



COMMUNITY AND POLITICS:
THE CHINESE IN
COLONIAL SINGAPORE
AND MALAYSIA

Yen Ching-hwang



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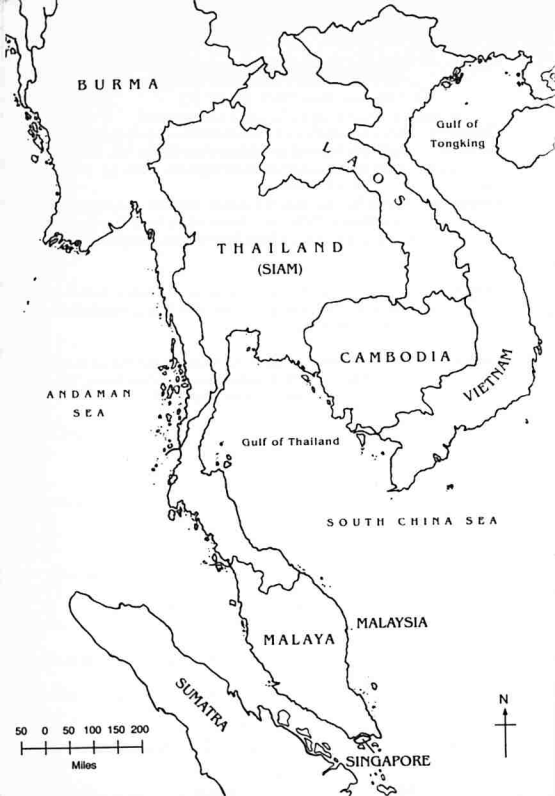
Part I Structure and Problems of the Chinese Community

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Part II Culture and Politics in the Chinese Community

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- Chapter 10 Chinese Revolutionary Propaganda Organizations in Singapore and Malaya, 1906-1911: *Journal of the South Seas Society*, Vol. 29, Pts. 1 & 2 (South Seas Society, Singapore, 1974), pp. 47-67.
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About the Author

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Introduction

The foundation of modern Chinese communities in Singapore and Malaysia was laid during the colonial era. Britain's advancement in Southeast Asia in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries created the Chinese communities in Penang and Singapore, and its ambitious economic projects brought tens of thousands of Chinese immigrants to the mines and plantations in the region. In short, British colonial policies were mainly responsible for the creation and development of the modern Chinese communities in Singapore and Malaysia.

British policy of 'divide and rule', together with its inability to control Chinese immigrants allowed the Chinese communities to retain much of their cultural heritage and social system. At the same time, British non-interference policy also enabled the Chinese communities to be involved in the politics of China which did not threaten British interests in the region. It was in this larger political and cultural setting that the modern Chinese communities in Singapore and Malaysia grew into maturity.

Politics in the Chinese communities in colonial Singapore and Malaysia were relatively unknown until the 1970s when Professor Wang Gungwu's famous article, 'Chinese Politics in Malaya' (1970) and my own book *Overseas Chinese and the 1911 Revolution: With Special Reference to Singapore and Malaya* (1976) were published. Professor Wang's work provides insight into the study of the political attitude of the Chinese in Singapore and Malaysia. His categorization of three major groups serves as a useful model for a historical analysis of the Chinese politics in the region. During the colonial era, the China-oriented group (Group A of Wang's model) was most active, and had also achieved a high degree of sophistication in mass politics.

This book is a collection of 12 articles written since I started my academic career two and a half decades ago. They are in some ways related to the themes of the structure and problems of the Chinese communities, and their cultural and political ferment.

Chapter 1 begins with a profile of the class structure and social mobility of the Chinese communities. It contrasts the overseas Chinese class system with that of China, and illuminates the salient characteristics of the system. It also points out that wealth was the main determinant of social mobility in the communities.

Clan and dialect organizations constituted the main body of the social structure of the communities. Chapters 2, 3 and 4 examine in detail the

Chinese clan and dialect organizations, with special emphasis on Fukinese (Hokkien) clans and Hakka dialect organizations. Though organized on different principles, both clan and dialect organizations provided a useful and necessary service for members, and brought the Chinese communities together. They perpetuated traditional Chinese values and preserved a distinctive Chinese identity.

Although the Chinese communities grew in numbers and economic strength during the colonial era, it encountered some serious problems. Two of these problems were gambling and opium-smoking. Chapters 5 and 6 look closely at these two evils in the Chinese communities. Chapter 5 refutes a long-held view by some British colonial officials that 'gambling was a way of life among the Chinese and was something ingrained in the Chinese race'. It scrutinizes the gambling farm system and its practices in the Chinese communities. It concludes that the prevalence of gambling during the colonial era was due more to the nature of the immigrant communities, the social and psychological needs of the immigrants, the gambling farm system, and the vested interests of gambling farmers and promoters. On the issue of opium-smoking, Chapter 6 analyses the circumstances under which the Chinese immigrants succumbed to this vice. It concludes that the opium farming system and its social ramifications were mainly responsible for opium-smoking being rife; and it rejects the view that this vice was innate in the Chinese race.

Part 2 of the book deals with the culture and politics of the Chinese communities. Chapter 7 examines the retention of traditional Chinese cultural values in the communities exemplified in the purchase of Ch'ing official titles. Financial needs forced the Ch'ing government to extend its sale of honours to the overseas Chinese communities which were hitherto excluded from such imperial grace. On the other hand, the retention of much of their original cultural heritage aroused the desire of Chinese immigrants to seek prestige from Ch'ing officialdom. This led many wealthy Chinese immigrants in Singapore and Malaysia to purchase Ch'ing brevet titles and ranks. The acquisition of Ch'ing honours satisfied their psychological needs and granted them special social prestige. At the same time, the Ch'ing honours also confirmed the leadership status of those *de facto* Chinese community leaders.

Part of traditional Chinese culture was preserved in the functions of clan and dialect organizations in the Chinese communities in Singapore and Malaysia. As the Chinese communities became more mature, and the outside influence became stronger, overseas Chinese cultural nationalists feared the loss of cultural and ethnic identities. Led by a group of wealthy

merchants who assumed the role of Confucian scholars in the communities, the cultural nationalists launched two aggressive movements in the region in an attempt to arrest the declining traditional values. One of these was the Confucian Revival Movement arising at the end of the nineteenth and the beginning of the twentieth centuries. Chapter 9 examines in detail the circumstances of the rise of the Movement, its organization, leadership and ideology.

