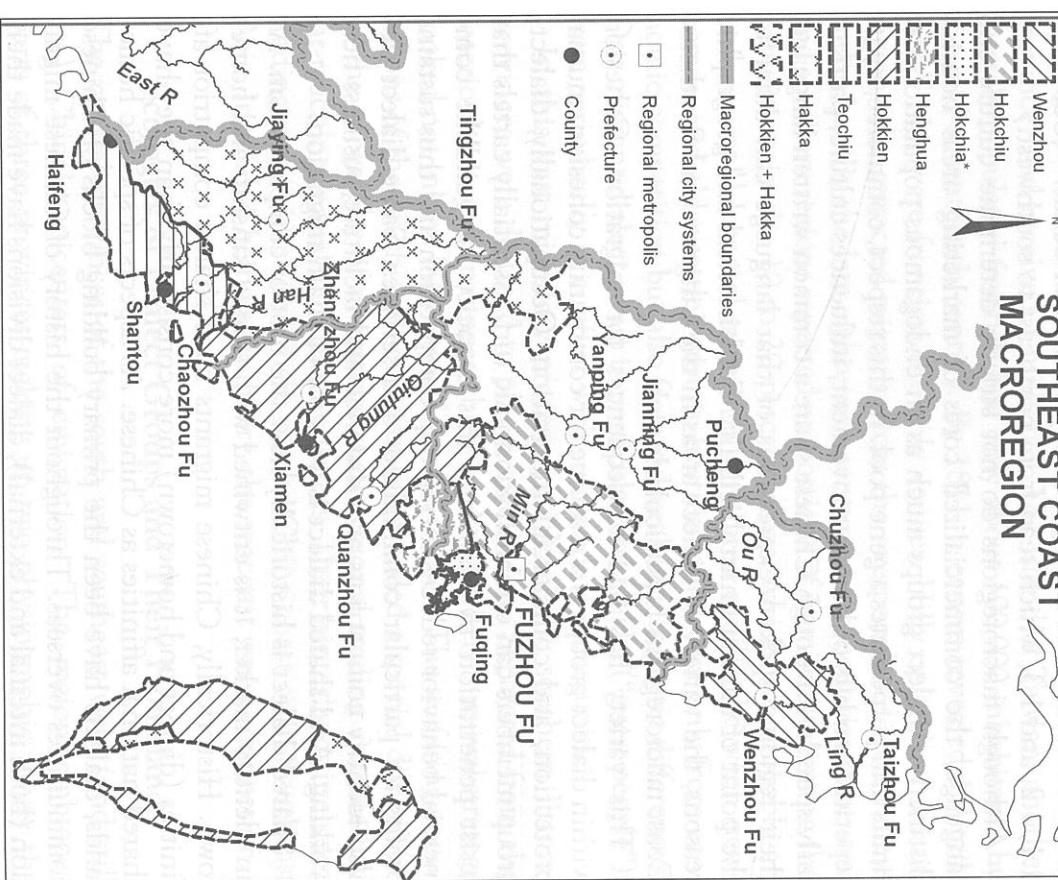
with administrative boundaries but instead are defined by rivers that carried goods between regional cores. The economics of macroregions dictated transport via least costly routes—usually by water—descending basins and converging in commercialized “core” areas surrounding fluvial junctions or deltas.³⁵ (See Maps 3, which read from northeast to southwest.)

macroregions do not strictly determine culture and commercialized cores of marketing areas nourish dialect groups much as an endogamous population perpetuates a gene pool. In this respect, commerce, by its habits of human movement, influences culture, particularly Chinese share a common written language, spoken expressions of that language can differ to mutual unintelligibility. For historical and geographic variety of dialect areas in the Lingnan and Southeast regions is particularly rich.

Dialect has had consequences for migration. Cohesion groups is a resource for community cohesion, mutual and commercial integration. Occupationally, dialects can establish economic turf, essentially cartels that define by outsiders; this capacity for guildlike competition reduces intragroup competition and thus sustains particular commodities and services. Same-dialect ties compatriots at a distance and facilitate business networks shared dialect is a vector of chain migration.

