The Chinese Kongsis in West Borneo: the Rise of the Chinese in Global Trade in the Early and Mid-19th Century

Master’s Thesis

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by
Fangchao Ji

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In special acknowledgement and memory of my grandfather, Mr. Dadong Fang. He is the most rigorous and respected man I have ever seen in my life. His profound knowledge, love and support are the glowing beacons on my way to truth.

特别感谢和追悼我的外祖父方大栋先生。他是我生命中所见过的最严谨、最认真和最受人尊敬的人。他无穷无尽的知识，爱与支持是照亮我追求真理路上的永恒明灯。
ABSTRACT


A thesis presented to the Graduate Program in Global Studies

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From 1770 A.D to 1885 A.D, Kongsi, a unique overseas Chinese community was established on the Southeast Asian island of West Borneo. This expatriate Chinese community started off by functioning as industrial gold mine but ended up dominating West Borneo both economically and politically in the late 18th century and the first half of the 19th century. In 1854 A.D, a Dutch colonial troop was sent from Netherlands East Indies in Java to West Borneo. They waged a war to decimate the Chinese Kongsis in Montrado of West Borneo. Why did the Dutch decide to annihilate the Chinese in Montrado? What was the true story hidden behind the war? To answer the questions, this thesis focuses on restoring the history of the Chinese Kongsis in the early and middle 19th century in an international context. Through studying primary sources, this thesis argues
that the vicissitude of the Kongsis was a significant epitome of the rise of the Chinese power in global trade in the early and middle 19th century. In this case, the Chinese and the Kongsis in West Borneo deeply influenced the economic benefits, military decision-makings and the prosperity of the European colonies in Southeast Asia. The Dutch suppression of the Kongsis not only caused the economic and population decline of West Borneo, but more important, prompted the Chinese to develop close trade relations with the British. The Chinese exploited the Kongsis and town ports in West Borneo as both important trade harbors and importing markets. Their participation in the global trade not only transformed the nature of the Kongsi from a regional organization into a trans-regional one, but also severely challenged the political order that the Dutch had been elaborating in Southeast Asia since the early 17th century.
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Introduction

Adam Smith was wrong.

If people search for the keyword “Chinese” through the entire *The Wealth of Nations*, they would not recognize how pessimistic or unlikeable that Adam Smith was about China’s historical role in the global trade system. “It is remarkable that neither the ancient Egyptians, nor the Indians, nor the Chinese, encouraged foreign commerce, but seem all to have derived their great opulence from this inland navigation… and the Chinese have never excelled in foreign commerce… The Chinese have little respect for foreign trade… the Chinese carry on, themselves, and in their own bottoms, little or no foreign trade. Your beggarly commerce!” (Smith, *pp. 20, 348, 644*). Smith’s charge against Chinese can be summarized by three major perspectives: the Chinese had an isolationist and autarkic economy; they inhabited an extraordinary possession of the immovable land; and they had an unreasonable attitude of contempt against foreign trade. All these elements seem to stand at the opposite side of free trade, which was the dominant factor of the rise of Europe according to Smith. Smith’s accusation was raw, strong and confident. However, there is only one problem: it was not true.

“Despite the Simplism and shallowness of Smith’s view, it became the basis of later historiography of Chinese foreign trade. No matter how much later scholars might refine, modify, and extend his view, their studies never went beyond his basic framework” (Zhao, *page 8*). The only effective and the most influential consequence of Adam Smith’s argument of Chinese foreign trade history was producing a firm stereotype that misguided scholars’
understandings of the economy and politics of pre-modern China since the 15th century. Fortunately, there have been a few East Asia scholars who recognized the historical fact about pre-modern Chinese maritime history. Gang Zhao is obviously one of them. In his book, *The Qing Opening to the Ocean: Chinese Maritime Policies, 1684-1757*, Zhao argues that Chinese economy during the Qing period was much more dynamic and open than Smith thought. Other scholars such as Tonio Adrade at Emory University, also began to realize the strong interactions that China had with the rest part of the world since the Ming dynasty. Adam Smith’s less rigorous understanding of China’s opening to the world brings up the most fundamental motivation of writing this thesis paper. This paper denies stereotypical opinions about China’s opening status in the 18th and 19th century from a new perspective: the perspective of the overseas Chinese community in Southeast Asia. Such perspective also reveals one significant defect among Smith’s argument of Chinese. His total negation of pre-modern China’s opening to the world ignored the fact that massive overseas Chinese migrations had begun to happen early since the 15th century and the floating population kept increasing until the 20th century. The growth successfully cultivated large-scale overseas Chinese communities from the west coast of the United States of America to the entire Southeast Asia. Table I presents the distribution of Han-Chinese population in Southeast Asian countries in 1951. “By 1951 the number of Han-Chinese in various parts of Southeast Asia numbered over 8,500,000. Although at present this represents only 5-6 per cent of the total population of some 157 million in all Southeast Asia, the significance of the Chinese is out of proportion to their numbers in many ways” (Wiens, *page* 344). These overseas Chinese communities had irreplaceable influences on pushing forward the so-called globalization 2.0
from the beginning of the 19\textsuperscript{th} century to the end of the 20\textsuperscript{th} century that was proposed by Thomas L. Friedman in his renowned book, \textit{The World is Flat}. This fact provides this thesis with the basis of research method and target (Friedman, \textit{page 9}).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Country</th>
<th>Han-Chinese</th>
<th>Total Population</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Burma</td>
<td>300,000</td>
<td>17,000,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Thailand</td>
<td>2,500,000</td>
<td>17,359,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Indo-China</td>
<td>850,000</td>
<td>24,000,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Malaya</td>
<td>2,615,000</td>
<td>5,849,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Indonesia</td>
<td>1,900,000</td>
<td>69,000,000</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(Table I. Han-Chinese population in Southeast Asian countries in 1951 A.D. Herold J. Wiens. \textit{Han Chinese Expansion in South China, page 344})

At the mid-18\textsuperscript{th} Century, perhaps around 1750s, Chinese began to set their feet on West Borneo by responding to recruitment efforts of indigenous Malay Sultans who needed labors to dig out the rich gold mines on the island for them. These Chinese labors left their hometown located in the Southeastern coastal area of China, traveled through the South China Sea and finally ended up being gold diggers who worked for Malay rulers on West Borneo. No one had foreseen that after only two decades of migrations, these displaced Chinese would unify together so effectively that they eventually created a completely new form of political power that was strong enough to contend against native rulers on the island. These new overseas Chinese organizations, with the name of “\textit{Kongsis}”, later became one of the most dominant regimes in West Borneo. Their influences and relics can still be traced today across the region even though the last Kongsi has been annihilated by the Dutch colonial government in Java in 1884. The concrete explanation of the meaning of the term “Kongsi” will be carried through in the following Chapter II. So far, what really addressed
historians’ attentions was the so-called “the strong republic democratic spirit” (De Groot, page 47) of the community. Certain amounts of the primary sources have proved that these overseas Chinese Kongsis contained highly sophisticated “democratic characteristics”, including the complete general election system, financial shareholding mechanism and rigorous self-autonomy structures. Originating from a Confucianism-dominating civilization and a powerful feudal empire (the Qing Empire) in mainland China, it is intriguing to observe an alive “democratic” Chinese community rising in the 18th and 19th century. There have been some well-established studies regarding this topic. For instance, J.J. De Groot has accomplished the work of Het Kongsiwezen van Borneo, one fruitful book that inquires the nature of Chinese Kongsis on West Borneo. In this book, De Groot argues that the Chinese Kongsi was in effect one kind of Chinese village republic, which contained strong democratic significances and Capitalism spirits. On the other hand, scholars, such as Wang Tai Peng counter-argued Groot’s opinion in his thesis research paper, Origins of Kongsis. In the paper, Wang argues that the so-called “democratic significance” of these Kongsis was just another pattern of the traditional “brotherhood” culture in mainland China during the Ming and Qing dynasty, which is totally different from the true republican definition (Wang, pp.5, 6). In addition, historians such as Leonard Blussé or Yuan Bingling who majors in European colonial history, Southeast Asian and East Asian studies also conducted high-quality research regarding of this topic. However, all these previous debates and outcomes are sharing one crucial shortcoming. The so-called “democratic significance” of this overseas Chinese community has driven the most attentions from these scholars. Hence, most of their studies were aiming at studying and explaining the structure and the institution of the community.
Such identical focus causes the ignorance of other important perspectives of the Kongsi Studies, which provides this paper with the initial motivation of exploiting new research dimensions of Chinese Kongsis.

When the last Kongsi in West Borneo was annihilated in 1885, not only Southeast Asia, but also the entire human world was stepping into a highly global and chaotic era. Nation-states were claiming independence from European colonists with strong self-perceptions. After over a half century of complex struggling, the Nationalism ideology that maximized the importance of being pure “Indonesian” and “Han Chinese” swept over both China and Indonesia. One consequence of this ideological trend was the strong antiforeign sentiment and the political ignorance of studying overseas Chinese communities. Unfortunately, Indonesia used to perhaps one of the strongest Antagonism towards the overseas Chinese in Southeast Asia in the 20th century. The history of anti-Chinese sentiment in Indonesia was enduring since the early 18th century when the Red Creek Massacre was launched by the Dutch at Batavia in 1740 A.D. But the latest outbreak of such Antagonism was the May 1998 Riots (Kerusuhan Mei 1998) that caused the death of thousands of Indonesian Chinese. In China, the communist central government in mainland China was facing the national secession issue with the KMT government in Taiwan since 1949. Both governments were struggling for being recognized as the only legitimate Chinese nation-state on earth. Under this circumstance, studying the existence of other overseas Chinese political regimes was not encouraged by the central government of mainland China.

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1 For more studies of the anti-Chinese history in Indonesia, see J.A.C. Mackie’s *The Chinese in Indonesia*, Charles A. Coppel’s *Indonesian Chinese in Crisis*, Leo Suryadinata’s *Political Thinking of the Indonesian Chinese 1900-1977* and the relative works done by Jemma Purdey.
Due to the unpopularity of the topic and to give readers a fundamental understanding of this unique overseas Chinese organization, this paper first provides general introductions of existed primary sources and previous academic works and scholars in this field. Then, through studying primary sources, this paper argues the dominant role that overseas Chinese merchants played in the globalization process in the 19th century. Using Chinese Kongsi on West Borneo as a case, the paper argues that Chinese merchants were not only the intermediary organ of the global trade in the 19th century, but also the dominant group among the system that kept challenging and threatening the European colonial governance and establishing a more multipolar order for the entire trading system.

Unlike most of the previous scholars, rather than studying one single Kongsi, the paper focuses on studying the integral history of the entire Kongsi system between 1818 to 1854. The year of 1818 was the year when the Dutch colonial government in Java decided to reconsolidate their supreme authority in West Borneo through launching economic and political restrictions on Chinese Kongsis. The restrictions became the foundation of the upcoming military expeditions against Chinese in 1851 (Yuan, page 103). Starting from 1818, there was no more “democratic purity” (De Groot, page 81) or exclusive Chinese development on this area of the island. The West Borneo stepped into the age of the Sino-Dutch war (the Kongsi War) period that lasted for three decades. This paper restores this 35 years of history and focuses on studying the origin of the conflict between the West Borneo Chinese and Dutch colonists. Even though the Dutch suppression had already begun in 1820s, but it was the war that was launched in 1851 that finally exterminated almost all West Borneo Chinese Kongsis with an exception of the Lanfang Kongsi in Mandor (Yuan, page
From 1818 to 1851, it cost the Dutch colonial government more than 33 years to enter the final stage of the total annihilation of the Chinese Kongsis. What took Dutch so long? Why did they not wage the exterminated expedition in the first place? Were there any martial, economic or political considerations? Among these considerations, which perspective influenced their final decision-making the most? Through studying the primary sources, this thesis discovers that it was the rise of overseas Chinese power in global trade that constitutionally threatened the Dutch and prompted the latter to wipe out the Chinese Kongsis in West Borneo. Although the numerous Chinese gold miners and the highly organized Chinese Kongsis did damage Dutch colonial interests on West Borneo, the obstruction was finite and superficial. Netherlands East Indies had been keeping a tolerant attitude towards them for half a century until 1850. Essentially, it was the overseas Chinese merchant groups who kept using West Borneo as the trading springboard between India, Singapore, Sarawak and mainland China that substantially damaged Dutch interests. They exploited the Kongsis and town ports in West Borneo as both important trade harbors and markets for imports. Their participation in the global trade not only transformed the nature of the Kongsi from a regional organization into a trans-regional one, but also severely challenged the political order that the Dutch had been elaborating in Southeast Asia since the early 17th century. In general, this thesis argues that the vicissitude of Chinese Kongsis was a significant example of the rise of overseas Chinese power in the international trade system in the early and mid-19th century.
Section I. Methodology: Primary Sources, Secondary Sources and the Research Method

I. Primary Sources

As mentioned above, due to the multi-political status of West Borneo in the 18th and 19th century, the primary records of Chinese Kongsis were written in four different languages including Chinese, Dutch, English and Indigenous Indonesian. Among these four languages, the Dutch records were the most reliable sources of studying Chinese community on West Borneo. Large amounts of chronicles, traveling notes of colonial documents are collected by the local archive in Pontianak or libraries in Leiden University in the Netherlands. Due to conditional limitations, this paper only focuses on studying Chinese and English primary sources. To proceed a more fundamental and comprehensive research of the relative topic, scholars are expected to master in Dutch language first.

This paper mainly studies four types of primary sources. The first primary source is the Chinese travelogues (or Qing travelogues notes) in the 18th and 19th century. The author of these sources were Chinese travelers, merchants and smugglers who sailed through Southeast Asia and stepped on the land of West Borneo during the middle and late Qing period. One great example is *The Record of the Sea (Hailu)* that was written by Xie Qinggao in 1820. Xie Qinggao was a famous Hakka traveler who was born in Guangdong (Canton) Province in 1765 when Qing China was under the governance of Qianlong emperor. In the year of 1782, Xie met an accidental marine peril while he was sailing to Hainan province. Luckily, he was saved by an Portuguese merchant ship and brought to Portugal. The poor man lost his
eyesight through the disaster and spent the next 14 years on living on the ship. From 1782 to 1796, Xie traveled from Europe back to China through the sea. During this long journey, Xie visited various islands, tribes, European colonies and kingdoms along the way. After he went back to Macao, he dictated his traveling experiences to another Chinese scholar Yang Bingnan, who later helped him organize his interpretations into a complete literature work: *Hailu*. The book became one of the most reliable and resourceful Chinese primary sources of studying the late 18th century Southeast Asian history. Thanks to the correspondence of the time, as shown in Figure I, *Hailu* contains detailed and original records of Chinese Kongsis on West Borneo, including the general biography of some Kongsi leaders and Xie’s personal traveling experience to these Kongsis. Besides *Hailu*, other Chinese records like *Illustrated Treaties on the Maritime Kingdoms (Haiguo Tuzhi)* by Wei Yuan and *Huanying Zhilue* by Xu Zhiyu were all selected and used by the paper. All these works were finished in the first half of the 19th century when Kongsis still existed and prosperous on West Borneo. Besides the external record, the paper also selects certain amounts of sources that originated from the interior of these Kongsis.
The second type of the primary source is the internal Chinese administrative records of these Kongsis. The source includes *The Yearbook of Lanfang Kongsí* (*Lanfang Gongsi Lidai Niance*), the three oral Kongsí stories that were recorded by Leonard Blussé in his edition work, *Conflict and Accommodation in Early Modern East Asia*, and other Dutch primary sources that were translated into English by Yuan Bingling in her book, *Chinese Democracies: A Study of the Kongsís of West Borneo*. Taking the *Yearbook* as an example, thanks to J.J. De Groot, it was perhaps the only existed Chinese primary source that originated from the Kongsís themselves. The Lanfang Kongsí was known as the last Chinese Kongsí on West Borneo and was finally annihilated by Dutch colonists in 1884. Fortunately, “in 1878 De Groot was sent to the town of Ceribon in Java to act as a Chinese interpreter. Two years later he was transferred to Pontianak in West Borneo. Here he accompanied the Resident on many official visits to the Lanfang kongsí, the last still existing zongting in West Borneo. He
established good relations with Liu A’sheng, the kongsi’s Jiatai’ (Yuan, page 6). Thanks to J.J. De Groot (1854-1921), a Dutch sinologist at Leiden University, his close friendship with the last leader of Lanfang Kongsi and intentional protection of Kongsi documents saved The Yearbook of Lanfang Kongsi. The book was transcribed by Ye Xiangyun, the son-in-law of the last Lanfang leader, Liu A’sheng. The book was delivered to De Groot privately around 1884. It recorded the biographies of every Chinese leader of Lanfang starting from 1777 to 1884. These records included leaders’ origins back in mainland China, their literature works, political accomplishments and their relationships with both local Malay sultans and the Dutch colonial government. Through studying these primary sources, we are not only able to restore the complete vicissitudes of the Lanfang Kongsi, but also proceed demographical studies of these Chinese leaders. Who were they? Which Chinese province did they come from? Were they educated? Or were they ordinary Chinese peasants? All these questions can be answered.

Besides De Groot’s contribution, Leonard Blussé at Leiden University also provides important primary records of the history of Chinese Kongsis. In his edition work, Conflict and Accommodation in Early Modern East Asia, he presents three recorded stories about the bloody conflict between these Chinese Kongsis. “A recently published Syair Perang Cina di Monterado (A.ryair about the Chinese war in Montrado), written by an unknown author in 1854 mainly deals with the role of Pangeran Suta of Mempawah [Mampawa] and other members of the local Malay nobility who fought by the side of the Dutch. Because the tenor of this text is pro-Dutch and anti-Chinese it also scarcely contributes to a better understanding of kongsi society” (Blussé, page 292). These stories contain convincible historical frameworks and reveal several detailed perspectives of Kongsis that had never been
discovered before. Considering the limited amount of the internal documents of these Kongsis, Blussé’s collection and translation of these stories are very important to the Kongsi study.