Politics in the Chinese communities in colonial Singapore and Malaysia had been much under-estimated. Chapters 8, 10, 11 and 12 attempt to look at this topic more closely. Chapter 8 starts with a general survey of overseas Chinese nationalism in the Chinese communities. It traces the origin and development of this political current, and identifies two types of overseas Chinese nationalist movements, cultural and political, both of them co-existing in the community. All these movements were China-oriented, and they had no intention of developing a separate overseas Chinese identity. It concludes that the overseas Chinese nationalism during the colonial era was mainly derived from race and culture, the special emotional attachment to their birthplaces in China, and the desire to retain racial and cultural identities. Its development was stimulated by the efforts of the Ch'ing consuls, visiting Ch'ing dignitaries, and the arrival of the Reformists and the Revolutionaries in the region.

The politics of the Chinese communities in colonial Singapore and Malaysia achieved a high level of sophistication in terms of organization and propaganda techniques. Chapter 10 looks at different types of propaganda organizations, the strategies and techniques employed by the Chinese Revolutionaries. The Revolutionaries applied both conventional and newly-developed methods to get their messages across to the general public. They used conventional mediums such as newspapers, magazines, leaflets, pamphlets, and books; but at the same time, they founded a number of Reading Clubs (Shu Pao She) – a kind of cultural and social centre where reading materials were made freely available – and used them to draw a large number of poor but eager readers to their support. In addition, the Revolutionaries also used drama performances and public rallies to reach vast illiterate masses in the Chinese communities. Using Penang as the focal point, Chapter 11 investigates the relationship between Penang Chinese and the Chinese Revolutionaries in the period between 1906 and 1912. It examines the founding of the T'ung Meng Hui (The United League) branch in Penang and its front organization, the Penang Philomatic Society (the Penang Reading Club); the growth of the Revolutionary activities on the island, the elevation of the Penang T'ung Meng Hui to the status of the T'ung Meng

Hui headquarters in Southeast Asian region, and the holding of the famous 'Penang Conference' on 13 November 1910. It also assesses the financial contribution of the Penang Chinese to the 1911 Revolution.

Using the Tsinan Incident in May 1928 as a case study, the last chapter explores further into the Chinese politics in Singapore and Malaysia during the colonial era. It looks closely at how the politics was played in the mass mobilization against the Japanese. The organizations and techniques in fund-raising for the relief of the Tsinan victims, the boycott of Japanese goods, and the promotion of native Chinese manufacturing products, are the main focus of this study. It concludes that the response of the Chinese in Singapore and Malaysia to the Tsinan Incident in 1928 was another high in the wave of overseas Chinese nationalism, and it was also a political mobilization by the overseas Chinese in their attack on the enemies who had threatened the security of China and the well-being of the Chinese people.

PART I

Structure and Problems of the Chinese Community

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CHAPTER 1

Class Structure and Social Mobility in the Chinese Community in Singapore and Malaya, 1800–1911*

The social history of the Chinese community in Singapore and Malaya in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries cannot be fully understood if aspects of class structure and social mobility are not examined. Of course, the social relations of the Chinese were principally determined by kinship and dialect ties, but they were also affected by class affiliations. Class status, like kinship and dialect relations, distanced Chinese immigrants from one another. This article seeks to examine the nature and structure of Chinese classes, class relations and the channels of social mobility in the Chinese community in Singapore and Malaya during the period between 1800–1911. The findings of this article may be applicable to other overseas Chinese communities outside this region for the same period.

Class Structure

Before discussing the class structure of Chinese society in Singapore and Malaya during this period, three points need to be borne in mind: firstly, the overseas Chinese society was a predominantly immigrant community; secondly, it was a subordinate community in terms of power and authority; and thirdly, it was an urban community. Its nature thus determined its class structure. As an immigrant community, it was characterized by an unstable population. Many immigrants treated their time overseas as sojournment rather than settlement; those who succeeded in making enough money returned to China, while many others continued to travel overseas to try their luck. This fluctuation in population affected the profile of the class

structure, and membership of the classes, in particular the workers, changed frequently. Since the society was a subordinate one, it did not have a fully-grown class system like China's which comprised a ruling class and a sizable peasant class. As it was predominantly urban, it produced largely merchants and workers rather than landlords and peasants.

Professor Wang Gungwu rightly pointed out more than a decade ago that the overseas Chinese society was vastly different from the traditional Chinese society in terms of class structure. It was divided into two major groups: *Shang* (Merchant) and *Kung* (Worker).¹ He also suggested that the *Shang* class should include merchants and shopkeepers, and the *Kung*, artisans, and perhaps clerks, teachers and squatters.² This classification is generally sound, but it would seem that a modified three-class paradigm is even more satisfactory, that is *Shang*, *Shih* (educated elite) and *Kung*. Under this classification, the merchants still occupied the top social stratum underlying a thin layer of educated elite above the workers. The *Shang* class consisted of traders, shopkeepers, exporters and importers, plantation owners, property owners, financiers and tin-mining proprietors. The *Shih* class consisted of clerks from foreign and Chinese firms, junior government officers, interpreters, school teachers and professionals. The *Kung* class consisted of artisans, shop assistants, plantation workers, mining workers and rickshaw pullers.

More generally, the *Shang* class could be sub-divided into two: capitalists and general merchants. The former consisted of exporters and importers, big plantation owners, tin-mining proprietors, big contractors, property owners and financiers; while the latter consisted of shopkeepers, general traders and small plantation owners. Many of the capitalists under this classification had little to do with buying and selling goods which is the conventional definition of a 'merchant'. They had possessed the essential characteristics of 'modern capitalists' such as entrepreneurial spirit, reinvestment of capital and the use of modern financial institutions. The reason for including them in the *Shang* class is partly because they did not identify themselves as 'capitalists' (Tzu-pen chia), but rather used the term *Shang*; a good example is that many mining proprietors called themselves *K'uang-shang* (mining merchants).³

The *Shih* class is also divided into two groups: the upper and lower. The former consisted of professionals, junior government officials, interpreters and clerks of foreign firms; while the latter consisted of Chinese school teachers and clerks of Chinese firms.

The *Kung* could also be sub-divided into two groups: artisans and general workers. The former consisted of carpenters, blacksmiths, goldsmiths, bricklayers, mechanics, cooks and tailors; while the latter consisted of shop

assistants, plantation workers, mining workers and rickshaw pullers. The dividing line between the artisans and general workers was the possession of a skill. The apprentices who aspired to become artisans fell between these two categories: before gaining the skill they were treated as general workers, but they were considered as artisans after they had acquired the skill and worked with that skill for a livelihood. Thus at the apex of the class hierarchy in the overseas Chinese society in this period was a small group of 'capitalists', and in the descending order were a large group of general merchants, a small middle class, a small group of artisans and a large group of general workers.

