

Understanding the Relationship Development of Plains Aborigine Tribes in Central Taiwan under Ch'ing Rule from the Multi-nature Perspective of *She*

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ABSTRACT

Using historical data, travelogues, and expedition records, this study examines the factors affecting the development of relationship between plains aborigine tribes in central Taiwan and their interactions. Under the Ch'ing government, all aborigine tribes were named *She* 社, while their Han counterparts were called *Chuang* 庄. Tribes of plains aborigines in central Taiwan came under the impact of external influence beginning from the 17th century. In particular, during the Ch'ing Dynasty (late 17th to late 19th century), social changes were rapid and interactions between tribes were intense. In the light of the multi-nature of *She*, this paper describes the original interaction network of the plains aborigine tribes and how Ch'ing governing policies changed the patterns of interaction among them. Apart from being a regional community with blood ties, *She* also serves as a unit for tax collection. To facilitate administration, the Ch'ing government grouped and integrated tribes in the same geographical location and appointed officials to organize tribal network and aborigine military colonies 番屯制. This perspective challenges the prevailing conception that plains aborigine tribes were loosely organized, with independent administrative structure and little interaction. Rather, the external influence from the government played a significant role in fostering closer relationship and more frequent interaction among tribes. In sum, reviewing the multi-nature of *She* would shed light on understanding the development of relationship between plains aborigine tribes and the factors affecting their interaction.

Keywords: *She*, *Hsiang-shui* (tribal revenues), Regional Tribes, tribal relationship