The third type of the primary source is the gazetteers of counties that located at the coastal regions of mainland China, where most of the West Borneo Chinese came from. These counties mainly located in two coastal provinces: Canton and Fukien. Figure II presents the scan copy of Jiaying Zhouzhi (The Gazetteer of Jiaying County), which recorded geographical, demographical, economic and social information of the county during the early and middle Qing period. Jiaying county (present-day Meizhou city in Canton) was locating in Canton province and was the original hometown of the Lanfang Kongsi leaders that were mentioned earlier. Chinese gazetteer was a distinct method of recording local information. “Gazetteers were sometimes written by individuals but more often compiled as part of government initiatives to produce multivolume works dedicated to an administrative region’s geography, civil and military government, economy, and society” (Giersch, page 68).

Gazetteers were not only the local chronicles, but also the administrative tool of the local government. Just as the the Hukou system in present-day mainland China, they were the official file system of population management during the Qing period, which provided local governors with reliable and detailed biographical descriptions of local residents.

The compilation of gazetteers reaches its pinnacle during the Qing period in the 18th and 19th century. As Giersch pointed out, the arrival of European Jesuits in the 18th century brought European scientific methodologies to many Qing ethnographers. These Chinese intellectuals combined both Qing “empiricism” (the collection and analysis of evidence) with
the classical Chinese studies and history and created the new Chinese-characteristic
evidential scholarship (Kaozhengxue). The Qing gazetteers were one of the fruitful outcomes
of such methodological evolution (Giersch, page 69). Unlike any of the previous Chinese
scholars, Qing ethnographers were trying to establish a more comprehensive, rigorous and
systematic local information system through compiling gazetteers. The paper selects several
Qing county gazetteers in Canton and Fukien provinces that were compiled in the 18th and
19th century such as Jiaying Zhouzhi (The Gazetteer of Jiaying County 嘉应州志), Chaozhou
Fuzhi (Prefectural gazetteer of Ch'ao-chou 潮州府志) to view the mainland Chinese
perspective of overseas Chinese immigrants during that time period.

The fourth primary source is the Dutch colonial document, traveler diaries, military
notes and local chronicles of Borneo island in the 19th century. As mentioned earlier, there
were a great many Dutch scholars or travelers who noticed the multicultural phenomenon in
Netherlands East Indies in the 19th century. The proceeded tremendous fieldworks in
Southeast Asia and left us with valuable research records. Due to the language boundary, the
paper only uses partial sources that have been translated into English with the great effort of
previous scholars. Due to the unique colonial history on West Borneo, Dutch scholars and
travelers, such as S.H.Schaank (the author of De Kongsis van Montrado. Bijdrage tot de
geschiedenis en de kennis van het wezen der Chinesche vereenigingen op de Westkust van
Borneo) and J.H.Tobias (the author of “De Westkust van Borneo”, in “Macassar”, De
Nederlandsche Hermes), have always been the world-leading researchers on Chinese Kongsis

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2 For more well-established Dutch independent works and records of Chinese Kongsis on West Borneo, see P.J. Veth’s
Borneo’s Wester-afdeeling, geographisch, statistisch, historisch, voorafgegaan door eene algemeene schets des ganschen
eilands, S.H. Schaank’s Het Loeh-Foeng-Dialect, M. von Faber’s “Schets van Montrado in 1861”, H.E.D. Engelhard’s
“Bijdragen tot de kennis van het grondbezit in de Chineesche districten”; and etc.
with many well-established independent studies and collected primary sources. The limited English translation of their works were mainly done and collected by Yuan Bingling, Blussé and Mary Somers Heidhues, who we will introduce earnestly in the following section. Dutch records of Chinese Kongsis were more like official administrative reports with downward observations that was different from the fragmental Chinese records. Considering the existence of devoted scholars like De Groot who were willing to travel to West Borneo simply for observing and studying Chinese communities there, it is reasonable to justify that Dutch had the most protective, systematic and deliberate procedure of recording West Borneo Chinese in good conditions. And that is why the one of the most valuable and rich collections of Kongsis studies are stored at Leiden University in Netherland nowadays.

Except for these independent studies, there were certain amounts of Dutch colonial documents that were written or compiled in Europe in the 19th and early 20th century. Although these official gazetteers, such as *Netherlands East Indies* that was published by Naval Intelligence Division in the Great Britain in 1944, focuses on covering the general information of the entire Dutch colonial territory in Southeast Asia, they still contained rich and valuable records of the Kalimantan island since Borneo was the third important Dutch colony in Southeast Asia only next to Java and Sumatra. In other words, though the special record of West Borneo Chinese and Kongsis were very rare, the records and studies of the Dutch colonial history in Southeast Asia were abundant enough to make up for the source vacancy. This paper then extracts valuable information about West Kalimantan from these

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3 For more western primary records, travelogues and social studies of the Dutch colonies in Southeast Asia, see A. Cabaton’s *Java and the Dutch East Indies*, Frank. G. Carpenter’s *Java and the East Indies*, Albert S. Bickmore’s *Travels in the East Indian Archipelago*, and etc.
colonial researches and organize them into an integrated timeline. These sources offer the western view of Chinese population on West Borneo in the 19th and early 20th century, including authors’ personal judgements and descriptions of Chinese personalities and behaviors. Since they were holding the actual governmental position of West Borneo in the 19th century.

The key to the historical research is studying primary sources. Considering the transnational and trans-regional context of this paper, the key to the Kongsi study is more complex than traditional historical researches. The Kongsis study requires not only historiographical and archival researches, but also the integration of different languages. Both Blussé and Yuan have realized these challenges and proceeded certain amounts of translation jobs between Dutch, English and Chinese. “Chinese authors who have written about West Borneo’s kongsis, such as Luo Hsiang-lin and T’ien Ju-kang, have simply exposed Western imperialism by questioning the moral right of the Dutch colonial administration to incorporate independent communities of Chinese settlers under its rule. Because they could not add any new Chinese material to the existing corpus, both authors have hardly been able to develop new viewpoints on kongsí polity “from within”. Luo bases his study on De Groot’s writings and T’ien has derived most of his information from Schaank” (Blussé, pp 291, 292). Blussé’s criticism is reasonable. Unfortunately, besides Yuan Bingling, all other existing Chinese academic works about Kongsis were limited by the source accessibility and strong nationalism political agendas. But the limitation does not totally obliterate the academic value of these secondary sources, which will be briefly introduced in the following section.
This paper selects and studies almost all living secondary sources about Kongsi studies in English and Chinese fields. We give the highest priority to the independent work that particularly studied Chinese Kongsis instead of simply mentioning or discussing these Chinese communities under a bigger research topic. Among these established works, several scholars and their researches are noteworthy. We have mentioned De Groot and Wang Tai Peng’s arguments in the introduction part. Through *Het Kongsiwezen van Borneo*, De Groot unreservedly presented his sympathy for Chinese Kongsis and highly acknowledged their sophisticated structures and striving spirits. He argued that the political intervention from Dutch colonial government in Java seriously damaged the so-called “purity” of Kongsi structure and their suspicion of the potential Chinese rebellion threat was unreasonable and
ridiculous (Groot, pp 81, 82, 83). Under this circumstance, Groot’s analysis of Chinese Kongsis was dominated by his personal preference and sympathy of this community. Both Wang Tai Peng and Leonard Blussé were aware of Groot’s biased interpretations. Wang Tai Peng is currently a columnist for the Asia-Inc bimonthly who finished his graduate thesis, Origins of Kongsis, at Australian National University. In the paper, he corrected Groot’s exaggerated understanding of the “republican democratic spirits” of Chinese Kongsis through tracing the origin of Kongsis back to mainland China.

Another very important independent English work is Golddiggers, Farmers, and Traders in the “Chinese Districts” of West Kalimantan, Indonesia by Mary Somers Heidhues at Cornell University, which is also the latest English academic work in this area. In her book, Heidhues restores the complete history of Chinese communities on West Borneo from the very beginning of Kongsis at the early 18th century to the last decade of the 20th century. The book not only traces the lifespan of Kongsis, but also continues to study the remaining Chinese population and relics on West Borneo after 1884. Furthermore, “although emphasizing the ethnic Chinese element in its population, this text should be a contribution to the social and economic history of West Kalimantan” (Heidhues, page 14). Heidhues does a great job on analyzing the ethnic proportion on West Borneo island and the geographical divisions between different groups with mapping instructions.

Besides the English secondary source, this paper also cites Chinese works as important considerations. The most famous one is Professor Luo Hsianglin (1906-1978) at Hongkong University and his book, a Historical Survey of the Lan-Fang Presidential System in Western Borneo (a Historical Survey). As a Hakka person who was born in Canton, Luo Hsianglin
was the founder of Hakkaology, an ethnological branch that specifically studies the ethnic Hakka history in mainland China. The introduction of Hakka people will be provided in the following section. Luo’s profound interests in studying Hakka history led him to the Kongsi study around 1940s. *A Historical Survey* hence became the first Chinese independent work that particularly studied Chinese Kongsis (see Figure III). The book specifically illustrated the history of Lanfang Kongsi and analyzed the institutional structure of the Kongsi. His works referred to some archival researches and primary source studies in both English and Chinese, which successfully restored the origin and development process of Lanfang Kongsi. Luo highly acknowledged the political accomplishment of Lanfang Kongsi and praised the striving spirit of Chinese in Lanfang. However, as mentioned earlier, Luo and his works were deeply influenced by the rise Chinese nationalism wave at the mid-20th century and his strong self-pride of being Hakka people. Besides, as Blussé addressed earlier, Luo’s studies were mainly based on J.J. De Groot’s established works and had very few original outcomes. But neither of these shortcomings could diminish the academic value of the book as the first independent Chinese historical study of Chinese Kongsis on West Borneo in history.
In addition to Luo Hsianglin, another historian, Wen Xiongfei and his book, *A General History of Overseas Chinese in Southeast Asia* are worthy of noticing. Wen Xiongfei (1888-1974) was a Cantonese historian who was born in San Francisco. Wen was a passionate supporter of Sun Yat-sen and Chinese democratic revolution in the early 20th Century. In 1912, Wen served as the secretary at the Office of President of the new born Republic of China in Nanking. After quitting from the political circle in 1925, he moved to Singapore and began to research the history of overseas Chinese. Three years later, Wen went back to Shanghai and became a history professor at Ji’nan University. Finally, in the year of 1932, he finished his book, *A General History of Overseas Chinese in Southeast Asia*. The book briefly introduces the complete history of overseas Chinese that started from Song dynasty (around the 11th and 12th century) with illustrations of the development of Chinese maritime technologies and the change of the migration routines across Southeast Asia and South Asia. More important, Wen conducts specific biographies for famous overseas Chinese leaders in history, which includes a biography of Luo Fangbo, the founder of Lanfang Kongsi.

Another important Chinese secondary source is *A Research on Lo Fang-bo and Lan-
The book is so far the latest Chinese independent research of Kongsis. Li Xinxiang is a Chinese independent scholar who was born in Mei county in Canton, where most of Chinese in Lanfang Kongsi came from. Taking the close geographical location as an advantage, Li spent over thirty years on traveling through southeast coast of mainland China and Southeast Asia to proceed large amounts of fieldworks for studying overseas Chinese history. Hence, his book is fully based upon primary sources and materials that were collected through the past fieldwork, which makes the work very solid and reliable. Li travelled across the local archives in Canton and Fukien provinces to trace the original biographies of Chinese in Lanfang Kongsis, tried to match their overseas English profiles with domestic Chinese records and conduct textual criticism on previous Kongsi studies. Unlike Wen Xiongfei or Luo Hsianglin, his work does not possess political agendas or personal preferences. He only focuses on collecting and displaying the primary records in both vernacular style and original ancient Chinese prose style.

Li Xinxiang’s work is quite rigorous. Even so, all these Chinese scholars, including Luo, Wen and Li, they place their emphasis upon studying the history of Lanfang Kongsi has determined the limited scope of their researches. What about other Chinese Kongsis? Did they hold a similar significance as Lanfang? Or were they different from each other? Why were they all annihilated by Dutch when Lanfang could remain survival in the last half of the 19th century? What triggered Dutch decision to wage war against Borneo Chinese? The narrow view of their works prompted them to lose the big picture of Kongsi study and fail to answer these questions. The causes for such parochialism have been brought up by this paper
repeatedly. Their prominent obsessions with the Hakka history, the so-called “democratic spirits” and the local sentiment all made the Lanfang Kongsi become the perfect research target. The latter combined all three motivations for being an overseas Chinese Hakka Kongsi with the maximum lifespan and the most significant institutional “democratic features” among all Kongsis on West Borneo. To jump out of the original research boundary and conduct complete studies of Chinese Kongsis, we must address one ethnic Chinese scholar who has contributed much more comprehensive and thoughtful works to Kongsis studies: Mrs. Yuan Bingling and her book, *Chinese Democracies: A Study of the Kongsis of West Borneo (1776-1884)*.

Mrs. Yuan Bingling is Professor Kristofer Marinus Schipper (Shi Zhouren in Chinese)’s wife and was a professor at Fuzhou University in Fukien province just as her husband. Together they established the Library of the Western Belvedere (known as Xiguan Cangshulou in Chinese) at Fuzhou University in the year of 2001, which is the first library in mainland China specialized in the humanities and social sciences of the West (Library of the Western Belevedere, Homepage). Mrs. Yuan Bingling is the most contributory ethnic Chinese scholar in the Kongsis study field by translating J.J. De Groot’s *Het Kongsweise van Borneo* from Dutch into both English and Chinese. More important, in her own book, *Chinese Democracies*, she provides large amounts of translation works regarding the Dutch primary records of West Borneo with original studies of the Chinese Kongsis. Her detailed illustrations of the continues warfare between Dutch and West Borneo Chinese after 1820s successfully breaks the traditional shackle of Kongsi study through addressing more attentions on non-Lanfang Chinese Kongsi.
I.ii The Research Method

Again, there are basically two most fundamental methods of conducting historical research. The first method is studying the primary sources. The second method is establishing fieldworks. Normally, to establish a rigorous research, historians would combine both two approaches. But due to conditional limitations, this paper only selects the first research method and combines it with a traditional sociological research method: the case study. In other words, this paper justifies the importance and the rise of overseas Chinese merchants in global trade system in the 19th century by selecting Chinese Kongsis on West Borneo as the targeted case. More specifically, among all the Chinese Kongsis, the paper is particularly studying the vicissitude of the Dagang Kongsi in Montrado on West Borneo in the early and mid-19th century. The detailed introduction of the Dagang and Montrado will be provided in the next section. Through studying the primary source, this paper demonstrates that the dying-out process of Chinese Kongsis in Montrado from 1818 to 1854 was the inevitable consequence of the rise of overseas Chinese merchants in global trade in the mid-19th century.

Section II. Terminology, Geography and Demography

II.i Terminology: Kongsi

“Kongsi”, written in 公司 in the modern mandarin, is a complex Chinese substantive with a long transformation history of its definition. The term is sharing the same meaning of “company” in Chinese in the present day. The reason why scholars kept using Kongsi instead
of company to describe the overseas Chinese organization on West Borneo is simple: they had totally different meanings in the 18th and 19th century. So far, Yuan Bingling has provided the most comprehensive explanation of the term in her book.

“"When we turn to the sources and studies related to the Borneo kongsis, we find a fairly bewildering number of very different receptions and meanings, defining “kongsi” as:
1. A common management group.
2. A social organization akin to a common descent group, like those found in Southern China’s “one-surname” villages and the clan temples.
3. A republic.
4. A generic name of Chinese ethnic secret societies of the Tiandihui (“Triad”) type which in fact did sometimes call themselves “kongsi”.
5. The title of an official or leader of the Chinese pioneer settlements.
6. The house where the latter has his residence.
7. An amount of money that represents the capital of the common management group.
8. A god, patron saint, or tutelary spirit of the Chinese pioneers, such as as Dabogong” (Yuan, page 3)

Which one of them is the most accurate one? Unfortunately, the answer is still debatable. As mentioned earlier, De Groot was the determined supporter of the third definition, which claimed that Kongsi was a pattern of a republican regime. But Wang Tai Peng disagreed with his opinion and argued that Kongsi was derived from the system of partnership or brotherhood culture among the maritime-merchants of Fukien and the private entrepreneurs who operated the copper mines of Yunnan, as well as from the Hakka system of self-government (Yuan, page 11). Although arguing whether Kongsis were qualified for being a republic or not is out of the scope of this paper, it is reasonable to justify that defining Kongsis as overseas Chinese Republics is incorrect. Taking the Lanfang Kongsi as an example, The Yearbook has proved that the Kongsi democracy that De Groot admired the most was highly limited. Even if Kongsi policy did define that the top leader must be elected by Kongsi members through free votes, there was one important prerequisite: all the
candidates had to originate from Jiaying county in Canton province. Chinese who did not come from Jiaying county were not allowed to run in elections (Li, page 183). The so-called democracy of the Kongsis was unilateral and far from being the actual republican democracy.

In general, Kongsi refers to a particular overseas Chinese community in Malaysian and Indonesian regions in Southeast Asia that was built upon the basis of shareholding partnerships (Heidhues, page 54). All members of the Kongsi had participations in both the profit and decision-making process of the entire organization. Taking the West Borneo Kongsi as an example, they originated purely from overseas Chinese mining industries. The main goal of establishing the organization was maximizing the industrial profits through collaborative mining and financial management. However, from the late 18th century to the early 19th century, such partnerships soon spread from the economic dimension to the political dimension. These overseas Chinese were no longer content to simply share economic profits within the community. Finally, “In west Borneo, by the time the Dutch arrived, these early cooperative units had taken on the character of states” (Heidhues, page 54). Although it is too exaggerated to define such partnerships as democratic republics, it is reasonable to justify that Kongsi was a new political organization that “provided a foundation for the social and economic life of the overseas Chinese” (Wang, page 4).