The main characteristic of the overseas Chinese class system was its fluidity. There was no legal barrier to social mobility, nor was there a competitive examination system that people had to go through before higher status could be acquired. Wealth was the main determinant of social mobility; those who possessed it moved up to the apex of the class hierarchy, and those who lost it descended even down to the bottom. The expanding economies of Singapore and Malaya provided many opportunities for Chinese to acquire wealth and to change their social status, and there was no quota restricting the number of people moving up the social ladder, which explains why movements between classes and between sub-classes were so frequent. In particular, movement from the upper *Kung* class to the lower *Shang* class was most frequent, because it was relatively easy for an artisan to change his status to become a shopkeeper. This fluidity had thus affected the shape of the classes in the overseas Chinese community.

The impact of Confucianism on the overseas Chinese class system was not so much on the formal class structure,⁴ as on the attitude of the overseas Chinese towards social groupings which led indirectly to the formation of classes. The Confucian hierarchical order expressed in class, clan and family structures left an indelible impression on the minds of the immigrants before they left China. When they were overseas and congregated into a community, they naturally saw the new society structured hierarchically. They measured and graded other people according to the possession of wealth in a hierarchical order, and paid respect to those who possessed higher social status. In the process of grading other people, one could not help knowing his own status in that class hierarchy. This strong status consciousness provided an incentive for the overseas Chinese to acquire wealth and symbols of status.⁵

Class distinction in Chinese society in Singapore and Malaya during this period was not as conspicuous as that in China where the distinction was clearly reflected in the styles of houses, clothes, hats and carriages,⁶ but

most overseas Chinese could be identified from their appearance as to which class they belonged. The desire to make wealth and status visible led many members of the *Shang* and *Shih* classes to dress differently from workers. They wore Chinese jackets and robes made of good and expensive material, probably of imported silk from Soochow and Hangchow.⁷ Such expensive clothes kept them at a social distance from those who could not afford such clothes, and enhanced their self-respect. In Chinese society in Singapore and Malaya, where wealth could not automatically be translated into power and prestige, the outward appearance thus became a conspicuous way of expressing one's possessions. Song Ong Siang's story that a group of wealthy Singapore Chinese imposed the wearing of stockings among themselves is a clear indication of such a consciousness that wealthy merchants belonged to a different social class.⁸

By contrast, the members of the *Kung* class dressed poorly. Partly because of their direct involvement in physical labour, they usually wore short jackets and short trousers made of coarse nankeen and unbleached material; they also wore bamboo hats to protect them from the sun, and they went barefoot.⁹

These different appearances not only reflected differences in the nature of their work, but also differences in income. Indeed, it was the income differential that mainly determined their class status. Generally speaking, income differences between members of the upper *Kung* class, the *Shih* class, and the lower *Shang* class were not very great; a self-employed artisan or a skilled worker earned as much as a shopkeeper, a clerk in a foreign firm or a junior government officer.¹⁰ But the income of a wealthy capitalist was many times the earnings of an ordinary worker. In the mid-nineteenth century, an average agricultural worker was paid S\$3 to S\$4 a month,¹¹ and his yearly income did not exceed S\$50. Towards the end of the nineteenth and the beginning of the twentieth centuries, the income of the average worker increased to S\$7 or S\$9 per month,¹² and his annual income was probably about S\$100. On the contrary, the yearly income of a capitalist was probably tens of thousands of dollars. Gan Nghoh Bee, a wealthy capitalist from Penang, had a yearly income of S\$50,000 from the Penang Opium and Spirit Farms in the period between 1901 and 1903.¹³ From the amount of money that wealthy capitalists donated to charitable organizations, we can also get some idea of their income and wealth. In 1888 a wealthy Chinese capitalist, Yeh Po-hsiung (Chih-ying), donated 5,000 taels to flood relief funds in Kwangtung.¹⁴ In 1889, a group of wealthy Chinese capitalists donated a large sum of money to the relief funds for the drought in Central China. They were led by Tan Kim Cheng who donated 4,000 taels, followed

by Wu Hsiu-shui 3,000 taels, Wu Hsin-k'o 2,000 taels, Tan Jiak Kim 600 taels, Hoo Ah Kay (or Chop Hoo Nan Sheng), Seah Liang Seah and Huang Chin-yen 400 taels each.¹⁵ Another famous capitalist in Singapore, Cheang Hong Lim (sometimes romanized as Chang Fang-lin), together with his three sons donated a sum of S\$7,970 to the relief funds for the flood in Shantung Province in 1889.¹⁶ Cheang had gained a reputation as a great philanthropist, and was said to have donated more than S\$100,000 to the poor over the years.¹⁷ Towards the end of his life, he fixed a sum of S\$3,000 as his contribution towards any deserving charity which appealed to him.¹⁸ Although some of these donations were not really for charitable purposes, but for paying for Ch'ing brevet titles,¹⁹ they nevertheless show the donor's wealth.

Class difference could also be measured in terms of the ownership of property. All general workers owned nothing as far as property was concerned. Their accommodation was usually provided by their employers. Shop assistants lived in the shops helping to look after the security of the shops;²⁰ agricultural workers lived in wooden houses with attap roofing in the plantations;²¹ mining workers also lived in *Kongsi* house which was made of timber or split bamboo, and was constructed for temporary purposes in the compound of the mines.²² While some artisans and shopkeepers owned shops, many probably rented their places for business which they sought to eventually buy. Many urban shops were becoming more valuable as the population increased and business expanded, which of course put the shops in good locations beyond the reach of ordinary shopkeepers, but this also provided excellent opportunities for capitalists to invest in property and to reap handsome profits. It is not an exaggeration to claim that many capitalists were involved in real estate speculation because of its quick appreciation in value. In 1875, 82 owners of houses in Singapore petitioned the government against the enforcement of the Gaming House Ordinance of 1870; 64 of them were Chinese merchants. Prominent signatories were Cheang Hong Lim, Tan Seng Poh, Lee Cheng Yan, Seah Eu Chin and Low Kim Pong.²³ Obviously the majority of the property owners in Singapore during this time were Chinese capitalists who had houses or shops to let and feared to be implicated in gambling in the properties they owned. Seah Eu Chin, one of the wealthiest Chinese capitalists in the Straits Settlements, owned many properties, plantations and an import-export business.²⁴ At the time of his death in 1883, his estate was estimated to be worth S\$1,359,000.²⁵ In 1885 at the time of his death, famous Kapitan Yap Ah Loy owned more than 150 houses in Kuala Lumpur, in addition to extensive tin mines and plantations in various parts of Selangor.²⁶

The overseas Chinese classes in Singapore and Malaya not only distinguished their status by income and possession of property, but also expressed it in different life-styles. Most of the wealthy capitalists were married with a family,²⁷ and sometimes had several wives or concubines.²⁸ They lived in well-constructed mansions and villas,²⁹ dressed in expensive silk, and travelled in beautifully-decorated coaches; and their women-folk wore gold jewellery.³⁰ They organized feasts and threw expensive parties. They celebrated birthdays³¹ and acquisitions of honours with lavish banquets, fireworks and theatrical performances.³² They not only enjoyed their wealth and expressed it, but also enjoyed their leisure in a way that many ordinary Chinese could not afford to do. Some of them gathered regularly in each other's villas, drinking tea or wine, reciting poetry and enjoying each other's company. In Singapore, for instance, a group of about 30 wealthy Chinese led by Cheang Hong Lim met every Monday to enjoy food, drink and literary programmes.³³