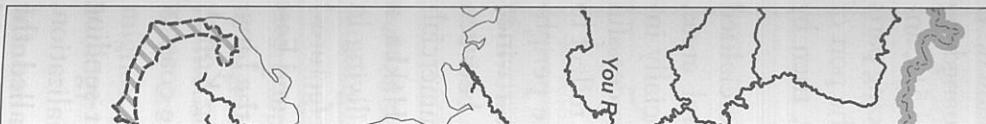
Dialect is historically near the root of compatriotism. As a marker, it is entwined with shared kinship and homeplace, Chinese migrants have shared compatriot affiliation and hometown) more consistently than they have had affinities as Chinese. As aspects of specific homelands have been the primary building blocks of Chinese overseas. Throughout the history of Chinese migration (internal and external), dialect divisions have made their structure, status consciousness, cultural expression, specialization, and civic engagement. Since the turn

of the twentieth century, dialect divisions have been covered by layers of pan-Chinese nationalism and worldwide commercial integration. Covered, but not smothered: dialect divisions have not only survived but still play a part in bonding large-scale Chinese associations overseas (as we shall see in chapter 8). As the essence



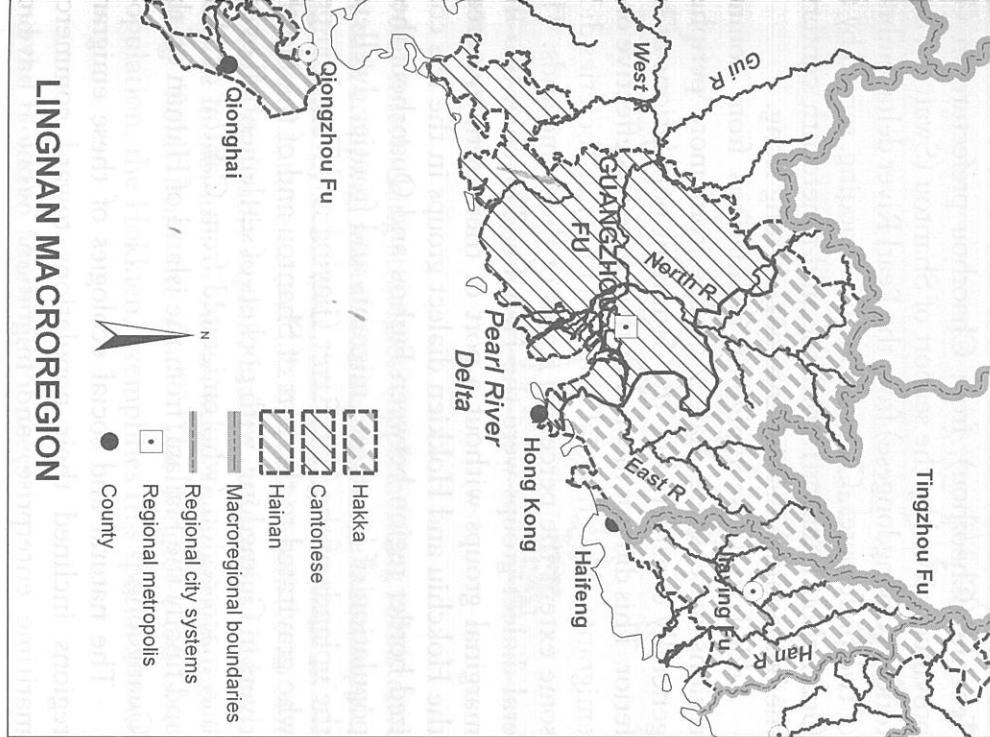
Map 1.1. Southeast coast macroregion dialect groups. Produced after Skinner (1985) and Li Rong et al. (1988).