II.ii Geography

Rigorously speaking, Borneo is not fully equal to Kalimantan based upon their geographical definitions. “Kalimantan, southern three-quarters of the island of Borneo (q.v) that is politically part of Indonesia. Indoensians, however, use the word as a geographic term
for the entire island (*The New Encyclopædia Britannica*, Volume 6, pp. 693, 694). Borneo has a broader geographical range of definition than Kalimantan when the latter is precisely a political segmentation defined by Indonesia. “Borneo, one of the great islands of the world, situated southeast of the Malay Peninsula in the Greater Sunda group of the Malay Archipelago. The island is bounded by the South China Sea (northwestern direction) and, clockwise, by the Sulu and Celebes seas, the Makassar Strait, and the Java Sea. The largest political segment of the island is Indonesian (until 1949 Dutch), known as Kalimantan. Along the northeast coast and northern tip like Sarawak and Sabah (formerly North Borneo), which in 1963 joined the Malaysian federation, and between them, the Islamic sultanate of Brunei” (*The New Encyclopædia Britannica*, Volume 2, page 390). In general, Kalimantan is one political part of the entire Borneo island that belongs to present-day Indonesia. The rest part of the island, known as Sabah, Sarawak and Brunei at the northern coast of Borneo, are politically attaching to the nation-state of Malaysia and Brunei (see Figure IV).

Understanding the geographical distinction is important since the political segmentation between north Borneo and the rest part of the island (especially West Borneo) was caused by the drastic colonial competition between Dutchmen and British in the 18th and 19th century, which highly influenced the vicissitude of Chinese Kongsis in the west. Figure IV presents the political boundary on Borneo in the year of 1878 when Kongsi has stepped into the dawn. Based on the political segmentations, the north Borneo, including Sarawak and Brunei, was recognized as the British Borneo when the West and South Borneo were known as the Dutch Borneo. In 1839, James Brooke, son of an East India Company servant who himself was a former company officer, left Bengal in South Asia and arrived at Sarawak on
the northern coast of Borneo island. After supporting the neighboring Brunei Rajah, Muda Hasim, to suppress the local rebellions in the North Borneo region successfully, Brooke soon established his own authority in Sarawak in 1842. The ambitious British man then became perhaps one of the most influential and powerful colonist through the history of the Great Britain with the title of “the White Rajah of Sarawak” (Wright, pp. 11, 12). His colonial government on North Borneo not only created generous trading profits, but more important, secured the maritime trade route between South China Sea, Malacca Strait and India for the British Empire. Brookes’ accomplishments were so profound that the academic researches of north Borneo were much more established and fruitful than the rest part of the island. Such segmentation dangerously threatened Dutch governance of the island and deeply influenced the fate of Chinese Kongsis on West Borneo in the mid-19th century.

In addition to the north-south confrontation between British and Dutch on the island, Figure V also illustrates the crucial strategical position of the island. As one of the largest island on the earth, Borneo was, and still is the heart of Southeast Asia. “The island is slightly pear-shaped” (Wright, page 8) and with a clockwise gradient. The northern pole of the island is pointing to the northeastern direction, which forms a long coastal line that embraces the South China Sea. The western side of Borneo is directly facing the gate of Southeast Asia, the Malacca Strait, and the most important former colony of the Great Britain Empire, Singapore. Using the island as an intermediate base port, trading fleets were able to travel between mainland China and the Indian Ocean at the shortest distance. Such geographical central

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4 For more independent historical studies of the British Borneo and James Brooke, see Kennedy Gordon Tregonning’s *North Borneo, North Borneo Brunei Sarawak (British Borneo)* by Human Relations Area Files in New Haven, L.R. Wright’s *The Origins of British Borneo*, and etc.
position determined that Chinese Kongsis on West Borneo were not developed in a quiet and isolated environment. On the contrary, they were rising under a highly open, dynamic and multi-national geographical circumstance.

(Figure IV. The Map of Kalimantan Island in Southeast Asia. Lee Yong Leng, *North Borneo (Sabah): A Study in Settlement Geography*, Fig. 1. Position of North Borneo, page xvi)

Just like other islands in Southeast Asia, the major terrains of Borneo island are massive tropical rainforests with continuous swamps. Both are obviously not the most ideal fertility for agrarian productions. “A belt of mangrove swamp of varying breadth fringes most of the shores, and behind this are plains- not necessarily open country- foot-hills and finally the mountainous regions of the interior… No land is better provided with rivers than Borneo, but unfortunately the majority of them are not navigable for boats of any size owing to the formidable bars at their mouths” (Evans, pp.18, 19). The interior landform of Borneo island is both barren and inaccessible. Regardless of the massive swamp that swallowed the soil, the rainforest would cause severe water and soil loss when the cragged mountains terminated the
possibility of developing stable and systematic agricultural productions. However, the typical tropical environment was not entirely negative. As mentioned earlier, the continuous inland rivers, especially the Kapuas River that connects the inland area with the sea through Pontianak city, provide residents with the most vital element of life: the fresh water. The sufficient water sources also allow humans to build up some simple irrigating systems to support small-scale agricultural productions. Moreover, although Borneo did not produce stable agricultural surpluses because of its environmental constraints, it did provide important luxury goods for Asian-wide trade. In the 18th and 19th century, the island contained rich mineral resources such as gold, gemstones, and diamonds, which were all strongly demanded by Chinese and Indian merchants during the pre-modern period. The tropical botany also produced high-quality camphor, Beeswax, aromatic woods, gutta percha, and resin that could be processed into Chinese medicines (King, pp. 105, 106). Moreover, the South and East Borneo later became the important oilfields and plantations for Netherlands East Indies in the 19th and first half of the 20th century. Large port towns, such as Bandjermasin and Balikpapan located at the Southern and Eastern coastline of Borneo developed rapidly due to their rich petroleum productions and exports (Netherlands East Indies, Volume II, pp. 386-394). In general, on the one hand, the hostile natural environment of Borneo island created very tough conditions for human settlements. On the other hand, due to the same geographical uniqueness, Borneo became both the transfer station and the production place in the global trade system from the early 18th century to the first half of the 20th century. Except for the macro-strategic position of the entire island, there were two major regions inside of West Borneo that influenced the Chinese Kongsis mostly: the Pontianak and Mandor in the south,
and the Sambas and Montrado in the north. The following map shows the general locations of them.

(Figure V. The Regional Map of West Borneo. Yuan Bingling, *Chinese Democracies*, fig. 1 Map of West Borneo, page 18)

**Pontianak and Mandor in south**

Pontianak was, and still is the political and economic center of West Borneo. The city is currently the capital of the West Kalimantan province of Indonesia. “It lies just inland from the western coast on the Kapuas River. Founded in 1772, the city was formerly the capital of
the sultanate of Pontianak, a trading station that later became the chief gold city of Borneo” (*The New Encyclopædia Britannica*, Volume 9, page 600). The foundation of Pontianak was known as the “milestone” of Dutch governance in West Borneo. In the year of 1778, the Dutch Indies at Batavia sent an official, Nicolaas Kloek, to Pontianak to investigate the conflict between the city and other Malay sultanate regimes in the upstream region on Kapuas River. Later, in the November 6th of 1778 A.D, “the VOC gave Abdoel Rachman (the founder of Pontianak the fiefs of Pontianak and Sanggau, as the Company claimed the sultan of Bantam had renounced his territorial rights … In a contract sealed on July 5, 1779, the VOC obtained preferential treatment in all commercial transactions at Pontianak. The harbor would be closed to all vessels which did not have a Dutch permit. All foreigners, especially the Chinese, would fall under the direct authority of the Company.” (Yuan, pp 22,23). Hence, starting from the 7th year after the birth of the city, Pontianak and its Malay governors became the official representative of Netherland Indies on West Borneo. Especially after 1818, when Dutch colonial government decided to increase the suppression against West Borneo Chinese, Pontianak remained as the Dutch power center of West Borneo. Unlike Montrado and Sambas in the north, the Chinese communities near Pontianak have always been the loyal and harmless subordinates of the Dutch. In this case, most of them gathered in Mandor.

Mandor was the capital center of the well-known Lanfang Kongsi between the year of 1777 to the year of 1885. It located at the northern direction of Pontianak with a driving distance about 95 kilometers. Most Kongsi scholars, including J.J. De Groot, Wang Tai Peng, and Li Xinxiang, were all focusing on studying the history of the Lanfang Kongsi in Mandor. Today, Mandor is functioning as a town within the Landak Regency of the West Kalimantan
province of Indonesia with some well-preserved relics of Lanfang Kongsi (See Figure V).

**Sambas and Montrado in north**

Through the entire 19th century, Sambas was the northern capital of West Borneo under the co-governance of the local Malay sultan and the Dutch. As shown in the map, the town located near the coastline and connected with the ocean by the River of Sambas. Both the merchant vessels and the Dutch navy could enter the town directly from the sea. Hence Sambas was also an important port for maritime trades and military reinforcements. Its rich resources and accessibility to the ocean also provided the basis of smugglings for the nearby Chinese groups. In the south of Sambas, just like Mandor near Pontianak, another large Chinese settlement, Montrado, was prosperous in the first half of the 19th century. Montrado (known as Monterado in Heidhues’ works) was the capital center of the Dagang Kongsi, the leader of a powerful federation of the Chinese Kongsis known as the Heshun Zongting, which will be introduced in the following section. Comparing with Pontianak or Mandor, Montrado has vanished on the modern West Borneo and the historical records of this particular area have also been hard to find. But as shown in Figure V, Montrado used to be the most Chinese-populated and prosperous area on the island. Considering the large number of towns that used to neighbor around Montrado and its close distance to the coast, it is reasonable to argue that Montrado might be even more developed than Mandor. However, such prosperity rapidly decayed when the Dagang Kongsi was destroyed by the Dutch in 1854 and the Chinese economic center moved southward to Mandor and Pontianak until today. Scholars like Yuan Bingling and Leonard Blussé were focusing on studying the history of the Chinese Kongsis in this area and so does this thesis. The vicissitude of the Dagang
Kongsi, Mantrado, and the nearby ports, Sambas, Sinkawang and Pamangkat, are the major research targets of this paper.

II.iii Demography: Dayaks, Chinese and the Dutch

The West Borneo population is described as “three pillars”: Dayak, Malay and Chinese (Heidhues, page 21). When Dayaks are believed to be the indigenous ethnic tribal group of Borneo island, the rest groups were both foreign migration groups with the difference of the sequence of the arrival time. This section focuses on introducing the general information of the Dayaks, the Chinese and the Dutch in West Borneo

II.iii.i the Dayaks

The accurate origin of the term, Dayak, is untraceable nowadays. But it is highly possible that the name came from the description of non-Muslim people with a meaning of the “uplander” or even “slave” of Islamic Malays on Borneo (Heidhues, page 23). In general, Dayaks referred to the “indigenous inhabitant of Borneo island” with a great variety of ethnic groups and primitive lifestyle (Yuan, page 66). The exact population of Dayaks among the entire island in the 18th and 19th century is nowhere to be found. But the West Borneo Dayak still constituted over 40 percent of the population of the province (Heidhues, page 23). Considering the exploited and population-loss situation that Dayaks have faced in the past centuries, it is reasonable to demonstrate that they had already been the majority population of West Borneo in the 18th and 19th century.

5 For more anthropological and independent studies of Dayaks on Borneo, see Victor T. King’s The Peoples of Borneo, I.H.N. Evans’ Among Primitive Peoples in Borneo, Edwin H. Gomes’ Seventeen Years among The Sea Dayaks of Borneo, and Riska: Memories of a Dayak Girlhood by Carol J. Pierce Colfer, and etc
There have been some fruitful anthropological works that specifically studied Dayaks on Borneo island since they were one of the few aborigines on Southeast Asian islands that still contained well-preserved cultural and social traditions. Based upon these studies, Dayaks in the 18th and 19th century had three significances. First, their social structure was fully based upon the family instead of the village, which means they existed as small-scale tribes in the rain forest on Borneo island (*Netherlands Indies*, Volumes II, page 23). Second, due to the isolated social structural constraint, Dayaks’ production and life mode were very primitive. In this case, several sketches from Frank S. Marryat, a British traveler who travelled through north Borneo in 1843 and portrayed his personal experiences through paintings, provide us with vivid pictures of Dayak people in the mid-19th century (see Figure VI). Through these paintings, people can observe some significances of Dayaks’ way of life. For instance, the long wooden spear of that the Dayak warrior was holding and his almost naked armor outfit revealed that Dayaks were still at the phase of cold arms. The blow-pipe with poison arrows was a typical hunting weapon for rain forest tribes. Besides, their rough customs proved that these tribes were still at the pristine social phase. Indeed, agriculture and hunting were the major production modes of Dayaks in the 18th and 19th century. “Dayak economic life was generally based on agriculture of the slash-and-burn type, but purely nomadic forest-dwellers, living from fishing or hunting with blow-pipes and poisoned darts, were also very numerous” (Yuan, page 21). They were the *Ganz Unten* group on the island due to their primitive and laggard social structure and economic production. Finally, anthropologists have verified that even within the Borneo Dayak community, there were still significant ethnic divergences among them. Here, Victor T. King’s book, *The People of Borneo*, detailedly illustrates some
major Dayak ethnic tribes on Borneo, including some tribes that gathered in West Borneo: *Ibanic* groups, *Malayic Dayaks* and *Barito* Groups. These Dayak tribes shared some similar significances: they were both egalitarian social formed tribes with excellent headhunting skills (King, pp. 48-55). In the 18th and 19th century, after Chinese and Dutch settled down on West Borneo, these unsophisticated aborigines were forced to interfere with other highly organized exotic communities. The consequence of such interference was completely tragic. Before the arrival of Chinese, they suffered from heavy taxations that were levied by Malay sultans. More severely, “Dayaks captured in raids also became slaves, and sometimes Malay expeditions were organized with the sole purpose of taking slaves” (King, page 129). After the establishment of the Kongsis, incoming Chinese took over their mining opportunities, invaded the limited agrarian land and kept condensing their living spaces. Dutch scholars such as P.J. Veth and W.L. Ritter have proved that there were pervasive intermarriages between Dayaks and Chinese on West Borneo. Their mix-blood descendants were called “*bantangfan 半唐番*” by other Chinese and suffered discriminations from Chinese who directly migrated from mainland China (Yuan, page 70). Though the study of Dayaks is out of the context of this thesis, they were still worthy of being noticed and studied as both the aboriginal lord and the majority people of Borneo island.
When the first wave of Chinese gold miners arrived at West Borneo in the mid-18th century, mainland China was under the governance of Manchus. From 1711 A.D to 1799 A.D, the Qing empire was in the reign of the famous Qianlong emperor, which was later called “the High Qing” period. Through the entire 18th century, the large Chinese feudal empire reached its last peak in the modern history. As mentioned earlier, the original group of Chinese Kongsis arrived at West Borneo around 1750s. The migration wave continued until the population was huge enough to claim independence from Malays and organize their own communities. To understand these overseas Chinese, two main questions must be answered first. First, where did these Chinese come from? Second, how did they develop after settling down on the island?

In the case of answering the first question, Figure VII accurately summarizes the main original diaspora of Chinese on West Borneo. As shown in the map, these Chinese mainly originated from the Southeastern coastal regions of mainland China, where the constitution of the local population was a total mosaic. Most of them migrated from Canton province and
Fukien province, which nowadays are still the two main hometowns for the entire overseas Chinese group on earth. However, the concentrated origin did not refer to the consolidated ethnicity. One of the most important significances of West Borneo Chinese was that even though they were all ethnic Chinese people, the internal divergence among these Chinese kept dominating the Kongsis politics and influencing the destiny of the group. Taking Canton as an example, as shown in the map in Figure VII, even within the territory of one single province, there were three different Chinese groups under the macro framework of being authentic Chinese: Cantonese, Hakka people and Teochiu people. Among them, the two largest groups on West Borneo were the Teochiu from the northeastern coast of Canton and the Hakkas from the inland mountain areas of Canton (Heidhues, page 31). Such distinction was not ethnic, but closer to the geographical and linguistic difference originated back to mainland China. There is no doubt that the distinction was crucial to West Borneo Chinese. Figure VIII presents how highly diversified the Chinese group was within just two areas, Lara and Lumar, on the island. Primary sources have justified two crucial consequences of this divergence. First, different regional and linguistic groups determined the formation and distribution of Chinese Kongsis, which means that Teochiu Chinese would not unit with Hakka Chinese and establish a Kongsis together. The famous Lanfang Kongsis at Mandor that has been studied repeatedly was a typical Hakka Chinese Kongsis. Second, the regional and linguistic divergence has caused several violent conflicts, or even wars within the Chinese community. Here, the author must address one fascinating story that was told by my thesis advisor, professor Xing Hang at Brandeis University, during his lecture about Chinese Kongsis. Few years ago, Hang traveled to Borneo island for proceeding fieldworks for his
relative researches. He visited several relics and temples of Chinese Kongsis, including a temple that was particularly enshrining the founder of the Lanfang Kongsi, Luo Fangbo, a typical Hakka Chinese. Hang met a Chinese descendent who claimed himself to be a psychic at the temple. The psychic told Hang that he could conduct spiritual connections with the long-dead Luo Fangbo so that Hang could ask him questions about Kongsis through his body. With both great suspicion and strong curiosity, Hang accepted the offer. After going through a weird ritual, the psychic told Hang that Luo Fangbo’s spirit had possessed his body. Hang then started to ask him questions about Kongsis. Among all the words that this “spirit” had told Hang, one answer attracted my attention the most. “You shall not forget all the blood on my hands!”, the “spirit” said to Hang with a wrathful voice, “do not always admire me as a great founder! Discover the dark side of my history!” Although it is ridiculous and unsolid for historians using supernatural power to proceed scientific humane studies, the proposition of the “angry spirit” was quite plausible and inspired. As the “spirit” proposed, primary sources have recorded the similar bloody and ruthless war that Luo used to wage against other Chinese groups. More important, he was not the only case.
Besides Luo, Leonard Blussé’s stories also record frequent and intense clashes between different Chinese Kongsis on West Borneo. These clashes were caused by multiple reasons, including political struggles inside of the Kongsis, the compelling merging that big Kongsis brought to small Kongsis and revenges due to hostilities that were caused by regional and linguistic differences. In 1839, a Malay sultan had a conversation with some Chinese Kongsis members. In conversation, the sultan brought up his deep confusion about the infinite wars within West Borneo Chinese communities. “All you people have come from China to seek your fortunes so that you can return to T’angshan (China). Why do you succeed in making
enemies among yourselves and not foregather in one place of your own?” (Blussé, page 310).