The members of the lower stratum of the *Shang* class, the shopkeepers, lived a completely different life from the capitalists. They spent most of their time in the shops. As the eight-hour work system was not yet known in the overseas Chinese community, they worked long hours. Many of them had families, and they lived above their shops, their wives and children helped to look after the shops.³⁴ When a shopkeeper tried to establish himself in the business, he had to work extremely hard, and so did his wife and children. Because of long working hours, most shopkeepers were physically tired, with no means to enjoy a life of leisure or entertainment. But they still found time to help nursing babies and amuse their children, and they looked happy and contented.³⁵ A shopkeeper spent most of his life in his shop. Its activities were the centre of his existence.

The life-style of the artisan who owned a small business was similar to that of the shopkeepers, and his workshop became the hub of his world, which, though confined, was materially well-off. Artisans could not live a luxurious life like the capitalists, but they had enough food and clothes, and they had reasonable accommodation.

The life of ordinary workers (coolies)³⁶ was the worst among the overseas Chinese. Most of them were young male *sinkheh* (new arrivals)³⁷ who were single; those among them who were married in China usually left their wives behind.³⁸ They worked long hours to eke out a living and to save some money in order to return to China wealthy. Long hours of hard work generated frustration, and in view of the lack of healthy entertainments, they were induced to indulge in gambling and opium-smoking.³⁹ Because of the lack of female companionship, they sought temporary relief in brothels.⁴⁰

The indulgences in these vices reduced their ability to save money, and resulted in the shattering of their dreams of accumulating wealth and returning to their home villages with honour. According to Seah Eu Chin, only ten per cent of these *sinkhehs* were able to fulfil their dreams of returning to China with some savings in the mid-nineteenth century.⁴¹ Presumably the remaining 90 per cent had to struggle in poverty for the rest of their lives. The lack of unemployment benefits and old age pensions made them destitute once they were out of a job or grew old. Some lucky ones could depend on the charity of the dialect and clan organizations to which they belonged,⁴² and some could depend on other charitable organizations to help relieve the miseries of old age.⁴³ Many were reduced to becoming beggars,⁴⁴ and some, who were emaciated by poverty, disease and opium-smoking, took their own lives in despair.⁴⁵

Class distinction was also reflected in prestige, status and power. The members of the *Shang* class were generally given higher status than members of *Kung* class in Chinese society and by the British colonial government. As wealth was an important prerequisite for Chinese community leadership, the wealthy capitalists were given leadership status, and those among them who were able, charitable and with ambition would become leaders of the whole community.⁴⁶ In the choice of leadership for the dialect and clan organizations, the wealthy were readily accepted as leaders because they commanded high status and prestige in society and were able to make substantial donations when required.⁴⁷ To the British colonial government, merchants as a class were desirable and useful since they could directly contribute to the growth and prosperity of the colonies.⁴⁸ Owing to this image, the merchants were given special status in relation to the government. Wealthy capitalists were selected to liaise with the government, to sit on semi-governmental committees such as Po Leong Kuk (Pao Liang Chi, an organization protecting Chinese females),⁴⁹ they were conferred British honours,⁵⁰ and were appointed to serve on the Legislative Council.⁵¹ An important body liaising between the government and the Chinese community was the Chinese Advisory Board which was set up in 1889.⁵² Reputable Chinese capitalists were selected from various dialect groups,⁵³ and their duty was to consult on subjects affecting Chinese interests and to forward their decisions to the Governor.⁵⁴ They sometimes voiced their objections to certain legislation they disapproved of, and attempted to assert their influence for change.⁵⁵

The members of the upper *Shih* class possessed comparable prestige and power to that of the merchants in the Chinese communities. Although they did not possess wealth, they were accorded high social status because of their

jobs. Being junior officials and clerks of foreign firms, they commanded certain influence with foreigners. Their influence hinged upon their command of the English language. The ability to speak English meant opportunities for communication and contacts with foreigners on whom they could exert influence. This placed them in the key positions between the Chinese communities and the British colonial government. Their influence and status were recognized by the British authorities through their appointment as jurors in the courts of the Straits Settlements.⁵⁶

Junior officials as a group were more respected than clerks of foreign firms. They were seen as petty mandarins comparable to Yamen clerks and runners in rural China.⁵⁷ As most of the Chinese immigrants had experienced the authority and power of the petty mandarins in China, they tended to regard the junior officials in the colonial establishment with the same respect and fear. Among these officials, those who worked in the Chinese Protectorates and the Department of Police as clerks, interpreters and detectives, enjoyed even higher status and prestige than officials of other Departments.

The Chinese Protectorate, which was founded in 1877,⁵⁸ assumed considerable power in the control of the Chinese communities in Singapore and Malaya. The Protectorate had its head office in Singapore,⁵⁹ and branch offices in Penang and Malacca. Chinese Protectorates were also set up in the Protected Malay States with headquarters in each capital city of the states and branch offices in districts where the Chinese population was numerous. Apart from a few top officials, middle rank and junior officials of the Protectorates were Chinese.⁶⁰ These officials seemed to have special authority over their Chinese compatriots. They were held in high respect because their authority had direct bearing on the Chinese population, their friendship was keenly cultivated by those Chinese who wanted special favours from them. Because of this, some of them tended to abuse their power and authority. In 1896, a Chinese clerk in the Chinese Protectorate, Telok Anson, Perak, was found guilty of collecting protection fees from local Chinese brothels.⁶¹ The same misuse of power was also carried out by a Chinese interpreter for the government in Raub, Pahang, in 1900.⁶²

In contrast to the merchants and the educated elite, menial workers had a very low social standing in the overseas Chinese community. Although most immigrants started from the same basis, those who succeeded in amassing wealth climbed the social ladder to respectability, earning an image of being hard-working and smart; while those who failed were labelled lazy and unwise.⁶³ There was little social sympathy for their poverty, which was deemed to be of their own making.⁶⁴ As one writer put it, 'they did not know

how to save money, and squandered their money on gambling and opium-smoking'.⁶⁵ In the eyes of many people, menial workers had little social worthiness. Since they were struggling to make a livelihood, they were considered to be incapable of contributing a great deal to the community. For their lack of wealth and knowledge, they were deemed suitable only to be led and to be told what to do.