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identity, dialect has wrought both community cohesion and community rivalry, even in recent times. For all these Chinese emigrant populations have conventionally been identified by their component dialects, which correlate roughly with these two macroregions, the preeminent geographic emigrants were five commercialized core prefectures,



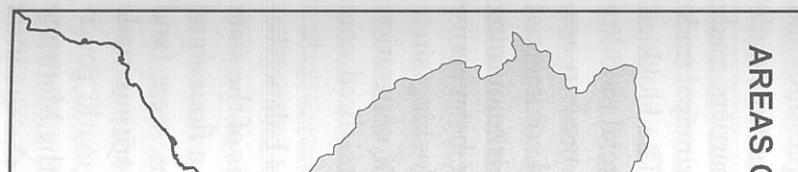
Lingnan macrolregion dialect groups. Produced after Skinner (1985) and Li 988.

each having a river mouth or a seaport. Reading from northeast to southwest (maps, pp. 30–31), the dominant emigrant dialect populations were 1) Wenzhou: from the area around Wenzhou prefecture in Zhejiang province, near the mouth of the Ou River; 2) Hokchiu: from the seaward reaches of the Min River basin around Fuzhou prefecture, served by the port of Fuzhou; 3) Hokkien: from the littoral prefectures of Quanzhou and Zhangzhou lying south of the Min River (Min-nan), served by a succession of seaports since the ninth century and since the mid-seventeenth by Xiamen; 4) Teochiu (Chaozhou), from Chaozhou prefecture in Guangdong province, served by the seaport of Shantou (Swatow); and 5) Cantonese (Guangdongese) from the Pearl River delta, embracing parts of two prefectures, Guangzhou and Zhaoqing, served by the port of Guangzhou (Canton) until the mid-nineteenth century, then by the burgeoning colonial entrepôt of Hong Kong.

Added to these emigrant populations from commercialized regions were three dialect groups from more peripheral areas, generally considered by the dominant populations as socially inferior. This did not mean that they were less effective or successful emigrants, though social structure in venue societies did reflect to some extent the perceived status of the homelands. The peripheral dialect groups were the Henghua/Hokchia, two intertwined marginal groups without a port of their own, squeezed between the Hokchiu and Hokkien dialect groups in the less commercialized border region between Fuzhou and Quanzhou; the Hakka, a population of inveterate migrants and frontier dwellers living in the uplands of the Han River (Jiaying and Tingzhou prefectures) who gravitated to the port of Shantou and of the North and East rivers in Guangdong, with pockets of settlement all over the Lingnan macroregion (who emigrated from Canton or Hong Kong); and finally the Hailam, from the island of Hainan off the coast of Guangdong.³⁶

The natural and social ecologies of these emigrant-sending regions inclined their populations toward commercialization, maritime enterprise, and migration. What I have called the “Maritime Interest” grew from their sparse soil and resourceful people. Adapting to population growth and land shortage thus in-

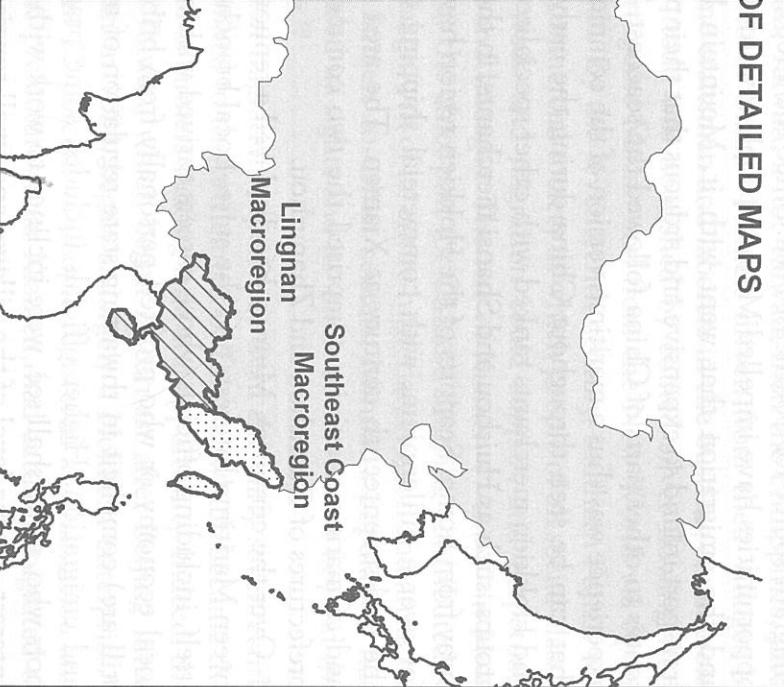
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Map 1.3. Areas of

volved several farming by canning agriculture to transport to sea as migrants pointed out, were creating migrant population ecology.