What he could not understand was that why these Chinese were so obsessed with fighting against each other? The significant linguistic and regional distinction inside of the Chinese group was definitely one of the answers, which leads us to the second question: how did these Chinese develop after settling down on the island?

Starting from the 1770s, dozens of Chinese Kongsis were established on West Borneo based upon the internal linguistic and regional divergence inside of the Chinese group. The table in Figure X summarizes the basic demographical information of all the main Kongsis. Except for the well-known Lanfang Kongsi at Mandor in the southern part of West Borneo, another Chinese Kongsi, the Dagang Kongsi in Montrado, was the most dominating Chinese Kongsi in the northern part of West Borneo. The north-south confrontation between the
Dagang Kongsi and the Lanfang Kongsi within the territory of West Borneo was the major political divergence among the entire West Borneo Chinese population. “De Groot paid attention only to the case of the Lanfang Kongsi... This parliament of sorts, with its most powerful member the Dagang Kongsi, was established in Montrado, an important mining site situated some fifty kilometres north of Mandor”. When the south Mandor was occupied by Chinese Hakkas from Jiaying district of Canton, the north Montrado was taken up by mainly Chinese Hoklos from Fukien province. (Yuan, pp. 11,31).

(Figure IX. Distribution, native places and surnames of the kongsi populations. Yuan Bingling, Chinese Democracies, Table 3: Distribution, native places and surnames of the kongsi populations, page 41)

Although both Hakkas and Holos were ethnic Chinese, the regional and linguistic differences between them were essential. First, these two groups of Chinese had completely different linguistic system, which means neither their speaking nor writing were same. Figure X presents some brief linguistic comparisons between different Chinese groups living in the
Teochiu area in Canton province and Minnan and Minbei areas in Fukian province. Even within one single province, people are still having completely different pronunciations of the same nouns.

(Figure X. The Linguistic comparison between English and the local dialects in Southeast China. Leo J. Moser, The Chinese Mosaic: the Peoples and Provinces of China, pp. 174, 187.)

Second, these regional or linguistic groups had very different histories, which means each of these groups was having their own system of traditions and cultures. A great example would be Hakkas who mainly originated from northeastern Canton province. As a very unique Han-Chinese group, Hakkas have been studied by both eastern and western anthropologists repeatedly. “The term Hakka, which literally means “guest people” or

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6 For more independent and ethnological studies of Hakkas, see An Introduction of Hakkaology 客家源流考 by Luo Hsianglin, Nicole Constable’s Guest People: Hakka Identity in China and Abroad, Herold Jacob Weins’ Han Chinese Expansion in South China, and Sow-Theng Leong’s Migration and Ethnicity in Chinese history: Hakkas, Pengmin, and Their Neighbors, and etc.
“strangers,” is the name of a Chinese ethnic group whose ancestors, like those of all Han Chinese, are believed to have originated in north central China. Estimated to number in the tens of millions today, Hakka now reside mainly in Southeast China, Taiwan and regions of Southeast Asia, but the Hakka diaspora extends to virtually every continent in the world” (Constable, page 3). Luo Hsianglin, the founder of Chinese Hakkaology, believed that Hakka were Han-Chinese who migrated from north China plain to south China during the South Song dynasty in the early 12th century (Luo, Page 63). Such ancient Chinese group has not only formed their own language, but also Hakka-characteristic cultures, traditions, productivity and living habits and personalities. And they resided in Southeast China with other Chinese groups that also contained the same long and distinctive cultural systems just as Figure XI presents. Under this circumstance, the conflicts were inevitable. Hence, to solve the puzzle for that early-mentioned Malay sultan in Blussé’s records, we must not regard the segmentations and confrontations between these Chinese groups as the internal contradictions within the West Borneo Chinese community. Instead, they were essentially the external disputes between two disparate cultural groups under a general framework of being Chinese.
The figures regarding the number of Chinese miners in the area between 1750 and 1860 are not to be ascertained with any degree of accuracy. Estimates differ widely. (Cf. Veth, Raffles, Muntinghe, De Groot, and Chinese chronicles. The following may be cited:

- 1770 10,000 adult miners.
- 1810 32,000 adult miners (estimated by Raffles)
- 1825 33,000 adult Chinese (Francis gives this figure).
- 1849 49,000 adult Chinese (Uljee in De Westerafd. V. Borneo, mentions a total Chinese population of 70,000).
- 1856 24,000 (total Chinese population).
- 1880 28,000 (official Government estimate)
- 1900 41,400 (official Government estimate)” (Cator, page 149).

The entire Chinese population in the territory of Netherlands East Indies was about 221,438 in 1860 and 1,233,214 in 1930 (Netherland’s East Indies, Volume II, page 163).

Table II and III present the demographic statistics of West Borneo Chinese between 1860 to 1961. According to these statistics, although the accurate Chinese population number during the Kongsi period (between 1750 and 1885) has been lost, there were probably 30,000 to 40,000 Chinese living in West Kalimantan area in the 1880s and 1890s. Even if the regional Chinese population exploded in the first half of the 20th century (from 48,000 in 1905 to
315,000 in 1961), they only accounted for no more than 12 percent of the total population of West Kalimantan. Such low proportion made West Borneo Chinese become the second smallest minority group (other than Europeans) in the area. In addition, the data also shows that the 3rd generation immigrants accounted for over 50 percent of the entire Chinese population in West Kalimantan in the 1920s. Considering the average life span of human beings, it is reasonable to justify that those large 3rd generation immigrants were the descendants of members of West Borneo Kongsis from the last century. These Chinese kept staying and multiplying on West Borneo even though the Kongsis had been gone for decades.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Region</th>
<th>No. of Chinese</th>
<th>% of Total Population</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Java and Madoera</td>
<td>582,431</td>
<td>1.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sumatra</td>
<td>448,552</td>
<td>5.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Borneo</td>
<td>134,287</td>
<td>6.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Celebes</td>
<td>41,402</td>
<td>0.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lesser Soenda islands</td>
<td>17,816</td>
<td>0.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Moluccas</td>
<td>7,454</td>
<td>1.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>New Guinea</td>
<td>1,272</td>
<td>0.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>1,233,214</strong></td>
<td><strong>2</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(Table II. The Chinese population in Netherlands East Indies in 1938 A.D. *Netherland’s East Indies, Volume II, page 166*).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Region</th>
<th>1st generation immigration</th>
<th>2nd generation immigration</th>
<th>3rd generation immigration</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Java and Madoera</td>
<td>120</td>
<td>20.6</td>
<td>93</td>
<td>63.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sumatra</td>
<td>259</td>
<td>57.8</td>
<td>111</td>
<td>17.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>West Kalimantan</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>25.1</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>36</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Elsewhere</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>40.6</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td>434</td>
<td>36.4</td>
<td>243</td>
<td>143.2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(Table III. Chinese in Indonesia by generation and region between 1860 and 1961. Charles A. Coppel, *Indonesian Chinese in Crisis, page 2*).
II.iii.iii the Dutch

Europeans were the least minority on West Borneo. “In 1860, only 104 Europeans lived in the entire residency, and that had only increased to 1077 by 1930” (Heidhues, page 43). Among these Europeans, the Dutch played the most multiple and important roles in the Kongsi history: they were the actual governor of West Borneo island, the early supporter who later turned into the annihilator of West Borneo Chinese, and the last devoted recorder of the information of Chinese Kongsis.

Dutch was one of the two most influential colonists in Southeast Asia (other than the British). Figure XII shows the early dominion of the Dutch in Southeast Asia in the 17th century. The first recorded Dutch expeditions to Southeast Asia can be traced back to the late 16th century. “The first Dutch expedition to the East Indies was despatched by an Amsterdam company in 1595 and the successful, though not profitable, outcome of this venture led to a fever of speculation” and 8 years later, in 1603 A.D, Dutch settled down at Bantam, Java by building up a trading station there (Netherlands East Indies, Volume II, pp. 49-50). Later in 1682 A.D, with the help of Dutch, the sultan of Bantam successfully suppressed an indigenous rebellion. To return the favor, Dutch “were granted a monopoly of the export of pepper and the import of manufactures into Bantam and its dependency, the Lampoeng district of Sumatra; further, in 1684, he forwent all claims on Cheribon. Thus, by 1684 the Dutch stood out as the chief power over the whole of Java” (Netherlands East Indies, Volume II, page 55).
Once they consolidated their power at Java, the Dutch East India Company (known as Verenigde Oost-Indische Compagnie abbreviated to the VOC) began to expand their controls to the outer islands in Southeast Asia. And Borneo came into their sights. The earliest record of Dutch intervention on Borneo was in the early 17th century when the VOC company tried to establish a trade line of diamonds through their connections with Sambas and Soekadana chiefs on West Borneo. But the most crucial moment of VOC dominance was in 1778 A.D. As mentioned earlier, the Dutch recognized, Abdoel Rachman, the Arabic founder and sultan of Pontianak and supported him to maintain the control of the entire West Borneo (Netherlands Indies, Volume II, page 62). Even though the VOC company retreated from West Borneo in the last decade of the 18th century due to the war between the Republiek der Zeven Verenigde Nederlanden and France in Europe in the 1790s, the Nederlands-Indië (Netherlands East Indies) that was established in 1800 continued their colonial governance of Indonesia until the mid-20th century.
It is noteworthy that the intense conflict between overseas Chinese and the Dutch on West Borneo was not the first instance in history. The long entanglement can be traced back over a century ago to the southern part of Southeast Asia. In the early 18th century, Batavia (present-day Jakarta) at Java was the most Chinese-populated area in Southeast Asia when the city also functioned as the governmental capital of the VOC company. Long before the rise of Sumatra, Singapore or Sarawak, Batavia and Java were the economic center of the early global trade system under the governance of the Dutch. However, an anti-Chinese massacre that broke out in 1740 at Batavia changed the entire situation. “In late September 1740 the VOC was presented with evidence of a Chinese conspiracy to rebel. The Chinese, for their part, believed that the VOC intended to ship surplus Chinese out of Batavia and throw them overboard to drown. Hostilities occurred outside the city walls in early October. There followed a search of the Chinese quarter within Batavia which soon turned into a massacre. For three days the slaughter and burning of the Chinese quarter continued. In the end it left approximately 10000 Chinese dead” (Ricklefs, pp. 239, 240). The Red Creek Massacre directly caused the rapid decline of overseas Chinese population at Java and forced them to find other safe footholds in Southeast Asia. Precisely at this time, the first recorded Chinese gold miners arrived at West Borneo. Although there were no direct proofs to justify the necessary relation between the Red Creek Massacre and the arrival of West Borneo Chinese in the 1740s, the massacre significantly impacted both the Dutch colonial order and overseas Chinese diaspora in Southeast Asia.

Why was West Borneo so special? It was because the island was one of the most

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7 For more studies and records of the Red Creek Massacre, see Thomas Stamford Raffles' *The History of Java*, Merle Calvin Ricklefs' *The Seen and Unseen Worlds in Java, 1726-1749*, and etc.
suitable places on earth to observe the intriguing global confluence in the 19th century. The following Table IV presents a comparative timeline of the Dutch history in Southeast Asia and Chinese history in both West Borneo and mainland China from 1740 A.D to 1884 A.D. Except for the Red Creek Massacre at Batavia in 1740 that changed the Chinese diaspora in Southeast Asia, in the last decade of the 18th century, when the Dutch VOC company retreated from Southeast Asia, the Dutch Republic was exterminated by French in Europe. Later, when the Napoleonic Wars ended in 1815, both the Dutch and the British began to re-expand their sphere of influences on Borneo island. And when the Qing empire in mainland China suffered from the defeat of the First Opium War and the Taiping Rebellion, the so-called “golden age of Kongsis” by Yuan Bingling (Yuan, page 57) also came to an end. Arguing the necessary connection between these events is out of the scope of this thesis. But it is reasonable to justify that in the early 19th century, Southeast Asia has become the most important intersection of both ends of the Eurasia.

(Table IV. The Table of the Comparative Timeline of the Dutch and the Chinese from 1740 to 1884. Blue parts are the targeted period of this research)

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8 This table was based upon the incidental records in *Netherlands East Indies* by the Naval Intelligence Division, *Qingshigao* 清史稿 by Zhao Er’xun, *Historical Resources on the Case of Trade around the South Pacific during the Period of Emperor Qianlong* (Qianlong Nianjian Yijin Nanyang Maoyian Shilia), 乾隆年间议禁南洋贸易案史料, and L.R. Wright’s *The Origin of British Borneo*, and etc.
Section III. The Pre-Kongsi War Period (1818 A.D-1850 A.D)

III.i The Time before 1818 A.D

“Indubitably 1818 was an eventful year. A new page was unfolding in the history of West Borneo. Veth devotes a whole separate section (“boek”) of 215 pages of his Borneo’s Wester-afeeling to the “Restoration and the Organization of the Dutch Authority” during this period” (Yuan, page 104).

Before 1818 A.D, West Borneo was at the phase of “the Golden Age of Kongsis” according to Yuan Bingling. During this period, the Chinese population grew both rapidly and steadily. They claimed independence from Malay sultanates and dozens of Kongsis were established in the region. As discussed earlier, most of these Kongsis located in Mandor in the south and Montrado in the north. The rise of Kongsis not only divorced Chinese mining income from the hand of Malays, but more important, allowed Chinese to proceed other businesses such as agriculture productions, ship-building industries, and small-scale manufactures and trades (Yuan, page 59). Except for more diversified production modes, these Kongsis also developed more sophisticated and complex social and cultural structures. Certain amounts of schools and temples were established insides of the community. Several Dutch travelers and missionaries such as W.J Pohlman, E. Doty and J. Haccoû who visited the Kongsis at Mandor in the 1830s and 1840s provided us with detailed records of the Chinese religious ceremonies and schools that they observed during the trip. In addition, the Kongsi governmental structures were formed with basic legislations and military forces.

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9 See Yuan Bingling’s Chinese Democracies, chapter 2, the Golden Age of the Federations of Montrado and Mandor (1777-1839).
10 See J. Haccoû’s “Reizen door de binnenlanden ter Westkust Borneo, gedurende de Jaren 1830 -1833” and W.J Pohlman & E. Doty’s Tour in Borneo.
Figure XIII presents the sketch of the main hall of the Mandor Kongsis (known as Zongting) and major official posts of the Montrado Kongsis in the north. These posts included brain trust (Xiansheng), financial officers (Zhazhu), military officers (Junshi) and even the principals of temples (Fushou) and distilleries (Jiulang). All these officials were elected through public votes, which later became the root of so-called “Chinese democracies” or “Lanfang Rebpulics” according to De Groot, Yuan Bingling and Luo Hsianglin. In general, in the 1820s, the Chinese Kongsis in West Borneo have become highly organized and sophisticated regimes. However, none of these achievements could be accomplished if the Dutch decided to put economic and political interventions on West Borneo.

Fig. 4. The Lanfang zongting ("kohgsi huis") at Mandor, c. 1822 (after Veth)
Table 5: Headmen and subordinates of the Heshun zongting

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Function</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Zongting dage, bo</strong> 雍堂大哥们</td>
<td>Entrusted with the running of the general headquarters, his main duty being to preside at the meetings and discussions between leaders of the different kongsis and the ketou and laoda (see below). In the beginning, the holders of this office were called “uncle” (bo), and after the 1820s the Dutch imposed the title of ‘captain’. They were paid 50 guilders per month, and were lodgered and fed in the zongting, and received a free allowance of opium.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Tingzhju 監主</strong></td>
<td>Beginning 1776, the fourteen kongsis of the Heshun zongting alliance each sent a tingzhju (deputy) to reside at the zongting in order to assist the zongting dage in the daily administration. Together with the latter, they decided on the different levies of taxes that were sometimes imposed on the members of the community. Their salary was 40 guilders per month and were also given free food and lodging and free opium.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Xiansheng 先生</strong></td>
<td>Title given to the secretaries of the zongting, since they were literate. In addition to being in charge of the correspondence, the secretaries received the guests who visited the headquarters. They tended to be more or less permanently employed and thus remained in place even when the different “Great Brothers” changed. Therefore, their position, although subaltern, was very influential. They earned 12 guilders a month.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Zhuazhu 僱主</strong></td>
<td>Entrusted with the guardianship of the important places and harbours, they were also charged with the levying of the taxes on exported and imported goods, as well as with the organization of the defence of the zongting. Later they became district heads, such as of Singkawang and Pamangkat etc.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Junshi 郷督</strong></td>
<td>The commander of the kongsí army. In the Lanfang kongsí, junshi also acted as the deputy-headman of the zongting.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Jiulang 酒庫</strong></td>
<td>There were two kinds of jiulang (arrack-distillery): the kongsí-jiulang and the private-jiulang. The former also levied the taxes from the farmers in the Kongsí territory.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Fushou 福首</strong></td>
<td>There were more than four elected fushou (headmen of the temple) in each large temple. They took charge of the festivals of the community and administered the common interest. The fushou managed the common affairs of the village-collaborating with the laoda and the ketou.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Ketou 客頭</strong></td>
<td>The powerful merchants in the township of Montrado and the holders of the shares of the gold-mines. Their influence could dominate the important decisions of the zongting.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Laoda 老大</strong></td>
<td>Elected village headman.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(Figure XIII. The Lanfang zongting in Mandor and the headman and subordinates of Heshun zongting in Montrado. Yuan Bingling, Chinese Democracies, Fig 4. The Lanfang Zongting ("kongsi huis") at Mandor, c. 1822 & Table 5, Headmen and subordinates of Heshun zongting in Montrado, pp. 73, 74)
As discussed earlier, comparing with Java, Sumatra, South and East Borneo, West Borneo had the least attraction to the Netherlands East Indies. Even before 1795 A.D, when the Dutch VOC company governed West Borneo through the sultan of Pontianak, the Europeans showed very little interest on intervening the local Chinese businesses. Under this circumstance, the West Borneo Chinese were allowed to develop their territories and communities freely. The only barrier they needed to overcome was the Malay monopolies of living materials.