Class Relations

What was the relationship between classes in the overseas Chinese community? This is a hard question to answer owing to the paucity of relevant materials. The relationships between plantation owners and plantation workers, between mining proprietors and mining workers, and between shopkeepers and shop assistants, formed the class relations in the overseas Chinese community. Like many other societies, class relations in the overseas Chinese community were basically interdependent and exploitative. The plantation owners, mining proprietors and shopkeepers wanted to maximize their profits. To achieve this aim, they mobilized all available resources including kinship and dialect ties, and the power of the secret societies, to ensure smooth industrial relations. Many shopkeepers brought their kinsmen or relatives from China to work in their shops,⁶⁶ as did the plantation owners and mining proprietors. Apart from kinsmen and relatives, preference for employment was given to people speaking the same dialect or belonging to the same secret society.⁶⁷ Based on kinship and dialect ties and secret society brotherhood, the relationship between employers and employees was not seen in class terms, but as an extension of these ties. The employee was given the impression that his employment was not so much due to his merit, but to his possession of a special relationship with the employer to whom he felt obliged. The basis of this relationship was not a formal contract, but a verbal promise of the employer regarding remuneration which undoubtedly placed the employee at his mercy.⁶⁸

The class relation was seen not just from the perspective of personal ties, but also seen in the light of the traditional Confucian superior-subordinate relationship. This relationship was mutual and paternalistic. The employer, who was also a kinsman, relative, or fellow from the same district as the employee, assumed the position of superior, who had the welfare of his employee at heart, and who looked after the employee as much as possible. In return, the employee who was obliged to owe him absolute loyalty, and worked to the best of his ability for him. Based on this mutual good faith, the employer would occasionally improve his employee's wages and working

conditions, and he would take it as his moral duty to improve the quality of life of his employee. When the employer-employee relationship was not based on kinship and dialect ties, it was easily strained. When a plantation owner or a mining proprietor recruited a number of coolies on contract, he saw that he was not morally obligated to do as much as for his kinsmen, relatives or fellow village folk. This made his demands for working value from employees more extreme. If his demands were not met, he ill-treated them. The ill-treatment took the forms of confinement, beating and starvation. In 1890, the Acting Assistant Protector of Chinese in Penang, G. C. Wray, reported serious ill-treatment of Chinese coolies in a sugar plantation in Province Wellesley owned by Tan Kang Hok. A coolie was starved to death.⁶⁹ The ill-treatment of Chinese coolies appeared to be widespread in the estates in Province Wellesley.⁷⁰ On the other hand, the absence of modern unionism placed the workers in a disadvantageous position vis-à-vis the employers. Firstly, the workers were not organized into groups, and had no confidence with regard to collective strength; secondly, they had no organizational mechanism through which to deal with the employers; and thirdly, they had no organizations to coordinate their activities, and as a result, they possessed little bargaining power.

As pointed out by Michael Stenson, Chinese immigrant workers were characterized by poverty, ignorance, and a transitory nature;⁷¹ they were generally apathetic towards their common welfare. Added to these disadvantages was the attitude of the colonial government which adopted a policy of minimum interference in the industrial relations of the Chinese, the labour laws adopted during the period under study being mostly the codification of existing mining usage.⁷² As a result, some employers took advantage of the leniency of the laws and blatantly violated the contracts with their workers. For instance, sick workers were not sent to hospital as required by the contracts and this resulted in their death. In 1890, it was reported that employers in Jelabu sent their sick workers to the government hospital on the verge of death because it was more convenient for them to die there.⁷³ In 1893, it was claimed that employers in Ulu Selangor worked their sick labourers to the point of death and threw them out of the mines to die by the roadside.⁷⁴

However, there were two deterrents which checked the potential abuse of the system: the shortage of labour supply and the absconding of workers. The shortage of labourers for plantations and mines occurred in the Malay Peninsula and some parts of Southeast Asia at least up to the end of the nineteenth century. It meant that the employers had to offer good wages and suitable working conditions in order to attract workers to enter into

contracts in the first place. When labour became more precious in the market, the employers had to take a friendly attitude towards their workers, and to comply with workers' demand for higher wages.⁷⁵ The employers were also aware that it would be difficult to acquire continuous labour supply if they developed a bad reputation in maltreating workers.

Absconding was an effective weapon for workers to deter ill-treatment by employers. Production would be disrupted because of the absconding of workers, and it would be too expensive for the employers to recover the absconded workers. But there were still reports of individual coolies running away and group desertion as a result of ill-treatment by estate and mine owners.⁷⁶

Absconding was not just a form of protest against employers' abuses, it was also a means of escaping from existing contracts. Some workers were induced by more pay or better working conditions offered by alternative employers, and they resorted to absconding. In 1888, serious absconding of Chinese coolies took place in Krian, Perak, when about 10 per cent of the Chinese population (486 out of 4,697) absconded because of poaching of coolies by Chinese tin mining owners.⁷⁷ Kho Bu Ann (Khaw Boo Aun), a Chinese sugar planter who had 1,500 acres of sugar estate in Province Wellesley, complained that 50 per cent of his Chinese coolies ran away.⁷⁸ Towards the end of 1880s, absconding from tin mines in Selangor became so serious that a Chinese Immigration Depot was set up to control the movements of mining labourers.⁷⁹ The scheme was initiated by the local British colonial government with the support of Chinese mining proprietors. The support of the Chinese Kapitan of Kuala Lumpur, Yeh Chih-ying and the leaders of the other dialect groups for the scheme indicates the serious effect of absconding on the Chinese community as a whole;⁸⁰ as some of them were mining proprietors, their support for the scheme was an indication of deep concern for their economic interest.

Under this scheme, a brick building which could accommodate 1,200 men was constructed in Kuala Lumpur with funds raised in the Chinese community, and it was well supplied with water and other facilities. All newly-imported labourers (*sinkheh*) had to be registered at the depot and remained there at the expense of their brokers until employment was found for them. Employers who were in need of labour had to apply to the depot manager who communicated with the brokers. Agreements were made in duplicate and the particulars were registered at the depot. The agreement set out in detail the sum of money to be received in advance by the labourers, term of service, the place of work, the scale of remuneration, the hours of work, and the nature of the food and clothing to be provided.⁸¹ On the

expiration of a *sinkheh's* term of service, he had to obtain a certificate stating that his agreement has been fulfilled. On presenting it to the depot he was registered as a *lau-kheh* (old hand). He was then free to take a job where he chose as long as he held the certificate of fulfilment of the contract. At the same time employers who engaged labourers who did not provide such a certificate were liable to a fine of S\$200.⁸² To prevent *sinkhehs* absconding to other states, a pass was to be obtained from the Chinese Kapitan before any coolie was allowed to leave Selangor.⁸³