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all interlocking strategies: supplementing subsistence cropping, manufacturing, and wage labor; spread commerce and labor over as extensive an area as profitably exploit. Indeed, as Jennifer Cushman notes, the inhabitants of this crowded, mountainous region “fields from the sea.”³⁷ The longest-established litoral, the Hokkien, exemplifies this special littoral

the Hokkien Maritime Pioneers

coastal Fujian province known colloquially as Min-fu (the Min River) has been historically most prolific

emigrant source for Southeast Asia. Since the 1500s, pressures and opportunities have impelled Minnan people toward maritime trade and the emigration that went with it. Mountain barriers made transport inland so expensive and arduous that their principal trade routes to other parts of China followed the seacoast. The Hokkien experience was thus a maritime version of the commercial mobility that can be seen throughout China during the early modern age, and Hokkien merchants ranked with other specialized commercial groups, such as Huizhou and Shansi merchants, in their sojourning away from home. Seaports of the Hokkien region have been active for over a millennium, with commercial shipping docking since the mid-seventeenth century at Xiamen. The area of emigration and of maritime activity comprised the two commercialized core prefectures of Quanzhou and Zhangzhou.

Over the centuries, Minnan has displayed a tenuous balance between Maritime Interests and the state. Local branches of the state itself, including officials whose careers thrived within a flourishing local economy or who profited personally from bribes, were (and still are) complicit in thwarting state regulation of maritime trade and emigration. Higher officials included some pragmatic governors who, as we shall see, were inclined to work with the Maritime Interest. At the level of the villages and small towns, the situation was even less clear-cut. Although the imperial state might ban maritime trade and emigration, it could not stop them. The state shared power with local stakeholders: lineages, literati elites, and merchants, all of whom were able to evade its reach or resist its orders, probably with the complicity of lower-level officials.

Hokkien adapted to their ecology in various ways. Large, rich lineages in Minnan had vested interests in maritime trade; returns from commerce far outpaced those from agriculture. Small, poor lineages, oppressed by powerful rivals, were rack-rented or even driven off the land to seek livelihoods in towns far from home. Lineages as power holders thus contributed to emigration both by generating capital for commercial investment by the rich and by displacing crowds of the rural poor. Displacement into crafts, petty commerce, and manual labor in nearby towns was often the first stage in a migration path that ultimately reached across the sea:

nearest at hand. Malaya, Borneo, towns whose poverty became Japan via Portuguese held Manchuria. A vigorously commercializing families learned how their dialect) the thousands of already expatriate village setting.

The Hokkien century was largest received settlement of the coastal bar. By 1700, about Quanzhou, their counterpart B. Taiwan.⁴¹ At merchant ships to embers. The Chinese trade and the South China region to the (successfully).

Although I society, one competing enterprises. In early colonizers of the cretters in the Straits component off

and, Taiwan; if not Taiwan, then the Philippines, Java, Siam or Siam.³⁸ Farmers driven from their villages by famine or conflict, and craftsmen and laborers in the bustling commercial trade was nourished by coined silver flowing from Portuguese Macao and from the New World via Spain and Portugal. By the seventeenth century, southern Fujian was a commercial society in which people of all social classes and trades and migration could support and perpetuate and lineages. The rise of Xiamen ("Amoy" in Hokkien) as the chief port for Chinese shipping contributed to the rapid growth of its entire hinterland region and attracted farmers to urban centers. Minnan's population had indeed its sights and its ambit of movement beyond the coast.³⁹