Currently, Malays constitute over 40 percent of the population of West Kalimantan. Before the 18th century when the Dutch VOC stepped into the island, Borneo was under the direct governance of different Malay Sultans. Comparing with local Dayaks, they contained a more advanced social structure as the form of a homogenous community (Heidhues, page 27). “The beginning of Malay rule on the island commences with the establishment of the Brunei Sultanate, founded by the traders from Malacca probably at the end of the fifteenth century” (Yuan, page 20).

One of the most important significance of Malays on Borneo is their Islamic belief. The strong religious identity prompted them to become the earliest, also the most legitimate ruler of Borneo island. The Islamic origin on Borneo can be traced back to the beginning of the 16th century. In January 6th, 1514, the Portuguese Captain-General of Malacca wrote a letter to his King Manuel I of Portugal, which contained the following descriptions: “There came from Burneo to this city (Malacca) three junks … The King is a pagan but the merchants are Moors (Muslims)” (King, pp. 122, 123). Starting from the early 16th century, to strengthen their governances with religious ideologies and tools, more and more Malays
sultans on Borneo began to submit to Islam and finally, around the mid-17th century, “Following the establishment of the coastal sultanates of Sambas, Sukadana and Landak in West Borneo, smaller Malay states emerged along the Kapauas river at major strategic confluences for the control of upstream trade” (King, page 125). Borneo stepped into the age of Malay sultanate Warring-States. “The west-coast sultanates of Sambas, Sukadana, and Landak were established during the latter half of the sixteenth century” (Yuan, page 20).

As many sources addressed, the most significant and powerful Islamic-Malay regime on Borneo was the Brunei regime located at the north coast of the island, which is still an Islamic nation-state in the modern world. Except for Brunei, there was another important Malay Sultanate regime that had crucial connections with the Chinese Kongsis: the sultanate of Mempawa. This Malay regime that located on West Borneo seemed to be a separate polity from the Sultanate at Brunei with an origin of being “Bugis adventurers who spread through the Archipelago after the Dutch occupied Makassar in 1667” (Heidheus, page 29). According to Dutch reports and records of Chinese Kongsis from Tobias and Francis, it was the “Panambahan of Mampawa” who initiated the first assembly that summoned Chinese to Borneo island in around 1750 A.D (Heidhues, page 51). “The largest of these polities, Sambas, Pontianak and Mampawa, were situated on the west coast. They also had the largest population of Chinese settlers. The sultanates were no more than economic and political superstructures, engaged in taxing transport routes (especially the harbors and rivers), in trading, and when it suited them in piracy” (Yuan, pp. 20-21). These sultans’ intentions of recruiting Chinese were purely economic. “Chinese mining technology and labor organization produced more gold than did the rather desultory methods of native laborers
(Dayaks in this case), who worked as miners when agricultural tasks, fishing, hunting and collecting in the forest did not occupy them” (Heidheus, page 52). They needed both the mining technology and the effective labors from Chinese miners. In the meantime, it was obvious that their original attitudes toward these Chinese miners were purely extractive. They strictly controlled the latter’s access to the life supplies such as salt, rice and opium. In the first two decades after 1750s, Chinese on West Borneo were not allowed to either produce their own rice or salt, nor import these supplies through the nearby port towns. The only way to collect these necessities of life was through the Malay Sultans. In this way, Malays were able to control the lifeline of Chinese miners and make them fully dependent upon their governance. Except for banning life resources, Chinese miners had to hand in almost the entire portion of the gold that was dug by themselves to the sultan as tributes. Otherwise their lifeline would be cut off by Malays or even worse, they would lose the job and being exiled out of Borneo forever. Such extractive governance later became one of the most direct motivation of the unification and independence of West Borneo Chinese.

The Chinese shared a very negative view against Malays. In Xie Qinggao’s Hailu, he recorded the following descriptions of Malays on Borneo. According to Schaank, Chinese miners named the Malay sultan of Sambas as “Robber Chief” (Zeitou, 贼头). Even though there were explicit records of the frequent intermarriages between Chinese and Dayaks, there was no single case of Chinese marrying Malays in the 18th and early 19th century (Yuan, page 71).

“The people is keen on its profits and eager to kill. When their men go to sea to trade, they take all their possessions. Their wives and children remain at home. They leave only a small amount of food. When the boat returns, they send a messenger to announce this at their home. Their wife must come to the ship to person to welcome them, only then will they
return home. If their wives do not come, they assume that they have forsaken them, and they will forthwith hoist the sails and be gone, never in their lives to return again” (Yuan, page 71).

As discussed earlier, when Chinese miners first arrived at West Borneo in the 1750s, the local Malay sultans tried to contain their power through monopolizing salt, opium and rice. The lack of rice could be solved by developing independent, small-scale farming while expanding the territory (Heidhues, pp. 52, 53). But producing salt and opium were much more difficult than growing vegetables and crops especially when most of the Chinese still needed to work over 12 hours per day as gold miners (Yuan, page 63). Major Nahuys, the Dutch commissioner who visited the Kongsis at Mandor in 1819 described his observations of the Chinese farming with the following words.

“"The path guided them past vegetable gardens and orchards, where diligent farmers were busy sprinkling their shrubbery. Many Chinese houses were scattered among these fields, like farmhouses in the Netherlands, and healthy, happy children played at the doorsteps (…)” (Yuan, page 113).

Hence, to get rid of the dependency upon Malay sultans thoroughly, the only way was to find other origins of these materials. Since the supply chain inside of the island had been blocked, maritime trade and smugglings outside of the island finally surfaced. The Chinese merchants and smugglers landed at the four major ports, Pontianak, Sambas, Singkawang and Pamangkat on the coastline of West Borneo. Before 1818, unlike Java or any other islands in Southeast Asia, there were no tariffs or restrictions that were set up by the Dutch on West Borneo. Even in Pontianak, the Dutch VOC did not pay enough attentions to the Chinese imports and exports activities there since the direct ruler of the port was still the local Malay sultan, who lacked both the ability and the method of controlling the port trade. West Borneo
Chinese were able to smuggle opium, salt and other foreign products through these ports without paying heavy taxes or being confiscated by the local governors. The prosperous maritime trade not only developed the ports, but also brought capitals and population to the Kongsis. When time came to 1818, “clearly, between their arrival in the mid-eighteenth century and the early nineteenth century, the Chinese miners had become independent of the Malay authorities” (Heidhues, page 54). The sultan monopolies collapsed.

It is important to notice that all these accomplishments were achieved under one condition, and that was, the absence of the Dutch political and economic interventions. Starting from Bandjermasin in South Borneo, the Dutch VOC company at Java began to expand their trades in 1603 A.D and in 1635 A.D, the local sultan gave the VOC the total monopolistic control over the pepper trade (Netherlands East Indies, page 63). To the VOC, the pepper trade had always been the only focus while considering the relations with Borneo regimes. They were not interested in involving with the local political or economic struggles with either Malays or Chinese. However, when the time came to 1818, everything changed.

But before we get to this point, we must first understand the history of the colonial transformation from 1798 A.D when the Dutch VOC collapsed, to 1816 A.D when the Netherlands East Indies restored its authority in Java.

“The dissolution of the Dutch East India Company in 1798 is an important dividing line in the history of the East Indies (Dutch)... The outbreak of the French Revolutionary Wars disrupted Europeans commerce and led to the downfall of the Company already weakened by corruption, and in 1798 the whole of its possessions and capital were handed over to the government of the Netherlands” (Netherlands East Indies, volume II, page 70).

The colonial history of Netherlands East Indies between 1798 and 1816 can be divided into three phases. The first phase was from 1798 to 1806. Three years after the Dutch
Republic was conquered by Napoleon Bonaparte. The Dutch colonists in the Far East were experiencing a period of “semi-independence”. During this period, the local Dutch government of Java lacked effective connections with the home country in Europe due to the French conquest. In 1803, a colonial report was submitted back to Europe and revealed one severe crisis that the Netherlands East Indies faced: the British. From 1795 to 1802, the Great Britain took over Malacca, Padang, Amboina, Banda and Ternate from the Dutch (Netherlands East Indies, Volume II, pp. 71, 72). More than half of the Dutch colonies were lost due to the lack of the authoritative reinforcements. The second phase was between 1806 and 1810, Daendels, a former leader of the Dutch Jacobins, was assigned by Louis Bonaparte, the king of the Holland, to go to Java, govern the Netherlands Indies and suppress the British power in Southeast Asia. Finally, from 1811 to 1816, the British occupied Java under the leadership of Thomas Stamford Raffles, the Agent to the Bengal government at Malacca and the author of *The History of Java*.11

It is obvious that the colonial competition between the Dutch and British in Southeast Asia was both agelong and ingrained. The latter once occupied the Dutch colonial headquarter in Java until the Convention of London was made between the Netherlands and Great Britain in 1814 after Napoleon was exiled to Elba. The Convention agreed that the Dutch should restore all their previous colonists in the Far East which they used to possess in 1803. Two years later, after two decades of struggling, the Netherlands East Indies was restored (*Netherlands East Indies*, Volumes II, page 77).

11 For more details of the colonial history of Java from 1795 to 1816, see Thomas Stamford Raffles’ *The History of Java* and the Volume II of *Netherlands East Indies* by the Naval Intelligence Division.
III.ii First Conflict: from 1818 A.D to 1825 A.D

“The Dutch claims to Borneo were not finally admitted until after 1816, for, since Daendels in 1809 had sold all the Dutch rights, Fendall was reluctant to recognize their title to the island until expressly ordered to do so by the British government in India... In 1818, the Dutch sent a few hundred soldiers to garrison certain outposts, but their strength was insufficient and the Dutch representatives were incompetent. The position grew worse, and the Chinese more unmanageable” (Netherlands East Indies, Volumes II, page 81).

In 1818, two years after the Dutch restoration in Java, Van Boekholtz was assigned “to hoist the Dutch flag in the lands of the princes” on West Borneo (Yuan, page 104). The Dutchman was supported by 600 soldiers and arrived at Pontianak on July 21st, 1818 (for the first time, we are observing the first real Dutch military force stepped into West Borneo in history). During his visit, Boekholtz met all three most powerful Malay sultans on West Borneo in Pontinak, Sambas and Mampawa. He also communicated with the Chinese Kongsis (the Lanfang Kongss) in Mandor through letters. The Dutch representatives were well-treated by locals and their flags was hoisted successfully across all the major towns within West Borneo terrain (Yuan, pp. 104-106). Everything seemed to be harmonious until the officials began to explore economic benefits that West Borneo could bring to the Netherlands East Indies.

“Van Boekholtz had been to Sambas and received many promises, but nothing had been truly settled... No money or victuals had been left. They only possible source of income open to the Dutch was either tolls and duties on vessels and their cargo, or a poll tax, to be shared, of course, with the sultan... Since the entire population devoted its attention to piracy, there was no legitimate trade in Sambas. Van Boekholtz had established a salt tax, but this proved to be unworkable. Opium farming was still in the hands of the sultan, so the possibility of getting any income from trade or distribution was nil. That left the poll tax. The Malay sultan and his nobility being, of course, exempt and the Dayaks being too poor, only the Chinese provided a likely prey for the starving Dutch garrison” (Yuan, page 106).
In general, the Dutch poll tax that specifically targeted on West Borneo Chinese was the first gift that the Netherlands East Indies sent to the Chinese Kongsis. On January 12th, 1819, the new contract was signed by the Dutch and the sultan of Pontianak. The contract stipulated that the Dutch would take over sultans’ duties and directly retain jurisdictions over the Chinese and the Chinese were required to pay two rupias per person annually as the poll tax to the Dutch directly. More important, the Dutch set up several import duties that specifically target at Chinese merchandises and high payments for travel permits if the Chinese wanted to leave West Borneo (thirty rupia for a man, fifteen rupia for a woman and seven rupia for a young girl) (Yuan, pp. 112-113). Surprisingly, the Chinese responded to these new policies positively. There were no records of drastic Chinese resistances against levying the poll tax. Oppositely, on November 28th, several major Chinese Kongsis including Santiaogou, Dagang, Kengwei, Xinwu, Taihe, and Manhe held a meeting together and agreed to obey the Dutch law (Yuan, page 108). One possible explanation was that the tax was comparatively affordable by the Chinese. According to Francis, the monthly payment of the Chinese miners was about 16 guilders in 1840s (see the Table V). In addition, the table of Kongsi official posters in the Figure XVI shows that the monthly basic income of Kongsi officials was between 12 to 50 guilders without considering the participation in profit and other bonuses. The contract in 1819 also stipulated that the Kongsi leaders who collected the poll taxes for the Dutch were allowed to keep five percent of these incomes for themselves (Yuan, page 112). Under this circumstance, two rupias per person annually seemed to be an acceptable offer for the Chinese. Although the Kongsis had decided to obey the new taxation, the conflict still broke out due to another reason, the import.
In March 1819 an English ship named the “Isabella” called at Sambas with a cargo of opium. Muller imposed an import duty of four thousand rupias. The captain paid this before delivering the cargo, an expenditure which caused the price of opium in Sambas to rise steeply. The Chinese were furious and attacked the English captain who was forced to flee for his life (Yuan, page 114)

G. Muller was an Austrian who used to serve in Napoleon’s army in Europe before joining the Dutch colonial army as a military officer. He was appointed by Boekholtz as Assistant-Resident of Sambas when the latter left the town. After the attack, he imprisoned two Chinese who were accused of smuggling the opium. Other Chinese were furious and tried to rebel against him through starting riots in Sambas. Muller then asked the British captain who he just saved to sneak to Pontianak for military supports. Few weeks later, the British came back with 40 soldiers. Relying on the reinforcement, Muller not only suppressed the riots, he then went to Singkawang port in the north and successfully calmed down the merchants who had come from Montrado for opium purchases (Yuan, page 114). His action revealed that the major cause of the Chinese riots was not the poll tax or the Dutch jurisdiction, but the trade disputes involved with both British opium imports and Chinese opium smugglings.

Muller was dismissed from his duty no later than the August of 1819 by the new Dutch
commissioner E.J. Roesler. The reason was clear: the Chinese in Montrado tried to attack and occupy Mampawa twice in April and May. Although both attempts failed, the Dutch obviously did not expect such intense relation with the Chinese. The new commissioner visited the Kongsis at Mandor and Sambas for purpose of fixing the relationship with the Chinese and urging them to pay the poll tax. The Lanfang Kongsi in Mandor ended up with paying approximate 7,000 rupias. But the Montrado Kongsis near the Sambas never paid the tax (Yuan, pp. 115, 116). Interestingly, it was also the same group of Chinese that had organized the attack towards Mempawa and the earlier riots in Sambas. At that time, these Chinese in the north were under the leadership of two most powerful Kongsis in Montrado: the Santiaogou Kongsi and the Dagang Kongsi.

Here we must address the significant structural difference between the Kongsis in Montrado and Kongsis in Mandor. The best way to interpret the distinction is reviewing Roesler’s visit at Sambas in the summer of 1819. When he summoned Zhu Fenghua, the leader of the powerful Santiaogou Kongsi and asked him to collect the poll tax among Montrado Kongsis for the Dutch. Zhu claimed that the most effective way to collect the tax was merging all the Kongsis in Montrado into one single Kongsi unit just like the Lanfang Kongsi in Mandor (Yuan, page 117). As he proposed, the Chinese Kongsis in Montrado kept experiencing the Separatism. But the Chinese Kongsi in Mandor had been unified by the most powerful Lanfang Kongsi into one single polity by the strong hand of a Hakka, Luo Fangbo, in 1777 A.D. The centralization of authority helped the Lanfang collect and pay the tax successfully but the Kongsis in Montrado failed to pay the taxes because different Kongsis were having different opinion about the Dutch poll tax. Thus, Zhu Fenghua wanted
the Dutch to help him emerge other Montrado Kongsis into his Santiaogou Kongsi so that he could help them implement the order and collect the tax just like the Mandor Kongsi did. Apparently, Zhu Fenghua was a Chinese with great ambitions and amicable attitude towards the Dutch.

The most complete records and descriptions of these Montrado Kongsis came from Schaanck’s book, *De Kongsis van Montrado*. According to Schaanck, there were approximately 14 major Chinese Kongsis gathered around Montrado: the Dagang Kongsi, the Santiaogou Kongsi, the Lao Bafen Kongsi, the Xin Bafen Kongsi, the Jiufentou Kongsi, the Shisanfen Kongsi, the Jielian Kongsi, the Manhe Kongsi, the Kengwei Kongsi, the Shiwufen Kongsi, the Taihe Kongsi, the Lao Shisifen Kongsi, the Xinwu Kongsi and the Shi’erfen Kongsi (Yuan, pp. 47, 48). Each Kongsi had their own mining territories. At the end of 1807, after complicated internal power struggles, 7 Kongsis stood out (Dagang, Kengwei, Santiaogou, Manhe, Xinwu, Shiwufen and Taihe). They unified together and established a federal organization known as the *Heshun Zongting*. They built up a main hall in Montrado. Each Kongsi sent its own representative (known as *Dage*) to this main hall for every important decision-making. All the Kongsi members of the Zongting kept peaceful and cooperative relations with each other until 1820 (Yuan, page 46). In general, comparing with the single-dominant kongsi structure (the Lanfang domination) in Mandor, Montrado Kongsis had a federation structure that was much more diversified and decentralized. But Zhu Fenghua, the leader of the Santiaogou Kongsi of the Heshun Zongting, was clearly not satisfied with the situation.

Zhu Fenghua did not hide his admiration of the Lanfang Kongsi in the south while he
was talking to Roesler. The man had a strong ambition of becoming the supreme leader of all Montrado Kongsis under the support of the sultan of Sambas and the Dutch. Unfortunately, he failed. One year later, in 1820, Zhu Fenghua fled to Sambas and turned for protection to the Malay sultan there. The man took away certain amounts of the gold even though some of the gold belonged to the entire federation. Zhu claimed the independence of the Santiaogou from the federation because he wanted to turn his Kongsi into “the Lanfang in Montrado”.