The key to the control of the movements of labourers was the certificate of fulfilment of the contract and the interstate pass. Obviously the absconded workers were unable to obtain the certificate and hence had difficulty in finding alternative employment. The inability to obtain a pass meant they had little chance of running away to other states. The heavy fine imposed on the employers who engaged unregistered labourers effectively prevented the poaching of labourers from other employers. The scheme was managed by a committee of Chinese headed by the Chinese Kapitan.⁸⁴ The operation of the scheme was reported to have achieved great success, in solving the problem of absconding.⁸⁵ In retrospect, the scheme also closed a channel of social protest by workers against employers' ill-treatment, and seemed to have placed workers in a disadvantageous position vis-à-vis the employers. Although the scheme appears to be fair to both workers and employers by stating conditions and obligations of both sides in the agreement, it worked in favour of the latter. There was no way to ensure the employers fulfilled the contracts, and they could manipulate their power of issuing the certificate. They could use the certificate as a threat in order to extract more services from workers than stated in the contracts. Whether the operation of this scheme can be interpreted as a conspiracy between Chinese mining capitalists and the British colonial government in oppressing the workers is a matter of controversy. Perhaps the government was unconsciously in favour of the employers because they happened to be wealthy capitalists who had frequent contacts with government officers;⁸⁶ or perhaps they were an organized group and were able to articulate and press for their demands,⁸⁷ while, by comparison, the workers were generally illiterate, ignorant and unorganized, and had no way to pass their opinions to the government.

Social Mobility

Chinese society in Singapore and Malaya during the period under study was full of stories of 'rags to riches', men arrived from China as poor *sinkhehs* who rose to become wealthy capitalists within one generation. Song Ong Siang's

One Hundred Years' History of the Chinese in Singapore (London, 1923) and Arnold Wright's work *Twentieth Century Impressions of British Malaya* (London, 1908) contain many biographies of the wealthy Chinese in the region, and provide rich materials for such study. Men like, Tan Che Sang and Seah Eu Chin (Siah U Chin) of Singapore, Chang Pi-shih (Thio Tiau-w Siat) of Penang, Kapitan Yap Ah Loy of Kuala Lumpur and Towkay Yau Tat Shin of Ipoh, belonged to this category. The life stories of these capitalists provide us with insights into the social mobility in the overseas Chinese community.

Tan Che Sang was born in 1763 in Chang Chou prefecture,⁸⁸ Fukien Province, into a poor family. He left China at the age of 15 for South Seas (Southeast Asia) in quest of economic advancement. His first destination was Rhio, a Dutch port where he worked for a few years. When Penang was founded as a free port in 1786, he was attracted to the new settlement and remained there for ten years. He then proceeded to Malacca, and finally settled in Singapore.⁸⁹ He was known to be one of the wealthiest Chinese in early Singapore, kept his money in iron chests, and often slept among them.⁹⁰ He wielded enormous influence and power over his compatriots in the island.⁹¹

Seah Eu Chin was born in Swatow, Kwangtung Province, in 1805. His father was a yamen secretary, which enabled Seah to receive a Chinese classical education. He came to Singapore in 1823, and worked on board a Chinese junk. He was then attached to several vessels as a clerk. Engaged in bartering with the Malays for five years, he learned much about their customs, habits and needs. This valuable experience laid the foundation for his future success in business. He established an agency house in Circular Road in Singapore supplying trading junks with provisions and receiving from them on commission the produce they had collected.⁹² Having been successful in the commission business, he invested his money in real estate. As Singapore was booming, his investment in landed property reaped handsome profits. His business enterprises grew and extended to agricultural plantations; he was the first Chinese owner of large gambier and pepper plantations in Singapore. He was also a general trader dealing in Chinese tea and European cotton piece goods, and had extensive contacts with the European community so that he was made a member of the Singapore Chamber of Commerce in 1840, probably the first Chinese to be admitted into that organization.⁹³ He became the leader of the Singapore Teochew community around 1830 when he was elected as the president (*tsungli*) of the Ngee Ann Kun, a dialect organization representing all Teochews in the island.⁹⁴ His leadership status among the Teochews was shown by his

representation of the Teochew community in dealing with the government.⁹⁵ He was then recognized by the British colonial government in Singapore as an important leader of the whole Chinese community,⁹⁶ and his assistance was sought to restore law and order in Singapore in 1849,⁹⁷ and in 1854 following the great Hokkien and Teochew riots.⁹⁸ At the time of his death in 1883, his estate was estimated to be worth S\$1,359,000.⁹⁹

Chang Pi-shih was born in Ta P'u district, Kwangtung Province in 1840. His father was a *Hsiu-ts'ai* (Budding talent),¹⁰⁰ and Pi-shih had a chance to receive some traditional Chinese education at home. In 1856 at the age of 17, he left home for the Dutch East Indies to seek his fortune. He arrived in Batavia and worked as an assistant in a shop owned by his maternal uncle. He was young, intelligent and hard-working. His pleasant demeanour and good behaviour earned him the love of the daughter of the proprietor of a neighbouring rice shop which resulted in their marriage. With the help of his father-in-law, in 1865 he founded a company named Yu Ho engaged in the development of coconut and rice plantations.¹⁰¹ He established a good relationship with the Dutch colonial government in Java and acquired from it the monopoly of opium and liquor sale. Within a few years, he emerged to become a prominent merchant in Java.¹⁰² In 1877, he extended his business enterprises to North Sumatra. He owned large plantations of coconut, rubber, pepper, coffee and tea, and founded a bank and a shipping line. His steamers which ran between Penang and Aceh competed successfully with European ships.¹⁰³

In the 1880s, Chang Pi-shih extended his business empire to the Malay Peninsula. Using Penang as his base in the Peninsula, his company, named Tung Hsing, was involved in mining in Bentong and Klang and in the construction of commercial towns.¹⁰⁴ By the end of the nineteenth century, Chang was widely recognized as one of the wealthiest Chinese capitalists in Southeast Asia. With his wealth, reputation and his special connection with Huang Tsun-hsien,¹⁰⁵ the Chinese Consul-General for the Straits Settlements, Chang was appointed as the Chinese Vice-Consul in Penang in 1893.¹⁰⁶ In 1895 he was appointed Acting Consul-General of the Straits Settlements.¹⁰⁷ In early 1903, he donated a sum of 200,000 taels to the Bureau of Railway and Mining (Lu K'uang Chi) for setting up its new technical school. As a result, he was recommended by the Governor-General of Chihli, Wang Wen-shao, to the court for a special award.¹⁰⁸ He was given an imperial audience by the Empress Dowager Tz'u-hsi, and was made an Expectant of Third Rank Director of Court of Sacrificial Worship (San-p'in ching-t'ang hou-pu),¹⁰⁹ and was conferred an official title of Vice President of a Board (Shih-lang hsien) pending an appointment after the establishment of the

proposed Ministry of Commerce.¹¹⁰ His official career reached its peak in 1904-1905 when he was appointed Imperial Commissioner to Inspect Commercial Affairs (K'ao-ch'a shang-wu ta-ch'en) and concurrently the Imperial Commissioner in Charge of Agriculture, Industry, Railway Mining Operations of the Kwangtung and Fukien Provinces.¹¹¹ Chang was thus heavily involved in the development of the modern Chinese economy, including railway construction, mining, agricultural farming and manufacturing.¹¹²