Even migration experience from the early seventeenth century was linked to the settlement of Taiwan, which became the center of farmers seeking land and opportunity. Indeed, the movement to Taiwan, which began in earnest after Beijing lifted the ban in 1684, began as largely a Hokkien enterprise.⁴⁰ At 20 percent of people registered at Zhangzhou and the prefectures near Xiamen, had actually migrated to the same time, smaller numbers were sailing on merchant ships to Manila (a fortified Spanish port) and to the Dutch port of Batavia in Java. By the mid-eighteenth century, groups of merchants had migrated to Guangzhou to run the franchises (*hang*) that were licensed to trade with Western powers. The diffusion of Hokkien dialect to Taiwan and throughout the South China Sea has made it a *lingua franca* throughout the point where one can use Hokkien dialect to hail a taxi in Taipei, Singapore, or Bangkok.⁴²

Hokkien in Southeast Asia occupied every level of outgrowth of their experience in long-distance shipping. Their success was their grip on large-scale trading and banking. In colonial societies, Hokkien became the Chinese progenitors of the creolized Peranakan population in Java and of the Baba Nyonya Settlements, and their dialect formed the Chinese creolized patois spoken by those groups. Just as in

domestic migration, "sojourning" was the preferred mode for merchants (who could reasonably expect to return home) and perhaps for many poor laborers or craftsmen (who, however, might never acquire the resources to return).

Something about Hokkien migration should remind us that people of those days in that culture had a very different conception of what was meant by "abroad." In port cities all along the China coast, from Guangzhou to Tientsin, lived sizable populations of sojourning Hokkien, managing shipping and entrepôt business in networks of dialect-based collaboration. A family might send members to several venues, within and outside China, to manage trade for considerable periods of time. It was a different world from ours, yet in some ways prophetically transnational. One went where business looked promising, boundaries notwithstanding.⁴³

Cantonese and the Ecology of the Pearl River Delta

Underlying the delta's position as a springboard for emigration was a distinctive local economy in which rural and urbanized counties interacted in a system of cash cropping, manufacturing, and labor export. Thriving markets and manufacturing towns were within reach of an agricultural hinterland that was already highly commercialized. Farmers were accustomed not only to local wage labor but also to seasonal labor some distance from home.

Areas closest to Guangzhou, the provincial capital (known as the "three counties"—Panyu, Nanhai, and Shunde), were centers of manufacturing and trade. Foshan's iron and porcelain industries drew thousands of workers from surrounding rural areas. Seasonal labor came to the industrial towns from the more agricultural "four counties" of Taishan, Enping, Kaiping, and Xinhui, which relied on labor-intensive cash crops (including silk, sugar, and tobacco). Workers in these areas were so accustomed to wage labor that moving some distance to find it was not much of a stretch. In the intervals between cropping seasons, thousands of peasants migrated long distances for short-term work in the manufactories of Shunde and Foshan.⁴⁴ The peculiar landforms of delta agriculture also provided opportunities for specialized wage labor: much of the land consisted of polders (silt fields reclaimed from the sea by diking and

draining). Finite multitudes of families in the economic straits

Farm life in overpopulation for market continued to sugar industry farms rather than their bond to families diver as seasonal labor longer-term rural life in the was the known he sent home even he remained a Cantonese to seek livelihood Asia had begun settled in Chaozhou. Yet before the Xiamen and Nanyang became served by foremen hence, they were emigrant-carriers as a port for port licensed gained increased Sea. Contact artifacts, by machinery, and Hong Kong pioneer far-flu

anced by wealthy gentry, these enterprises absorbed laborers. Because of their habituation to labor export, Pearl River delta developed flexible and diversified strategies.⁴⁵ In the delta illustrates how families could adapt to by combining subsistence farming with production. Instead of relying exclusively on cash crops, they king their family plots for their own food needs. The for example, was based on a myriad of small family han on a plantation system. Smallholders sustained the land and to family-based farming even while fied their incomes by hiring out male labor.⁴⁶ Just or export was based on individual farm households, migration also needed the farm family as an anchor to e delta country. Central to the sojourner's way of life edge that his family relied on him and that whatever would remain part of the household estate in which stakeholder.

