

COMPLETION REPORT

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The Construction and Disintegration of Cross-Straits Dual Families between Taiwan and Fujian during the Qing-Japan Regime Transition

This research takes Xu Zangchun, who came to work in a Tainan trade firm (brokerage) in the 1870s and returned to his hometown in Fujian in 1917, as an example. It uses travel documents and household registration to explain why he came to Taiwan, how he established a cross-straits dual family, and changes in the relationship with his hometown during Japanese rule in order to highlight the choices and dilemmas of Taiwan's first generation of dual nationals.

From 1878, Xu Zangchun gradually established a cross-strait dual family spanning Jinjiang and Tainan centered on himself. After Taiwan was ceded to Japan in 1895, he became a transnationalist, swinging between Taiwanese (Japanese) and Chinese identities, and possessing Japanese and Qing dual nationality. Well versed in cross-border business arrangements, he diversified his investments to disperse risk during the chaotic years of the late Qing.

His children were raised for the most part in his hometown, and brides also came from there. Moreover, Xu Zangchun initiated the establishment of the Qing People Association, and his house served as a sojourning station for Fujianese in Tainan; the unusual size of his household demonstrates his ongoing connections to Fujian. Finally, he was supportive of the construction and activities of traditional temples. All of these factors clearly show his strong sense of nativism and national identity.

He frequently crossed the strait until 1917. At that point, due to his advancing age and the increasing Japanization of Taiwan, he and his family moved back to China. For Xu Zangchun, the abandonment of old customs and an emphasis on social reforms made the environment of Taiwan incompatible with his nativism and his vigorous maintenance of traditional religious culture. Only the second son Gongmo and his family stayed on in Taiwan.

This transition from transnationalism to nativism highlights another aspect of recent business immigrants in Taiwan during regime change. Japanese colonial rule impacted them far more profoundly than it did localized merchants like Wang Xuenong. They did not necessarily return to China as Taiwanese citizens, but instead adopted transnationalism and dual nationality business strategies to promote the continued prosperity of the family. The Xu Zangchun family even moved into the Philippines and Japan. This was a common pattern among Fujianese emigrating overseas during this period. However, in order to maintain ties, in addition to frequent gatherings of family members, Xu Zangchun also distributed his portrait and the family precepts to the far-flung family homes, as well as instituting the worship of the family guardian spirit in a Jinhua Mansion at each one.

The frequency of travel within these cross-strait dual families has long been obscure. But the records kept by the colonial government make it obvious that before the 1910s, the Xu family members crossed the strait very frequently. The death of the family head, followed by the deterioration of Sino-Japanese relations in the 1920s, gradually decreased such travel. In wartime, contact was further cut off, and the fourth generation in Taiwan no longer even knew about the family in Quanzhou. Not until the 1960s were the relationships among the Xu families

reconstructed through the efforts of the Philippines branch.

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Verbal Presentation (Date, Venue, Name of Conference, Title of Presentation, Presenter, etc.)

Lin Yuju, April 8, 2022, "The Construction and Disintegration of Cross-Straits Dual Families from the Late Qing Dynasty to the Early Days of Japanese Rule: The Case of Xu Zangchun, a Guild Merchant in Tainan." in the 19th Annual Conference of European Association of Taiwan Studies, Cyprus, 35pages. Online presented in English.

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