Yap Ah Loy was a man of different cut. Born in Hui Yang district, Huichow prefecture of the Kwangtung Province, on 14 March 1837,¹¹³ he was an ethnic Hakka. His father was an impoverished tenant farmer. The severe agrarian problems in South China were aggravated by the opening of the treaty ports and the political chaos as a result of the rise of the Taiping movement. Like many other peasant families, Yap's family was driven by outside forces to the brink of bankruptcy. Ah Loy had to spend his childhood as a 'cow-boy' (mu niu-t'ung) and, at the age of 13 and 14, he became a farm-hand trying to eke out a living. He had no opportunity to receive any education.

In 1854 Ah Loy left China for Malaya. He arrived in Malacca, and was helped by his clansman, Yap Ket Si (Yeh Kuo-sze) who found him a job as a mining worker at Durian Tunggal. After four months, Ah Loy left Durian Tunggal for Kessang where he was taken in by another kinsman named Yap Ng (Yeh Wu) as a shop assistant, and he stayed there for about a year. Probably because he was not used to the local hot climate or his performance as a shop assistant was not impressive, Yap Ng decided to send Ah Loy back to China with a sum of money. But when the junk was anchored off the coast of Johore, Ah Loy was enticed to gamble and lost all the money.¹¹⁴ Fearing disgrace, he decided to go to Lukut to try his luck. Lukut at that time was a booming tin mining town, and Ah Loy seized the opportunity and started his business enterprise from there. He was taken in by a fellow Huichow Hakka miner in 1856 as a cook. After three years' hard work, he saved a reasonable sum of capital; at the same time, he also learned a lot about the management of a tin mine and the way of controlling workers. With the help of his clansman Yap Fook (Yeh Fu), he started his business of selling and buying pigs and tin ores. With the great demand for pork consumption among the local Chinese population, his business was very successful. He thus extended his business activities to a neighbouring town, Sungei Ujong, where a large number of Hakka Chinese congregated.¹¹⁵

The rise of Yap Ah Loy's power and fame was, however, due to his close relationship with a fellow Huichow Hakka named Liu Ngim Kong (Liu Jen-

kuang), a Panglima of the Chinese Kapitan of Sungei Ujong, Sheng Ming-li.¹¹⁶ War clouds gathered in Sungei Ujong when Ah Loy arrived. Because of continuous disputes over tin mining, the Malay chiefs and Chinese tin miners were divided into two opposing groups engaged in feud and war. Ah Loy was recommended by Liu Ngim Kong to Kapitan Sheng, and was made Deputy Panglima. Although Ah Loy was defeated in a major conflict in 1860 during which Kapitan Sheng was captured and killed, he nevertheless impressed many Chinese with his ability. Later when law and order were restored in that town, he was recommended for the position as the Kapitan of Sungei Ujong in 1861.¹¹⁷ At the end of 1861, Ah Loy left Sungei Ujong for Kuala Lumpur, a new mining centre, at the invitation of his old friend Liu Ngim Kong, who was then the local Chinese Kapitan. Ah Loy became the manager of Liu's tin mines with a good salary; at the same time, he started his own tin mines and in 1865 founded a Chinese drug store named 'Teh Sheng'.¹¹⁸ With his ability and the trust of Liu Ngim Kong, he emerged to become a powerful figure in Kuala Lumpur, and in 1868 succeeded Liu to become the Chinese Kapitan of Kuala Lumpur.¹¹⁹

His succession to the position of the Chinese Kapitan of Kuala Lumpur was a turning point in Yap Ah Loy's career. For the first time, he demonstrated his administrative ability and political acumen. He ruled the Chinese community in Kuala Lumpur with an iron hand and effectively maintained law and order. Of course, he used his political power to benefit himself economically, and became one of the largest tin miners in Selangor.¹²⁰ But he quickly became involved in the civil war in the state which lasted for several years.¹²¹ From March 1873 to 1880, he was the *de facto* ruler of Kuala Lumpur, and proved to be an able administrator.¹²² He was also a very successful capitalist. He was one of the richest men in Selangor owning numerous tin mines, plantations, factories, shops and land.¹²³

Towkay Yau Tat Shin (Yao Teh-sheng) was born in a peasant family in P'ing Yen district, Chia Ying prefecture of Kwangtung Province. He received some traditional Chinese education but because of his poor background, he had to leave school at a very early age and worked as a transport coolie on the border between Kwangtung and Kiangsi. In search of economic advancement he left China for Malaya. He arrived in Sungei Ujong and worked in a tin mine as a coolie. With his ability, he was soon promoted to head coolie. But his ambition was to start his own mine and become a wealthy capitalist.¹²⁴

He thus gave up his job and became a hawker which provided him with a better opportunity to save. When he was informed of a better mining opportunity in Perak, he quickly moved to Ipoh where he started a grocery

shop named 'Teh Ho'. At the same time, he was making contacts to pave the way for his entry into mining enterprises. With the capital generated from his grocery shop and his business skills, he had a good start in tin mining. He then expanded his business, and joined with other rich miners like Cheng Keng Kwee and Loke Yew in buying up mining lands in Perak and Selangor. He was also involved in opium, liquor farming and building contracts.¹²⁵ He received a large contract from the Perak government to construct 300 shops in Ipoh, and thus became one of the richest Chinese capitalists in Malaya.

The life stories of the above wealthy capitalists reveal certain conditions which contributed to the rapid social mobility from the bottom to the top.

Intelligence. This included components such as education, foresight, and administrative ability. The entrepôt trade in Penang and Singapore, and the rapid economic development in the Malay States provided an excellent opportunity for immigrants to make fortunes. As the majority of the immigrants were illiterate, those with some education or foresight were able to exploit these opportunities. Seah Eu Chin and Chang Pi-shih's education proved to be valuable in their careers. While all of them seemed to have possessed foresight which guided them in their business enterprises. Once their business expanded, they needed administrative ability to manage their business empires. Yap Ah Loy and Chang Pi-shih had demonstrated their extraordinary ability not only in their business managements, but also in political affairs.

Kinship and dialect ties. As the Chinese community in Singapore and Malaya was so rigidly segregated, kinship and dialect ties were most important in social connections. Those who had kinsmen, relatives and fellow villagers overseas stood a better chance of climbing the social ladder. The help that Chang Pi-shih and Yap Ah Loy received from their relatives and fellow villagers proved to be most valuable in their early successes.