were well equipped by their tradition of labor export goods abroad. Substantial emigration to Southeast in as Cantonese refugees from the Manchu conquest ampa and Annam (today's Vietnam) and Cambodia. e mid-eighteenth century, Canton lagged behind other Fujianese ports as an emigrant sender to the use Cantonese trading interests were already well gn ships (including the vessels of tribute emissaries); ere not impelled to develop their own shipping (and ying) industry.⁴⁷ Although it could not rival Xiamen urely Chinese shipping, by 1757 Canton was the sole to receive Westerners' shipping. Thereby Cantonese sed access to the trade routes of the South China with foreigners also brought familiarity with foreign hich some Cantonese learned to operate and repair eminently salable skill. Later, the British seizure of rovided easy access to what was soon to become the t shipping entrepôt. Cantonese thereby were able to ng emigration venues in North America, Australasia,

and other areas less frequented by Hokkien; and by the second half of the nineteenth century were flocking to the tin mines of the Malayan jungle.

The Teochiu: Shipping, Trade, and Settlement

Ancestors of the population of Chaozhou prefecture (of which “Teochiu” approximates the dialect pronunciation) came from southern Fujian, so although they inhabit the adjacent province of Guangdong, their dialect is close to Hokkien. The people of Chaozhou have been farmers skilled in cash cropping (sugar and indigo) which inclined Teochiu emigrants toward plantation agriculture in venues throughout Southeast Asia.⁴⁸ Shipping and trade were also important to Teochiu, who excelled in shipbuilding and navigation. Trade with Siam (today’s Thailand) was particularly vital to the economy of south China because of the indispensable imports of rice from that country, encouraged by Chinese imperial decrees. Since the seventeenth century, these imports were carried by Teochiu ships. The rice trade supported a growing community of Teochiu merchant sojourners who served the Siamese monarchy by operating the royal shipping business. Teochiu status and numbers in Siam increased during the reign of King Taksin (r. 1767–1782), son of a wealthy Teochiu immigrant by his Thai wife and adopted by a Thai nobleman. Commanding both Chinese and Thai languages, Taksin was in a position to favor Teochiu compatriots and use their commercial and administrative talents to benefit his court. Taksin’s eventual fall did not compromise the power and wealth of Teochiu in Bangkok, the capital of his successor monarchs, who continued to patronize them and to welcome their immigration.⁴⁹

Numerically, nineteenth- and twentieth-century Teochiu emigrants were mostly poor farmers, craftsmen, and wage laborers displaced by poverty, warfare, and natural disasters. Their emigration venues were situated throughout Southeast Asia, with Siam/Thailand still the preferred destination (to this day, the Chinese population of Thailand is predominantly Teochiu). With the opening of Shantou (Swatow) as a treaty port in 1860, the export of laborers rapidly increased, an estimated two-thirds of whom were voluntary emigrants and the rest indentured (contract) coolies.⁵⁰ Overseas,

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ned an initial foothold in plantation agriculture (pepper in Singapore and Malaya, and sugar in Siam) but moved out into varied occupations, including (in Thailand) highest spheres of big business and finance.⁵¹

II: Borderland Frontiersmen

migrants adapted to clearing and cultivating hilly upmacroregional borders, the Hakka (lit. “guest people”) frontier dialect group with a distinctive culture. Occupying frontiers, they labored at mining and forestry, stonecutting, metalworking and charcoal burning, along and-burn agriculture. Uniquely among ethnic Han, men kept their feet unbound, which made them effective alongside their husbands or on their own while the men elsewhere. Their historic homeland was the mountainous bordering three southeastern and southern macroregions, expanded their areas of settlement into the lowlands during of economic growth when work was plentiful. Faced Cantonese-speaking neighbors, they considered them often were) an embattled ethnic minority whose safety in community self-defense.⁵²