The Dagang Kongsi, another powerful member of the federation, then waged wars against Zhu and the Santiaogou. All the other Kongsi members became involved in the conflict. After two years of military confrontations, in 1822, the Santiaogou Kongsi was defeated and forced to flee away from Montrado to another gold-mining town named Sepang. The Dagang Kongsi finally became the only supreme power of the Heshun Zongting with several other small and middle kongsis uniting under its sway. But what happened next might prove that Zhu Fenghua’s admiration of the Lanfang Kongsi in Mandor was reasonable. Comparing with Mandor, the Montrado Chinese had always been a painful thorn for the Dutch until the 1850s.

The Dutch noticed the internal struggles happened inside of the Montrado Kongsis. However, they continued to pursue the nonintervention method. In 1821, Mr. J.H. Tobias, the former Resident of Bantam, was assigned to be the new Dutch Commissioner in Sambas. The man apparently showed more interest on investigating the piracy and persisting in the general nonintervention policy than involving with the internal conflict of the Montrado Chinese. He sent back the Chinese messenger from Montrado who came to explain their earlier attacks in

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12 The Detailed description of these 2-years war was recorded by Leonard Blussé in Conflict and Accommodation in Early Modern East Asia: Essays in Honor of Erik Zürcher, Text A: History of the Land of Montrado, pp. 294-300
Mampawa and focused on re-signing a new contract with the Malay sultan (Yuan, page 118). One important proposal that Tobias made was about the import situation in West Borneo. “Trade there was, but all the gold went to China or was traded in Singapore for opium, textiles, and iron. Diamonds went to Java, traded by the Bugis, but next to nothing was imported from Java. Levying of taxes on salt, opium, and textiles was inefficient because of the wide-spread smuggling. Again, the only solution was the Chinese poll tax” (Yuan, page 119). To collect the poll tax more efficiently, Tobias proposed the following new strategy.

“The Chinese would henceforward be divided up into and administered by a number of different districts, each governed by independent persons of their own race and nominated by the Dutch. If need be, these Chinese district heads would be assisted by trustworthy indigenous chiefs. They would be encouraged to take the interest of the government to heart by the fact that they themselves were to receive a reasonable percentage of the taxes they would collect in their district… These sums would be left to the above-named heads to extract in whatever way they saw fit from their subjects” (Yuan, page 119).

The plan was specifically targeting at the Chinese Kongsis in Mandor and Montrado. And just like what Roesler experienced earlier, the Lanfang Kongsi in Mandor reacted to Tobias positively. “The poll tax for 1823 had yielded eight thousand guilders, and it was anticipated that the next year would show a thirty percent increase” (Yuan, page 144). But when he arrived at Sambas in the early September of 1819, Tobias found himself getting trapped into an internal political chaos of the Chinese Kongsis. At that time, Zhu Fenghua had already surrendered to the sultan of Sambas and the confrontation between the Dagang and the Santiaogou had begun. Tobias, as the Dutch commissioner in Sambas, was forced to become the intermediary of two sides even though the man was not interested in intervening the Chinese politics. Because as long as the internal struggles continued, the poll tax would not be paid by the Montrado Chinese successfully. Although discussing the chaotic
diplomatic history of this period was out of the scope of the thesis, but apparently, no matter how hard Tobias had tried to fix the relation between the Dagang and the Santiaogou and prompt them to pay the poll tax, the poor man totally failed. Until he was relieved from the office at the end of 1824, the Dutch taxation among Montrado Kongsis never succeeded. His successor, Van Grave, also presented a quite pessimistic view of the Dutch governance of the Montrado Chinese. Grave’s fate was even more tragic than his attitude. He was shot to death by a pirate vessel outside of Singkawang just one year later in 1825 (Yuan, page 145).

Even though he failed, Tobias’s governance was not completely incapable. Oppositely, the man firmly adopted several military measures to suppress the Montrado Chinese with the help from his military commander, De Stuers between 1820 and 1824. The following summary presents all the military actions that the Dutch took during this period.

In the August of 1822: Tobias ordered the Dutch troop with three hundred and twenty-nine soldiers to march to Mandor. No resistance was found there.

In the December of 1822: Tobias asked De Stuers to send an expeditionary force to Lumarr and expel the Chinese of the Dagang Kongs there because Zhufenghua and the Santiaogou Kongs asked him for seizing new territories from the Dagang.

In the January of 1823: For the same reason, De Stuers continued the expedition from Lumarr to Lara. Zhu Fenghua assisted him with supplies and ammunition. They were attacked by the Dagang troops and Stuers were heavily wounded. But the Dutch won the fight at last and took full control of Lara area.

In the March of 1823: De Stuers expedited from Sambas to Montrado directly with 347 soldiers and 30 officers. Zhu Fenghua and the Santiaogou Kongs supported him with 200 armed men. The entire troop was constituted Malays, Chinese and Dutch soldiers and marines. The troop occupied Singkawang port and Montrado. Stuers published several new regulations for the Chinese there and the troop left Montrado on the April, 28th. The Santiaogou Kongs settled down at Lara and Sepang with the help of the Dutch.

On August 31st, 1824: Van Grave, the successor of Tobias, ordered a military construction under the command of Captain Trip with more than two hundred soldiers at Singkawang because the Montrado Chinese protested the former regulation that was made by De Stuers. The montrado Chinese attacked Singkawang with thouosands of men and the

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13 For more detailed description of the political struggle between Santiaogou and Dagang, see Leonard Blussé’s records and the 3rd chapter of Yuan Bingling’s *Chinese Democracies*
Dutch was defeated. The Chinese occupied Singkawang and burned down the Dutch stronghold and barracks. They also expelled other Chinese who belonged to the Santiaogou Kongsi out of the port town. Grave went back to Batavia and asked for stronger reinforcements and policies to suppress the West Borneo Chinese. Neither of his requirements were approved by the Dutch headquarters.\(^{14}\)

Here, we see the name of Singkwang more and more frequently. Not only Muller first noticed this port as the important gathering place for Chinese merchants from Montrado, both Tobias and Grave had taken military actions for occupying and controlling the port. As time went by, Singkawang developed to be another major port in the northern part of West Borneo other than Sambas. The only difference was that Sambas was under the full control of the co-governance of the Dutch and the Malay sultanate when the Singkawang became the haven for the Montrado Chinese.

Even though Tobias was dragged into the internal conflict of Montrado Kongsis and forced to take military methods, we must understand that his ultimate purpose was not playing the role of the United Nations and helping the Chinese to achieve peaceful coexistence. His main purpose was always protecting the Dutch colonial interest and guaranteeing that the Montrado Chinese would pay the poll tax after the conflict was relieved. In the March of 1823, when De Stuers expedited to Montrado, Tobias indicated him that “it is no less needful to requite the innocent, including those who by use of violence had been forced into complicity with the uprising and the fighting” (Yuan, page 139). Obviously, the Dutch wanted to minimize their involvements with the Chinese Kongsis. In addition, according to his new plan of the taxation that we quoted earlier, his usage of terms such as “indigenous people” was containing significant exploitative European colonial ideologies. All

\(^{14}\) This summary of the Dutch military actions originated from Veth’s *Borneo’s Wester-afdeeling* that was translated and organized by Yuan Bingling in the 3rd Chapter, *Reinstatement of the Dutch Authority*, of her book, *Chinese Democracies.*
the governmental policies and approaches were serving for one purpose, that was, making profits for the Netherlands East Indies. Hence, it is reasonable to justify that Dutch’s core colonial ideology of nonintervention remained unchanged in the 1820s. They had no intention of destroying and eliminating the Montrado Kongsi at that time.

III.iii The “Period of Neglect”: 1825 A.D- 1840 A.D

“The Period of Neglect” (periode van verwaarlozing) was named by Veth and Kielstra and was referring to the time span between 1825 to 1840. After the poor Van Grave, who lost the control of Singkawang and failed to gain reinforcements from Batavia, got shot by a pirate vessel outside of Singkawang (unsurprisingly, this port again) in the August of 1815, P. Diard, a new Dutch commissioner became his successor. Taking the previous lessons, Diard simply canceled the entire poll tax system in Montrado and replaced it with new import duties: 12 percent on all goods imported to the Chinese settlements and an annually-paid token of respect (“huldebewijs”). More important, an agreement was made by the Chinese leader of Montrado and Diard, which stipulated that there shall be no foreign boats allowed to enter nearby Chinese harbors. In this case, the “Chinese harbors” would be Singkawang and the nearby Pamangkat (Yuan, page 145). From this point, we are observing a complete transformation of Dutch focuses from the interior region to the import and maritime trade on the coastline of West Borneo. The Europeans had already discovered that their largest source of revenues in West Borneo was not the lands, but the seaports on the coastline.

The overall colonial policy continued for 7 years until 1832, another new commissioner, E. Francis, was sent to West Borneo. It was under his governance that the age
of free trade of West Borneo began. Under the command of Batavia, Francis canceled all the duties and claimed both Sambas and Pontianak as free ports (*vrijhavens*). The Dutch still tried to monopolize the opium and the salt trade by stipulating that all foreign ships had to enter West Borneo only through these two ports. One year later, in 1833, the Dutch headquarter in Batavia reiterated its *laisser-faire* policy in West Borneo and claimed that “the administration in West Borneo should not intervene in the affairs of the local rulers and the indigenous people in any way. In the period 1838-1847, the authorities in Java even gave order that no Dutch official should venture into the interior of West Borneo” (Yuan, page 147). In general, after Tobias’ forced interventions, the Dutch presented a more unrestrained attitude towards the Chinese Kongsis on West Borneo until the 1840s. There were no signs of hostility or exterminations against the Montrado Kongsis showed by the Dutch during this period.

The most significant consequence of the policy was the rapid growth of the opium trade and smuggling between Singapore and West Borneo, or say, the British and the Chinese. When Francis proposed the idea of turning Sambas and Pontianak into the only two legitimate “free ports”, he was expecting “to put an end to the direct trading of merchants from Singapore in the Chinese harbours of Singkawang and Pamangkat” (Yuan, page 147). Obviously, he failed. The trade between the Chinese and the British had become so profitable that the Dutch restrictions could do nothing but accelerating the smuggling. In 1834, G.W. Earl, the author of *Eastern Seas*, carried large amounts of opium from Singapore to Singkawang. He visited Montrado himself and expressed his thought of building up a stable opium trade relation between Singapore and Montrado. Earl sold all the opium to the Dagang
Chinese and left (Yuan, page 147). Everyone was happy except for the Dutch. As discussed earlier, their largest source of revenues in West Borneo was exploited and challenged by the trade relationship between the Chinese and the British. But at that time, the Dutch was not capable of intensifying their control over these ports.

What was hidden behind such *laisser-faire* policy was the big historical picture after 1825. Two main factors dominated the focus of the Dutch in Southeast Asia. The first factor was the Java War from 1825 to 1830. In 1825, Dipo Negoro, a Javanese Prince, led a massive indigenous rebellion against the Dutch colonial government in Java (Netherlands East Indies, volume II, pp. 83, 84). The war continued for 5 years and the Dutch colonial order was once put into a very dangerous situation. Under this circumstance, Batavia withdrew the Assistant-Resident at Mempawa and Landak to support the Java War, which severely weakened the Dutch control on the outer provinces of Netherlands East Indies (Yuan, page 146).

The second factor that forced the Dutch to retreat was more important and fundamental, that was, the British expansion in Southeast Asia in the 1820s and 1830s. In the case of West Borneo, the most important perspective would be the Anglo-Dutch treaty of 1824.\textsuperscript{15} The Treaty, which officially confirmed the distribution of the British and the Dutch colonies in Southeast Asia, brought two negative consequences to the Dutch. The first consequence was the establishment of the British Singapore that directly faced West Borneo on the other side of the sea. The second consequence was the official approval for British ships entering the Dutch ports in Southeast Asia.

\textsuperscript{15} Numerous amounts of works have been done about the Anglo-Dutch Treaty of 1824 since the Treaty was the important symbol of the rise of British Singapore. For more detailed descriptions, see Nicholas Tarling’s *Britain, the Brookes and Brunei*, the Volume II of *Netherlands East Indies* by the Naval Intelligence Division, pp. 82-83, and etc.
“On the commercial side it provided that the ships and subjects of either nation calling at ports belonging to the other should not pay more than double the duty charged to nationals, or more than six per cent where the nationals paid no duty; that there should be mutual communication of treaties made with native governments; and that no such treaty should aim at excluding the trade of the other contracting power” (Netherlands East Indies, volume II, page 82).

It seems that the Dutch wanted to share a mutually beneficial relation with the British. But what they did not see was the existence of the third commercial force in Southeast Asia in the early 19th century: the Chinese. The Dutch openness ended up with creating spaces for the tremendous amounts of trade and smugglings between the British and the Chinese on West Borneo from 1840 to 1850.

Except for these two most significant consequences. Another influence of the Treaty was also noteworthy. The Treaty stipulated that the British surrendered their influences in Sumatra and made no further settlements south of Singapore. Such power distribution left one crucial region unsettled: North Borneo. Specifically speaking, Sarawak and Brunei (See Figure XIV).
“Indeed the Dutch commissioner in Borneo had sought to open relations with Brunei firstly, in 1822, through the Sultan of Sambas, and then, in 1823, by dispatching a Javanese envoy. G. Muller, the Dutch Resident at Sambas, tried to make contact with the Kayans. He visited the Rajang in July 1823, but met Brunei opposition. In subsequent travels Muller was murdered at the head of the Kapuas. But no punishment followed, since the Java war had begun” (Tarling, page 32).

The Dutch failed to establish control over North Borneo. Six years later, in 1839, a British man named James Brooke arrived at Sarawak. Later, on September 24th, 1841, the first British White Rajah of Sarawak was born.16

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16 For the history of British Borneo, see footnote 4 above.
III.iv The Decade of Peace: 1840 A.D-1850 A.D

The Dutch noticed the huge influence that James Brooke had caused in Sarawak. Yuan Bingling discovered a letter from the Dutch Minister of Colonies J.C. Baud, to the Governor-General of the Dutch East Indies, J.J. Rochussen in 1845. In this letter, Baud specifically discussed about the region of Sambas on West Borneo and proposed his plan of developing the region.

“His idea was that West Borneo should become a free trade zone where no more taxes of any kind should be levied. First and foremost, such a free trading zone would attract immigration from China, Thailand, and Vietnam… In Sarawak there was already a free trading zone where goods could be imported without paying any duties. Through the port of Singkawang, the Chinese miners in West Borneo could smuggle anything they wanted, and to prevent them from doing so would entail endless costs and trouble” (Yuan, pp. 147, 148).

Under the pressure of the prosperous British Borneo right across the northern border, the Dutch decided to persist in the nonintervention policy and develop the free trade environment in West Borneo in the 1840s. They expected to build up another heaven of free trade to attract capitals and compete against the White Rajah, which caused one significant impact on the Chinese Kongsis in Montrado. In a free environment, Kongsis were experiencing drastic economic transformation from gold-mining to agricultural productions and trade. According to Raffles, between 1830 to 1840, the gold export of West Borneo dropped rapidly and in the next three decades, the entire yield of West Borneo mines decreased by ninety percent to only one tenth of its previous output (Yuan, page 150). The gold mining has no longer been the major industry of the Chinese Kongsis in the 1840s. The stable agricultural production could be observed everywhere inside of the Chinese territory such as Pamangkat, Mandor, Tayan, and other delta regions near the ports and rivers (Yuan,
Yuan Bingling also listed several examples of the diversified Kongsi industries in the 1840s:

“In 1847, the Lanfang Kongs, for instance, started to dig for diamonds at Bonan (in Landak), for iron at Tayan, and reaped large profits from its copper-mine at Mandor… The doufu industry became the most important processing industry at Bengkayang… The shipyards at Pontianak and the saw-mills of Kampong Baru all proved quite profitable Chinese enterprises in the second half of the nineteenth century. Sebangau, situated between Singkawang and Sambas, has remained a centre for building small wooden ships up to the present day” (Yuan, page 155).

These new production modes were small-scaled and harmless, which left no reasons for the Dutch to suppress them. In 1844, Assistant Resident D. L. Baumgardt visited Montrado for four days and wrote down the following words to share his experiences and understandings of the Montrado Chinese with us.

“There can be no doubt that the Chinese know… that the Netherlands government is a powerful organization, able to, whenever it really will, confront all the Chinese in Borneo together with the Dayaks and Malays and if necessary to destroy them. But on the other hand, the same Chinese realize the advantage of their present state of independence, a privilege that they have only secured after much trouble and difficulty… they told me openly that they did not come to this coast to wage war, but to increase their fortune” (Heidhues, page 83).

It seems that the Montrado Chinese had been very friendly and loyal to the Dutch in 1844. The Chinese Kongsis had become the sedentary community with innocuous life patterns just like the indigenous Dayaks who had no threats to the Dutch colonial order. Indeed, there were no records of any significant conflicts between the Chinese and the Dutch from 1840 to 1850. Then the question is, how came the Dutch decided to destroy the entire Chinese community in Montrado just few years later in the early 1850s?

Another intriguing dimension was the international situation in the 1840s. While the West Borneo Chinese was experiencing a peaceful decade, yet the mainland China was facing
its violent beginning of the forced openness and modernization. In the September of 1839, just when the British settled down in Sarawak, the First Opium War (or First Anglo-Chinese War) broke out between the Qing empire and the Great Britain Empire. Three years later, in 1842, the Chinese empire had a disastrous defeat and the Treaty of Nanking was signed. The Qing court was forced to open five commercial ports across mainland China, ceded Hongkong and paid tremendous war indemnity to the British. Although there was no direct evidence to prove that the defeat of the Qing empire caused the later Dutch suppression over the West Borneo Chines, the incidents were still noteworthy due to three reasons. First, the First Opium War officially established one of the lucrative opium trade route between the British India and the mainland China, which was one of the most profitable and popular global trade routes in the 19th century. The route went through and deeply influenced Southeast Asia, especially Singapore, Malacca as the British colonies and the northwest coastline of Borneo island. Second, when the Qing Empire was forced to open to the world economically, more and more domestic Chinese began to expand trade and business abroad, especially with the British. Third, as addressed by Philip A. Kuhn, the war heavily declined the economy in South and Southeast China. “Guangzhou, historically a magnet to migrant labor, was abruptly subject to commercial competition from the newly opened “treaty ports” of Shanghai and Ningbo. Some 100,000 of its porters and boatmen, suddenly unemployed, quickly joined outlaw brotherhoods and turned to banditry to survive” (Kuhn, page 111). The southeast coastal population was facing severe marginalization caused by wars and poverty, which forced massive Chinese to travel or migrate overseas for survival. Southeast Asia, especially Hongkong, Singapore, North Borneo and Sumatra, embraced and accepted these
people. Hence, the biggest beneficiary of the Opium War and the Treaty of Nanking was no doubt the victorious nation: the Great Britain Empire. Such consequence was clearly disadvantageous to the Dutch.