ants, these frontier-bred people were able to sustain in demanding environments, such as the jungles of neo, where Hakka (and some Teochiu) were invited by alay sultan around 1750 to mine gold and where milifense corps proved essential to survival.⁵³ Community also led Hakka communities into wider conflicts: back local militia confederation in the Guangxi hill country core of the massive Taiping Rebellion (1851–1864), formed local interethnic feuding into an antidynastic movement. The defeat of the Taipings and persistent warfare with Cantonese speakers forced tens of thousands dialect groups to flee abroad. Cantonese and Hakka found themselves competing for tin deposits in the triangle, where they went right on fighting each other. During eighteenth century, mining continued to be an important akka laborers, particularly in the Indies and Malaya. In

urban settings overseas, such as Singapore, Hakka quickly established profitable footholds in low- to lower-middle-class craft and service occupations as pawnbrokers (in Singapore, a virtual monopoly), cabinetmakers, house builders, woodcutters and sawyers, blacksmiths, and house servants.⁵⁴

The Hailam: Cheerful and Hardy Pioneers

The inhabitants ("Hailam" or "Hoinam") of Hainan island, now a separate province but historically governed as part of Guangdong, formed a peripheral dialect group traditionally regarded as social inferiors by their richer neighbors (Cantonese, Teochiu, and Hokkien). Undaunted, they made the most of their skills as shippers and agriculturalists to become pioneering emigrants. Sojourners throughout Southeast Asia, these hardy islanders made their particular mark in Siam by virtue of their existing skills as sailors, boatbuilders, fishers, and sawmillers and (as native denizens of the tropics) by their genetic resistance to malaria. Cheerful and adaptable as inland pioneers, they did not compete with higher-status dialect groups in capital-intensive mercantile trades.⁵⁵

Hokchiu: Twentieth-Century Migrants

The region around Fujian's provincial capital (Fuzhou) and its market hinterland, northern Fujian (Minbei, "north of the Min River"), was agriculturally rich and productive and therefore lacked a culture of maritime trade and migration. In fact, it sent relatively few migrants overseas until the twentieth century. Mass migration hardly began in Minbei until 1900, when tea-growers suffered from drought and foreign competition. Since 1901, however, the Hokchiu dialect area has been the source of two famous migrations: the first to the region of Sibu in present-day Sarawak, East Malaysia, on the northern coast of Borneo. There the reformer, pioneer, and Methodist minister Huang Naishang (see chapter 6) led 1,000 Fuzhounese farmers to settle and till the land under the patronage of the British raja, Sir Charles Brooke. To this day, Sibu is called "New Fuzhou," with some 60 percent of its population of Chinese ancestry.⁵⁶ Since the 1980s, there has been a second and much larger migration, hundreds of thousands,

largely to Negeri Sembilan near Fuzhou.

Henghua/Huayao

We pair themonomically and the Ho and the Xinghua priests (Fuzhou) and county) was villages that were considerably culturally hygienic, social inferior advantage. Some poor Henghua successfully Chinese anccard of nationalism hail from the Wenzhou: A Situated in part of the Wenzhou. It is mutually intelligible dialect of the Wenzhou before the mid-19th century, of extraordinary poverty and eth century, spreading it shall explore show how migration techniques bined to enterprise.

orth America, from the villages and market towns (see chapter 8).

Hokchia: Enterprising Latecomers

The neighboring dialect groups because they were economically and socially marginal to the Hokchiu on their north and to the Hokkien on their south. Henghua dialect (spoken in Fuzhou) was unintelligible to speakers of Hokchiu and Hokkien (Minnan); Hokchia (spoken in Fuqing) was a subdialect of Hokchiu, but Fuqing contained some who spoke Henghua and others that spoke Hokchia: a hybrid county.⁵⁷ Like the Hailam, these dialect groups prospered by their more commercialized neighbors as latecomers yet prospered overseas by turning low status to high. As latecomers to the Dutch East Indies, for example, Henghua and Hokchia were able to collaborate more easily with the indigenous people than were higher-status so (as we shall see in chapter 7) prospered in a period of revolution. Some of Indonesia's top business leaders are from this group.

Late-Blooming Emigrant Community

In coastal Zhejiang, the Wenzhou's spoken language is Wu speech group common in the lower Yangzi region. It is unintelligible with Mandarin and with any other in the Lingnan and Southeast Coast regions. Although the area was not a prominent source of emigrants before the twentieth century, its story thereafter has been one of extraordinary versatility and adaptive opportunism, shaped by a culture of regional self-reliance. In the late twentieth century, Wenzhou emerged as a powerful emigrant homeland, whose workforce both nationally and internationally. We examine Wenzhou's famous success story in chapter 8. It will discuss the manipulation of available resources, traditional migration patterns, and adroit evasion of central state control communities. China's most celebrated local model of private

Adaptive Practices in the Emigrant Homelands

Social practices embedded in the emigrant homelands were notably adaptable to the needs of sojourners abroad, particularly the flexible use of orthodox kinship symbols as cover for unorthodox practices: small groups of villages or weak lineages could band together under a common surname or even a multisurname alliance for defense against powerful lineage neighbors. The aura of patrilineal orthodoxy (communal ritual centers and genealogies extending back many centuries to a notional common ancestor) could cover aggregations of non-kin to achieve a common interest (e.g., all the Zhao-surnamed families in a county, whether actually related or not). Or a group of surnames could band together under an utterly fictitious surname.⁵⁸ In venues abroad, where intact homeland lineages were rare, willingness to form pseudo-kinship associations under a common surname was a potent adaptation for community solidarity and survival. A fictional kinship bond was vastly preferable to none—assuming that its members were from the same dialect group. When the Cantonese reformer Liang Qichao visited San Francisco's Chinatown in 1900, he counted twelve single-surname (orthodox) kinship associations and nine multisurname “kinship” associations, each with an auspicious title of the sort common in orthodox lineage associations (*tang*). He wrote that although he found the multisurname groups (orthodox kinship principles cast aside) “inconceivable,” he understood that they had been formed because small surnames were routinely oppressed by larger ones. He likened the practice to “federalism” (*lianbangzhi*). Another such practice, especially among Hokkien, directly accommodated commerce and sojourning abroad: adoption of sons into a lineage, a traditional way to sustain ancestral sacrifices in the absence of a male heir but adaptable to keeping a real heir at home while the less valued adoptees undertook the risky voyages abroad to manage family business.⁵⁹

What can we conclude more generally about the special ecologies of the Southeast Coast and Lingnan regions as homelands for migration? One factor was human displacement by degrees: leaving a village to work, either seasonally or permanently, in a city.⁶⁰ This often amounted to the first stage in a transition from agriculture to

petty commodity trading (and little) regional orientation of affinity networks connecting seaboard refugee communities. A third factor to be discussed is the heavy bonding led by sending migrant's families to new venues together in and moral support.

The association was not permanent. This sense of ability of families to the likelihood

merce or artisanry, social roles that migrants could turn to in many venues. From shop assistant to shopkeeper, to interregional trader, was a path to success for hardworking (lucky) migrants. A second factor was intense cohesion of groups, bonded by dialect and kinship, which served as security, mutual aid, and business cooperation far from h affinity groups were to be found across China. Never-
guistic fragmentation along with close bonding between d kinship (one-surname villages) lent an especially particularism to the societies of the south and southeast gions. Reliance on linguistic, kinship, and locational d to identities defined by narrow, defensible boundaries. tor was a general familiarity with money and commerce, ssed shortly.

Niches, Corridors, and Livelihoods

In the early modern era, the increased pace of internal mi-
grants to find efficient ways to survive and even
from home. The search for mere survival, to say nothing
of prosperity, led to practices that enhanced a migrant popu-
larity strength. These practices grew naturally out
native-place bonds, or compatriotism. Compatriotism
first, maintaining links to the native place itself so that
moral obligations to kinsmen back home could be met
them money as well as helping others follow in the
footsteps (presuming that the occupational niche in the
e was promising). Compatriotism also meant banding
in the venue society for security, business cooperation,
support.

The assumption behind compatriot links was that migrants were
nently settled away from home. Instead, they were con-
temporarily absent, “sojourning” in another place of work.
of impermanence was often unrealistic, given the profit-
ng-term sojourning, the personal ties (including second
mat grew up in migrant communities far from home, and
ood that a migrant might die without realizing his dream