Section IV. The Kongsi War (1850 A.D- 1854 A.D)

IV.i The Prologue of the War (1850 A.D)

After decades of free development, the turning point of the Montrado Chinese came with the arrival of a new Dutch Resident of West Borneo, F.J. Willer, a man who later was proved to be both smart and lethal to the Chinese Kongsis in Montrado. When he arrived in the early 1850, the smuggling activity was reported to be rampant in West Borneo. “The majority of the putative contraband- consisting of opium, salt, arms, gunpowder and foodstuffs- was imported by the Dagang Kongsi which collaborated with Fujian and Chaozhou merchants from Singapore” (Yuan, page 160). In the February of 1850, the Pangeran Ratoe Toewa Negara, the brother of the Malay sultan of Sambas who had been authorized to monopolize the local opium trade by the Dutch, found twenty five boexs of opium, forty koyans of salt (approximately 100, 000 kilograms of salt) and 400 barrels of gunpowder were delivered from by a Chinese vessel Singkawang to Sedau, a port located between Sungai Raya and Singkwang. Ratoe sent a spy named Amt to follow and investigate this smuggling activity to the nearby Kongsi of Djintai, which was a member of the Kongsi federation in Montrado under Dagang authority. But the local Chinese captured and killed him (Yuan, page 161). The following map shows the geographical information of the
northern area of West Borneo, including Sambas, Sedau, Budok, Singkawang, Sepang and Montrado.

(Figure XV. The West Borneo goldfields c. 1850. Yuan Bingling, *Chinese Democracies*, page 185)

The angry brother of the sultan reported the smuggling and the murder to the Assistant-Resident of Sambas. But the Chinese from the Dagang Kongsis denied Malay’s accusations. Under this circumstance, Willer, the new Dutch Resident of Sambas, implemented a new restriction at Sedau port: he ordered to install a blockade at the entrance of the port so that no
ships could depart from the port. One month later, on April 30th, the Chinese from the Dagang Kongsi protested against the blockade and claimed that none of the Kongsi vessels had engaged in smuggling (Yuan, pp. 161, 162).

Willer refused to lift the blockade. The man also understood that he could not fight against thousands of angry Chinese since the Dutch military force at Sambas was not strong enough. He thus wrote a letter to Batavia to ask for reinforcements. Sixteen years earlier, in 1824, another desperate Dutchman Van Grave did the exact same thing when Singkawang was conquered by the Chinese from Montrado. Grave’s application was never approved by his superiorities in Java. Willer definitely learnt the failed lesson from his predecessor. The man wisely used a new approach to convince Batavia to send military troops to West Borneo. In his letter, instead of simply introducing the resistance from the Chinese, Willer addressed that there was also a British vessel at Sedau that might be involving with the entire situation. He also pointed out that the Dutch must took over the control of the port of Pamangkat located at the mouth of the River Sambas from the Chinese in order to protect their largest source of revenues in West Borneo from both the Chinese and the British (Yuan, page 162). Willer’s proposal successfully hit the mark and drew attentions from Batavia.

Later in June, to capture the Chinese smuggling vessels, Willer and the sultan of Sambas had a skirmish with the Chinese fortress nearby the port of Sedau. Both sides had casualties and the Dutch retreated at last. Willer went back to Sambas. Although being defeated in the skirmish, the man had achieved his goal. For the first time, Batavia began to consider the Chinese in Montrado seriously. Official documents and notes indicated that some Dutch officers even compared West Borneo Chinese with Koxinga who expelled the Dutch
from Taiwan in the 1660s! In the summer of 1850, after months of discussions, Batavia ordered Lieutenant-Colonel Sorg and Willer “to force the Chinese to obedience, to settle ourselves at Montrado- the capital city on Borneo’s West Coast- in order to bring the Chinese population under our laws, upheld by European officials and protected by military might”. Under this command, Willer immediately targeted the Pamangkat port as the first strike point. The Chinese from Montrado refused to give up on the port and the battle of Pamangkat began (Yuan, page 165).18

To Pamangkat, the entire September of 1850 was filled with chaos and gunfire. At first, Sorg occupied Pamangkat with the help of the steamship (SS) Borneo, 419 Dutch soldiers and more Malay troops. But the Chinese from Montrado soon took back the port and Sorg himself was wounded and dead. The Dutch abandoned the port and retreated to the SS Borneo on the River of Sambas. One month later, in October, a new commander known as Lieutenant-Colonel B.F. Le Bron de Vexela came back with more than 500 Dutch soldiers. They attacked Pamangkat in November when the heavy rain turned the entire battlefield into a muddy swamp. The Dutch failed again and retreated to Sambas. The Montrado Chinese finally won the battle and occupied the Pamangkat port (Yuan, pp. 165-178).

In December, both sides began to seek for a peace talk. Yuan Bingling quoted three letters that were written from the Dagang Kongsi to Willer at Sambas (Yuan, pp. 178-181). According to these letters, the Dagang Kongsi presented an unbelievable submissive attitude towards the Dutch. They not only repeatedly apologized for the loss that was caused by the

17 Such concern was proposed by General-Major Penning Nieuwland in his note to the Governor-General in 1851 A.D.
18 For the detailed descriptions of the battle of Pamangkat, see Yuan Bingling’s Chinese Democracies, chapter 4, Transformation and Conflict.
earlier battle, but also withdrew from Pamangkat at the end of the month. Both behaviors indicated that the Dagang Kongsi was seeking for a peaceful negotiation with the Dutch even though they had won the fight. Finally, in the January of 1851, an agreement was signed by both sides. The Heshun Zongting recognized the Dutch as the only authority and the Dutch Resident had the right to appoint the supreme leader of the Montrado Chinese among the candidates. This leader was called *regentschapsbestuur* in Dutch and “Helan Huangdi Chifeng Heshun Zongting Jiatai” (荷兰皇帝敕封和顺总厅甲太) in Chinese. (Yuan, pp. 178-185). The following Figure XVI from Yuan Bingling’s book presents a picture of the official seal of the Chinese Regent that was authorized by the Dutch.

(Figure XVI. The Official Seal of the “Helan Huangdi Chifeng Heshun Zongting Jiatai” (荷兰皇帝敕封和顺总厅甲太). Yuan Bingling, *Chinese Democracies*, page 186)

The name of the leadership, *Regent or Jiatai*, was very intriguing because in the south, the leader of Lanfang Kongsi in Mandor had already been given the exact same official position by the Dutch in 1823. And the Chinese in Mandor had been keeping a peaceful and submissive relationship with the Dutch since then. It is obvious that the Dutch was trying to
govern the Kongsis in Montrado by using the similar method of governing the Lanfang Kongsi. Instead of annihilating them, the Dutch wanted the Montrado to be an obedient subordinate inside of their colony.

Another very important stipulation that came from the agreement was of course about the import. The blockade at Sedau was lifted and all the imports restored. But the Dutch still remained the monopoly on salt and opium. The only difference was that there would be a so-called “club of capitalists” to plan for the distribution of these commodities to the entire Chinese community. Willer even wanted to give the right of the opium farming to the Chinese but the proposal was opposed by other Dutch officers (Yuan, page 184). The relationship between the Dutch and the Chinese in Montrado seemed to be fixed. Indeed, the Dutch in the early 1850s began to show a more repressive attitude towards the Chinese comparing with the Dutch in the first half of the 19th century. To suppress the Chinese smugglings and protect the Dutch monopoly on imports in West Borneo, military actions were taken decisively. But still, the European colonists showed no intentions of annihilating the Dagang Kongsi. Oppositely, according to their agreement with the Chinese in 1851, the Heshun Zongting was designed to be another Lanfang Kongsi in Montrado. The latter had been able to exist and prosper for the last thirty years since the first Chinese Regent (Jiatai) was assigned by the Dutch in 1823. It is reasonable to justify that the Montrado Kongsis once had the opportunity to coexist with the Dutch colonists peacefully. No one could expect that only two years later, there would be no more Chinese Kongsis in Montrado.

Another important historical incident that happened in 1850 was outside of Borneo. In mainland China, the catastrophic Taiping Rebellion broke out in 1850 and lasted for more
than twenty years. Although Ping-ti Ho has pointed out that the registration of population during the Taiping Rebellion had been stopped due to chaotic wars, it was undeniable that the Rebellion severely damaged both the Qing empire and the domestic Chinese society. Large amounts of the Chinese migrated overseas to escape from the rebellion wars and to survive. The 1850s then became an important watershed between the pre-modern and modern overseas Chinese migrations. “Mass Chinese emigration began in the mid-1800s and lasted through the 1920s, its demographic and spatial scales abrupt departures from the past” (Kuhn, page 107). Both the earlier Opium War and the Taiping Rebellion profoundly influenced the overseas Chinese diaspora in the 19th century.

IV.ii The End of the Dagang Kongsi (1851 A.D- 1854 A.D)

“Large-scale smuggling by the Kongsis shattered Dutch complacency. Singapore had become an inexhaustible source of opium, weapons, and other goods. The profit on a smuggled chest of 150 pounds of opium was estimated at seven hundred to a thousand guilders, and how many chests reached the West Coast was anyone’s guess. Furthermore, so little salt was being traded by the official monopoly at Sambas that the real consumption of the area was unknown… Although all the Kongsis smuggled such products, Thaikang (Dangang) bore the brunt of the blame” (Heidhues, page 85).

From 1851 to 1854, the entire progress of negotiations and wars between the Dutch and the Dagang Kongsi was a total mess. To restore the historical facts clearly, we must introduce two important figures. The first would be F. J. Willer and the second figure was Major A.J. Anderson, the Dutch military commander and the annihilator of the Montrado Kongsis.

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19 About the population statistics during the Taiping Rebellion, see Ping-ti Ho’s Studies on the Population of China, 1368-1953, part I, section V, pp 65-73.
After the battle of Pamangkat, Willer has become perhaps the only Dutch who had conducted the closest relations with the Montrado Chinese. The man was no doubt a peace seeker, who proposed to govern the Heshun Zongting through political and economic reforms. In the political sphere, in the February of 1851, Willer established the regentschapsbestuur administrative system and fostered a Chinese named Zheng Hong (also known as Tjang Ping) to be both the regent (Jiatai) of the Heshun Zongting and the puppet of the Dutch (Heidhues, page 91). In the economic sphere, as mentioned earlier, he wanted to give the opium farming rights to the Chinese Regent so that the opium smugglings would decline. Apparently, this proposition was not welcomed by Batavia. Willer tried to meet and state his proposals to the Dutch Governor-General Duymaer van Twist in Batavia on September 3rd in 1851 but the latter refused to see him (Yuan, page 21).

Except for the reforms of administration and opium farm, Willer also noticed another important factor that deeply influenced the Dutch colonial order on West Boneo. James Brooke, the British White Rajah and the supreme governor of Sarawak, was developing a prosperous land right in the northern neighborhood of Sambas. Comparing with West Borneo, Sarawak in North Borneo shared much more freedom of trade. Starting from the early 1840s, James Brooke had welcomed Malays, Dayaks and Chinese who lived in the rest part of the Borneo island to trade with his “quasi-kingdom” (Yuan, page 159). Later in the July of 1850, on their way to occupy Pamangkat port, the Chinese from Montrado first conquered Sepang, the gold mining field that belonged to the Santiaogou Kongsi since 1822. Numerous Chinese refugees from the Santiaogou fled from Sepang to Sarawak. More important, the Chinese
merchants and Malay nobles in the nearby Sambas also fled to Sarawak due to the fear of the Dagang attack. But instead of expediting to Sambas, the Dagang Kongsi ended up with focusing on Pamangkat port completely (Yuan, pp. 168, 170). Hence, it is reasonable to justify that the British Sarawak had become the refuge of the Chinese in West Borneo. The more conflicts and wars that the northern part of West Borneo had, the more Chinese refugees Sarawak would receive. The Dutch governors, not only Willer, but also his successors, were fully aware of the threat from the British. The major difference was their solutions.

On October 21st, 1851, Willer submitted a complete proposition, which was known as the Provisional Regulations on the Inner Administration of the Former Kongsi Lands of Montrado, Budok and Lumar, to the Governor-General in Batavia. His methods were finally heard and adopted by the superiors. Few months later, in the March of 1852, the final version of the Provisional Regulations was published among the Montrado Chinese Kongsis (Yuan, page 203). Except for the stipulation of the regentschapsbestuur system that put the entire Chinese community under the Dutch jurisdictions directly, two restrictions of the import trade were made.

“6. The financial administration will be revised; the regent will be responsible for all transactions, but he will be placed under the supervision of the Resident and Assistant-Resident.
7. Ships not flying the Dutch flag are not allowed to enter the harbours of Pontianak and Sambas, &c.; vessels sailing from Sambas and Pontianak to other harbours or river mouths also have to possess a certificate of approval signed by the Resident.
8. The Resident, the regent of Montrado, the Jiatai of Mandor and other administrators will establish regulations for those Chinese who return to their home land; Chinese immigrants to West Borneo, will be dealt with according to the regulation promulgated on March 31, 1846” (Yuan, page 204).

Again, in the Regulations, there were no restrictions or interventions of the gold mining
industries, agricultural productions or internal affairs of the Chinese Kongsis. The entire emphasis was upon controlling and suppressing the smugglings, import trade and other connections between the Chinese and the British in both Singapore and Sarawak. After almost a year of struggling, Willer finally got the approval and support from Batavia. For the third time (also the last time), peace was expected to arrive between the Dutch and the Montrado Chinese.

Unfortunately, none of these stipulations took effects. The most fundamental reason was that Zheng Hong, the Regent and the puppet that Willer had fostered, had no actual authority among the Montrado Chinese. In the December of 1852, a huge meeting was held inside of the Dagang Kongsi to discuss the new Dutch regulations. Probably over one thousand Chinese attended the meeting but only one-fifth of them supported Zheng Hong and the Dutch he represented. According to Heihues, 70 percent of these supporters were miners (both laborers and shareholders) when the rest 30 percent were farmers and local shop owners. The “lansaai” (gold miners) dominated the meeting and accused Zheng Hong of being the puppet of the Dutch (Heidhues, page 93). To get rid of the resistance and implement the new regulations in a peaceful way, the poor Dutch Resident at Sambas held 13 negotiation conferences with the Montrado Chinese from the October of 1852 to the January of 1853. None of these conferences had been proved to work. Zheng Hong was expelled by the Montrado Chinese and stuck in Pontianak. Willer’s planes finally failed. 20

While giving credits for Willer’s years of persistence, we must ask that why did he fail? Or why did all these Dutch officers fail to govern the Kongsis in Montrado? One possible

20 The Detailed descriptions of these 13 conferences were written by Yuan Bingling in her book Chinese Democracies, chapter 5, Willer Conferences, pp. 208-218.
explanation was that the Montrado Chinese had become so powerful that they just simply refused to submit to the Dutch. But this fails to explain two facts. First, we have confirmed that the Montrado Chinese had always been submissive to the Dutch. Even after winning the battle of Pamangkat and controlling the port successfully, they still chose to give up on the port and apologize to Willer. Second, there were no similar conflicts or problems recorded when came to the Lanfang Kongsji in Mandor. When the Chinese in the north kept resisting against the Dutch regulations, the Chinese in the south remained obedient and friendly. Hence, there must be some more fundamental and special factors about the Dagang Kongsji or the Montrado Chinese that were dominating their fate.

Through resultless negotiations with the Chinese, Willer had one important accomplishment. At the end of the December of 1852, Willer auctioned off the rights of opium farm to Zheng Hong by 145,200 guilders. Zheng Hong, as a powerless Regent, was not supposed to have enough money to win the bidding. But he was supported by another Chinese man named Wu Changgui\(^2\) (also known as Eng Tjong Kwee), who was the leader of the Chinese merchants and the wealthiest man in Montrado. Wu Changgui helped Zheng Hong to buy the rights of opium farm (Yuan, page 212). Since Zheng Hong was abandoned and expelled by the Kongsis later, it is reasonable to justify that the rights remained in the hands of Wu Changgui and Chinese merchants. Wu Changgui accompanied with Zheng Hong as one of the nine representatives of the Montrado Chinese. In this case, he was representing the bazaar group and the Chinese merchants from Montrado. Later, when Zheng Hong was trapped in Pontianak after all the negotiations had failed, Wu Changgui went back to

\(^2\) According to Yuan Bingling, the description of Wu Changgui was written by Van Rees in his Montrado. The latter claimed Wu to be the “father of the citizens of Montrado” in 1854.
Montrado safely. Their bazaars and wealth in Montrado were well-preserved even after the Kongsi War. It seems that the Chinese merchant group and bazaar owners in Montrado was distinguished from the gold miners and the leadership of the Kongsis. Prins, the successor of Willer arrived at Sambas in the February of 1853, Wu Changgui and other Chinese merchants tried to negotiate with Prins privately. They continued to show their submissions to Prin in Sepang in April. But none of these activities were supported by the majority of Kongsi miners in Montrado (Yuan, pp. 225, 226). Obviously, a new internal division has shaped among Montrado Chinese in the 1850s. Such division was not determined by either different Chinese regional and linguistic groups or different Kongsis, but by the different social division of labor. On the one side, it was the gold miners who refused to submissive to the Dutch. On the other side, it was the Chinese merchants and bazaars who wanted to keep a peaceful relationship with the Dutch without any costs. In the following text, Yuan Bingling even used more exaggerating terms to describe the split.

“The option of farming out tax contracts for the distribution of opium and salt, with all the benefits from the income of the farms, was no doubt discussed, as it had already been more or less promised in Batavia. All this must have been fairly favourably received by the “bourgeois” party of bazaar merchants who wanted peace before anything else, and far less by the “proletariat” miners who, of course, were in the great majority among the delegates. For bazaar, the main obstacle standing in the way of a new form of government was the issue of the huge debt of 160,000 guilders which had been contracted by the present leaders. They feared that under a new political system, these debts would no longer be recognized. They argued that the present headmen could not be dismissed or replaced before this debt had been paid” (Yuan, pp. 189-190).

On January 29th in 1854, while the war between the Dagang Kongsi and the Dutch troop in Montrado was continuing, Wu Changgui and other merchants forced two leaders of the Heshun Zongting, Liao Erlong and Huang Du, to abdicate from the position because they
were determined fighters against the Dutch. Eventually they failed. Liao and Huang re-seize their power and the war continued until the Dagang was completely defeated (Yuan, page 235). But no records have shown that Wu Changgui and other merchants were punished for their coup. Their properties and statues remained until the miners were defeated by the Dutch. After the war, at the end of the December of 1854, the Chinese merchants who had submitted to the Dutch and stayed in Montrado received the following threatening messages from the remnants of the Dagang Kongsi.

“Formerly a premium of 200 dollars was offered for the arrest of certain named rebels. In all likelihood my people will seize those of you who have betrayed any of these (rebels).
You big guys who now receive money from the government, you are proud and happy like cocks that flap their wings crowing on a dunghill, but you will not enjoy this sense of happiness for long. The small people have banded together and have united themselves in order to get rid of you. In the previous years we went to battle and you also joined the ranks and carried flags, tjontjos and guns. Now you are proud but beware! Probably you will not live long. The lives of eight or ten of you are in my hands.
What has pained me is the tax-farming of the slaughtering of pigs and the distilling of jiu (arrack). The rich can buy ten or eight catties of pork meat, but the poor and the coolies cannot get a single piece, even if they pay for it. And this is not all: the poor are rejected! [...]” (Yuan, page 253).

The Chinese merchants in Montrado had been eager to have a peaceful relationship with the Dutch even though the majority of the Kongsi was standing on the opposite side. They tried to overthrow the Chinese rebel force from the inside regardless of the cost of being threatened and defined as “traitors” or the “evil rich” after the war. They were proved to be very professional, egocentric and pragmatic merchants who regarded maintaining a peaceful trade environment and maximizing their profits as the top priorities. Heidhues has concluded that the major cause of the failure of Willer was his ignorance of how the rest of the Kongsi would react when he fostered a puppet Chinese to lead them (Heidhues, page 97). But it is
noteworthy to ask a further question: if the Chinese in Montrado chose to submit to Zheng Hong and Willer, could the situation be different? The answer is obviously negative. As long as the Dutch monopolized the import trade, the smuggling would soon make a comeback and the Chinese merchants would re-develop their trade relations with the nearby British. The conflict between the Kongsi miners and the Dutch could be resolved by violence, but the interest conflict between the Chinese merchants and the Dutch was irreconcilable because it was the conflict between the trade monopoly and the pursuit of free trade.

IV.ii.ii A.J. Andreson

A. J. Andreson arrived at Sambas in 1851 and kept staying there as the supreme military commander of the Dutch troop. Two years later, in 1853, Anderson was assigned to be the Lieutenant Colonel and led the Dutch troop to conquer Montrado and dissolved the Heshun Zongting (Heidhüs, page 87)\textsuperscript{22}. Comparing with Willer, Anderson’s attitude towards the Montrado Chinese was much more determined and uncompromising. However, his tough propositions did not come from nowhere. The man had a profound understanding of the Montrado Chinese.

Andreson submitted a report to Batavia on December 18\textsuperscript{th}, 1852, which was later acknowledged by Yuan Bingling as a “remarkable document” (Yuan, page 218).\textsuperscript{23} In the report, Andreson summarized and analyzed both the history and the situation of the Montrado Chinese comprehensively. The Governor-General was impressed by the report. Andreson and the new Commissioner Prins were assigned to replace Willer and solve the Chinese problem

\textsuperscript{22} According to Heidhüs, the record of A.J. Anderson was done by C.G. Toorop, “De krijgsverrichtingen in de Chineesche districten”, \textit{Indisch Militair Tijdschrift} 2(1932): 905.

\textsuperscript{23} According to Yuan Bingling, this report is recorded in \textit{extensor} in Kielstra’s “Bijdragen tot Borneo’s Westerafdeling”.

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in West Borneo. At first, they did not take any military actions. Andreson and Prins visited
Sambas and investigated the situation of the Montrado Chinese in the February and March of
1853. Prins officially demised the *Regentschap* administration that Willer established and
Zheng Hong, the fearful Regent who was afraid of returning to Montrado, handed in his
resignation to the Dagang Kongsi. Liao Erlong and Huang Du, two aggressive Chinese gold
miners then became the leaders of the Heshun Zongting. They did not give Zheng a pass.
Zheng Hong was captured and executed for being the “traitor of his country” (Yuan, *pp. 220-
222*). And the Dagang Kongsi was under the complete control of the Chinese gold miners like
Liao and Huang.

On April 5th, Prins and Andreson occupied Sepang, the former territory of the
Santiaogou Kongsi which had been expelled by the Dagang, with 350 soilders. Prins received
16 submissive Chinese “delegations” from Montrado and the Commissioner was very
pleased. He did not realize that these Chinese were actually Chinese merchants and bazaar
owners who were led by Wu Changgui. They could not speak for Montrado. The
consequence of the misunderstanding was fatal. The Dutch officers misunderstood the
situation and believed that all Chinese in Montrado had been submissive to the Dutch just
like Wu Changgui and his merchant groups. On April 18th, when Prin and Andreson decided
to leave Sepang and go back to Sambas, they found themselves surrounded by thousands of
the Dagang troops. The Dutch got trapped by 10 days and finally fled away from Sepang. The
Chinese troop, which was under the command of the “nationalist” Liao Erlong, re-captured
the town and built up fortifications. Prins and Andreson were both furious. Failing to
understand the divergence between the Chinese merchants and the Chinese miners, Prins felt
that the submissive “delegations” who came from Montrado in the early April was a symbol of the “duplicity” of the Montrado Chinese, which was the strong evidence of being cunning, dishonest and underserving colonial subordinates (Yuan, pp. 223-226). And the best way to get rid of them would be the violent repression. This time, there were no more endless negotiations for peace or excuses such as the Java War. More important, there was no F.J. Willer standing in the way to the war against the Montrado Chinese. On June 17th, 1853, the following announcement was made by the Raad van Indie in Batavia. And Andreson returned to West Borneo with more than 1,700 well-equipped Dutch troops (Heidhues, page 98). The Kongsi War began.

“… Several members of this Council have long since expressed the feeling that no transactions with the rebellious Chinese Kongsis are possible; that the future should not be sacrificed to the present and that these foreign colonizers should be brought to submission through a war of attrition and a blockade, and, if possible, be forced to leave this field of exploitation; …

… Here we have therefore a battle of national character against national character… The case of Montrado will therefore probably become a national affair. Should it be resolved to wage a war on Montrado, preparations should be made to fight against the combined forces of all the Chinese living on Borneo’s West Coast” (Yuan, pp. 228, 229).

The war continued for almost one year. Andreson was proved to be an insightful commander just like Willer. The Dutch maritime force first blocked the entire coastline of West Borneo to cut off all the possible supplies for the Dagang troop from the seas. Next, Andreson chose to occupy Singkawang, the port that has been brought up repeatedly in this paper. His strategy was correct. Once Singkawang was conquered by the Dutch, all the nearby Kongsis of Buduk, Lumar and Lara immediately sent delegations to the port and submit to Andreson (Heidhues, page 98). Yuan Bingling also pointed out that “the key to Montrado was Singkawang”. (Yuan, page 236) Under this circumstance, in the May of 1854,
the entire Heshun Zongting was collapsed by Andreson and the Dagang Kongsi became the last resistance. After two more weeks of struggling, in the early June of 1854, the Dutch troops entered Montrado “in total silence, and the entire population was found kneeling before their houses… The victory seemed complete” (Yuan, page 243). One month later, on July 12th, 1854, Andreson issued a decree (bevelschrift) right at Montrado:

“- The federation of the three Heshun Kongsis was dissolved.
- Montrado, Budok, Lumar, and Lara would be administered by government-appointed officers.
- The Dagang Kongsi and the associations of miners united under the names of Shangwu and Xiawu have been destroyed, their possessions, and houses as well as mines, will be confiscated…
  …- Singkwang, Djintan, Sungai Raya, and Sungai Duri will be occupied, and, for the time being, Montrado and Kulor as well…
  …- No new mines are to be opened.” (Yuan, pp. 244-245)

The age of the Chinese Kongsis in Montrado came to an end.

Section V. Rethink the Chinese, the Dutch and the British in global trade in the early and middle 19th Century

After the war in 1854, Montrado declined rapidly and never recovered. The Chinese migrated to the coastal region for farming and trading settlements. “For a time, Monterado was capital of an assistant residency, but in 1880, even that moved to Singkawang” (Heidhues, page 102). As mentioned earlier, the Chinese gold mining kept declining since there were no more Kongsis to manage the industry. The following Table VI shows that in the early 1860s, even the tax income from pigs was higher than the tax income from the gold mining in the norther part of West Borneo.
Another intriguing number in this table is obviously, the huge profits that were collected through the import duties on opium. The duties were almost ten times more than the tax on gold-mines and took up over sixty percent of the total taxation of the region. Where did the opium import from? Considering the international environment of the global trade in the middle 19th century, the best answer was no doubt the British India.

Starting from the 1820s, there had been lots of Dutch officers noticing the success of the British free trade and proposed the similar ideologies to Batavia. Willer noticed that the war in West Borneo was forcing huge amounts of Chinese refugees to flee to Sarawak. In 1857, three years after the extermination of the Dagang Kongsi, the Sarawak Rebellion broke out. When James Brooke tried to enforce the British monopoly on the opium in Sarawak just like what the Dutch had been doing in West Borneo for the last half of the century, the Hakka Chinese from Bau rebelled and attacked Kuching. Few Europeans were killed. Brooke suppressed the rebellion successfully in 1858. Many Chinese left Sarawak and returned to West Borneo. They ended up with settling down in Pamangkat port (Heidhues, pp. 102, 103). Montrado had been history, but the ports of Singkawang and Pamangtak remained prosperous.

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<tr>
<td>Gold-mine</td>
<td>26,760</td>
<td>21,192</td>
<td>21,000</td>
<td>68,952</td>
<td>22,984</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>301,476</td>
<td>262,944</td>
<td>294,188</td>
<td>858,608</td>
<td>286,203</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(Table VI. The taxes of Montrado, Singkawang, Lara, Lumar and Budok in 1860-1862. Yuan Bingling, Chinese Democracies, page 156)
We have repeatedly discussed the two most important British colonies in the outer sphere of West Borneo: Sarawak and Singapore. The fact was that early in the 1820s and 1830s, during the Period of Neglect, two Dutch government reporters, Muntinghe in 1821 and Francis in 1832, had proposed the idea of building West Borneo into a free trade zone to the colonial headquarters in Batavia. In addition, J.C. Baud, who we brought up in Section III, used Sarawak as a successful example of establishing a free trade zone on Borneo island in 1845. Unfortunately, none of their opinions were taken seriously. Veth has pointed out that although Pontianak and Sambas had become the free ports in 1834, such “free trade” was only limited between Java and West Borneo. The vessels that did not come from Java were either forbidden or heavily levied in these two ports. “Not only did the Government (Dutch) show little inclination to protect the economic interests of the Chinese; safety of person and property also left much to be desired” (Cator, page 153). At first, the Chinese on West Borneo were required to pay the Dutch poll tax. Then, the imports of salt and opium were heavily levied and monopolized while smuggling were punished severely. Blockade, expeditions, duties, and maritime bans were implemented frequently. The Dutch not only thought little of the Chinese in the maritime trade in the early and middle 19th century, more important, they tried to completely block and exclude the Chinese from the trade. Such attitude was the most fundamental difference between the Dutch and the British.

“The Basis of British Far Eastern policy during much of the 19th century was the valuable China trade and the security of the commercial routes by which that trade was exploited. The problem facing policy makers in London was not the acquisition of large amounts of territory- an idea repugnant to successive Colonial Secretaries- but the possession of strategically located and small naval stations and entrepots which could command the sea routes through the Indian Ocean, the Straits of Malacca and the South China Sea” (Wright,

24 Quoted by Cator, such concern came from Veth: Borneo’s Westerafdeeling, vol. II, page. 514
Contrary to the Dutch policy in West Borneo, the British highly emphasized their trading relations with the Chinese in the Far East in the early and the middle 19th century. As it is known to all, the tea and opium trading route between the British India, Singapore and China was one of the most prosperous routes through the British colonial history. “Lionel Curtis notes that opium shipments from Company sources in India in 1770 amounted to 200 chests, in 1830, 4,000 chests and by 1840 had increased by more than seven times… most sources agree that there was a continuous increase in the amount of opium shipped to China from the late 18th century on and after 1833 the increase was great indeed” (Wright, page 2). As discussed earlier, West and North Borneo were geographically the intermediaries of this crucial trading route. Furthermore, West Borneo itself was a prosper market of opium due to the large amounts of Chinese settlements. Since the Dutch illegalized the opium import in West Borneo, the smuggling cooperation between the Chinese and the British became the only choice.

Before the 1870s, Netherlands Indies kept pursuing the Culture System25 instead of the commercial Liberalism. Private entrepreneurship and economic entities were not welcomed in the system and since the colonial government had the absolute monopoly in the global. The situation only improved when W.R. van Hoevell and Eduard Douves Dekker began to advocate for a complete reform of the colonial ideology in the 1850s. But the Liberalism principles were not applicated by the Dutch until the 1870s (Netherlands East Indies, pp. 84,

25 According to Netherlands East Indies, pp. 84-85, “…instead of paying taxes in money, (cultivators) should be required to devote part of their land to the cultivation of export crops for the government… the Culture System, as it was called, was part of a comprehensive plan to develop commerce, shipping and industry in the Netherlands.” The System worked as the basis of the Dutch colonial policy until the 1870s.
85, 89). Before that, massive complaints about the Dutch exclusive trading polices had been received by the Great Britain empire in 1850s. They were filed by several different trading organizations including the East India Association of London, the Edinburgh and Singapore Chambers of Commerce, and the East India and China Association of Liverpool (Wright, page 19). When the Dutch regarded the Chinese as their colonial subordinates, the British treated the Chinese as both commercial partners and the customers. When the Dutch exploited economic benefits from the Chinese through levying poll taxes, the British were making huge profits with the Chinese through developing maritime trade with them. Hence, the so-called “Chinese-distinction” between the British and the Dutch was essentially the competition between the traditional Commercialism and the uprising Liberalism in the early and middle 19th century.

**Conclusion**

“In all cases where these Chinese enterprises (with or without the co-operation of members of other races) have developed without causing damage to the Native population, and in so far as they do not form a potential danger to the political unity of the Netherlands Indies, their existence and continued prosperity are by the very nature of things to be desired, as they have proved capable of contributing in no uncertain way to the welfare of the country. It appears, however, that the Chinese colonists often show a marked disinclination to co-operate for the political unity of the Netherlands Indies; tending rather in an opposite direction at times” (Cator, page 254).

The original intention of establishing the Chinese Kongsis in West Borneo was purely economic. But within just decades the organization developed into a much more diversified and multi-dimensional level. Some scholars (such as De Groot and Cator) have argued that it was the rapid expansion of Kongsi power and their political autonomy that threatened the Dutch colonial order in West Borneo. This understanding was incomplete. Starting from the 1800s,
the main policy that the Dutch pursued in West Borneo had always been noninterventional, or so-called *laisser-faire*. Just like the previous Dutch VOC company, Netherlands East Indies was not interested in getting involved with the internal affairs among the indigenous groups in their colonies. But there was one important prerequisite. So long as these groups did not damage the interests of the Dutch colonial government, the Dutch would prevent the unnecessary interventions.

Apparently, the Lanfang Kongsi in Mandor adapted to the Dutch principle and survived until 1885. It was also a strong evidence to justify that neither the self-autonomous political structure nor the rising Chinese power was the major cause of the Dutch suppression against the West Borneo Chinese. When the Kongsis in Montrado developed smugglings and trading relations with the British neighbors in Singapore and Sarawak, Netherlands East Indies responded immediately. To the Dutch, the fear of the British competitor was much stronger and more fundamental than the concern of the Chinese Kongsis themselves. Hence, the Chinese connections with the British were considered to be threatening and intolerable.

While reporting the Chinese situation, almost every Dutch Commissioner and officer (Francis, Muntinghe, Baud, Willer, Prins and etc) in West Borneo expressed their concerns about the relationship between the Chinese and the British. Starting from the 1820s, the political and economic focus of the Chinese in Montrado had shifted from the interior region to the port towns (Singkawang, Sedau, Pamangkat, and Sambas) located on the coastline of West Borneo. The merchants and bazaar owners rose rapidly. The major source of the income shifted from gold-mining to the smuggling and imports of opium, salt and rice. Under these circumstances, the Kongsi War was essentially the consequence of the conflict of interest
between the Europeans and the Chinese in the global trade in the early and middle 19th century. The Chinese in Montrado transformed from wage-earners into the third colonists of Borneo other than the Dutch and the British. They were eager to fully participate into the international trade with the Europeans as producers, merchants and consumers. Only in this way, the Montrado Chinese could escape from the Dutch monopoly on the prize of the goods and maximize their own profits. Hence, the strong pursuit of the right of trade was the primary cause of the annihilation of the Montrado Kongsis. Although the mining industry in Montrado had declined after 1854, ports like Singkawang and Pamangkat remained prosperous and so did the Chinese merchants in West Borneo. No matter how hard the Dutch tried to strengthen their monopolies, the participation of the Chinese power in global trade in the early and middle 19th century had been inexorable.
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