The capacity to overcome certain disqualifications. There were many social 'evils' in the Chinese community, principally gambling, opium-smoking, drinking and prostitution. Involvement in these social 'evils' reduced the ability of the immigrants to accumulate capital. Gambling was in particular an 'evil' that would destroy one's chance for upward social mobility. All the above wealthy capitalists seemed not to have the gambling habit, or indulged in opium-smoking. Yap Ah Loy who lost all his passage money in gambling had learned a lesson, and he did not seem to have gambled again.

This rapid mobility within one generation was one of the patterns of the upward social mobility in the Chinese society during the period under study. Another pattern was the rapid mobility within two generations.

Under this pattern, the father was an immigrant who managed to accumulate some wealth to become a shopkeeper or owner of some enterprises. When his son who was local-born succeeded him, the business was expanded to become an empire, and the son became a wealthy capitalist. In fact, many of the life stories collected in Song Ong Siang's work are examples of this two-generation mobility. The stories of Teo Lee, Tan Kim Seng, Hoo Ah Kay, Wee Ah Hood and Cheang Hong Lim are some of them.¹²⁶

The reasons for this two-generation rapid mobility are obvious. The immigrant who worked hard to save money had laid a solid foundation for his children. With this capital and business base, the children could achieve rapid accumulation of wealth by expanding the business activities. They also acquired knowledge of how to do business from the father. On the other hand, as most second-generation Chinese were local-born, they received an English education which was crucial for contacts with the government and European capitalists; they were also more familiar with local conditions, and were therefore in a better position than the immigrants to accumulate wealth. This helps to explain why the Malacca-born Chinese were very successful in the early period of Singapore society.¹²⁷

What we have discussed above are some of the patterns of upward social mobility, but these patterns by no means represent the norm. Those people who achieved rapid mobility within one and two generations were in the minority. Many Chinese immigrants did achieve some mobility in their lifetime. For a member of the artisan class to move up to become a merchant was relatively easy. For a carpenter, blacksmith, goldsmith, cook or tailor, he could start a shop to do business with a sum of money. Partnership was sometimes favoured because of the lack of a good banking system in the Chinese community.¹²⁸ Thus an artisan became a proprietor-worker. On the one hand, he was working for wages; on the other, he worked not for an employer but for himself. If he put in more time, he would gain more return. A tailor was the best example in this category. He could start a small shop making clothes for coolies or shopkeepers, he would gain his handsome income as a proprietor-worker. Once he had saved more money, he could expand his shop or move to a larger shop, and would take in one or two apprentices. As business grew, he took in more apprentices, and would reduce his involvement in making clothes but remained in a supervisory position. Eventually, he would become a merchant. This transformation of an artisan into a merchant could take years, depending on business itself. This process of transformation also took place among the apprentices. Those who had learned the skill and had saved some money would quit the master's shop and start a small shop of their own, and then expand to become merchants.¹²⁹

For unskilled workers, coolies, upward social mobility was more difficult. These included the workers in plantations and mines, and rickshaw pullers. As their labour could be easily replaced, they lost their bargaining power. Because of hard physical labour and frustration, they tended to indulge in gambling, opium-smoking and prostitutes.¹³⁰ This further reduced their ability to save. In fact, only a small number of them succeeded in moving up the social ladder. There were several ways of achieving this upward mobility: to move up from a rickshaw puller to a rickshaw owner; to become a hawker, peddler or small planter, and then a merchant. A small number of rickshaw pullers managed to change their status to be rickshaw owners. They were the coolies who were determined to climb the social ladder. They worked hard and resisted social evils. After having saved enough money, they bought their first rickshaw and then purchased more and let them out for hiring.¹³¹ Just as in Chinese society today, the Chinese community in Singapore and Malaya was rich in varieties of food which provided jobs as hawkers, meat, vegetable and fruit peddlers. Those coolies who had saved a small sum of money could change their jobs to become hawkers or peddlers. In the Malay states, some of the coolies could also become transient peddlers selling general goods and buying local produce in the Malay villages.¹³² The advantages of being hawkers, peddlers or transient peddlers were that their business required small capital, flexible working hours, and a better return for their labour. After succeeding in small business, they could then start a shop to become a merchant. To be a merchant was to be known and recognized. The status of merchant was acquired when someone started a shop dealing in goods and selling goods, and his activities were accepted by the local people as those of a merchant. When a hawker or peddler struggled to become a merchant, he had to rent a shop and to give the shop a name. The shop's name had to be registered with the government and accepted by the local community. Then the shop-owner would be recognized as a merchant. The acquisition of merchant status was important because a certain prestige and respect were accorded.

Alternatively, some coolies after serving their required terms changed to become small pioneer planters. They obtained a loan from shopkeepers in the city, cleared a piece of forest land and planted vegetables, plantains and indigo at first, and later crops such as pepper and gambier.¹³³ The clearing and planting were hard and the return was slow. But if they endured to the time of production and hit the high market price, they would make a very lucrative return. With this success they changed their status to become a merchant or a planter-merchant.

Conclusion

Chinese immigrants did not bring with them a class system from China, but when they congregated overseas, their social grouping was influenced by their experience in China and the values prevalent in the village communities in Southeast China. The Confucian concept of hierarchical order left an indelible imprint on their minds, and had a profound impact on the creation of a class system overseas. In a community where mandarins, scholar-gentry or priests were absent, merchants ranked top of the social hierarchy, and wealth became the main channel of social mobility. In such a relatively fluid society, the rate of upward social mobility was higher than that in China. However, class distinction still existed, and class exploitation was hidden in a complex social relationship based on kinship and dialect affiliations. This quasi-Confucian superior-subordinate relationship was a useful social mechanism which the employers could use to smooth industrial relations, and to prevent the rise of modern unionism in overseas Chinese society.

Endnotes

- * This article was first published in the *Modern Asian Studies Journal*, Vol. 21, No. 3 (Cambridge University Press, 1987), pp. 417-45.
- 1. See Wang Gungwu, 'Traditional Leadership in a New Nation: The Chinese in Malaya and Singapore', in G. Wijeyawardene (ed.), *Leadership and Authority: A Symposium* (Singapore, 1968), p. 210; see also Wang Gungwu, *Community and Nation: Essays on Southeast Asia and the Chinese* (Singapore, 1981), p. 162.
- 2. *Ibid.*
- 3. This term is still popularly used in Singapore and Malaysia. The association of mining proprietors is called 'K'uang-shang kung-hui', and the term K'uang-shang is frequently used by local Chinese newspapers to refer to those mining proprietors.
- 4. For a discussion of the impact of Confucianism on traditional Chinese class structure, see Tung-tsu Chu, 'Chinese Class Structure and Its Ideology', in J.K. Fairbank (ed.), *Chinese Thought and Institutions* (Chicago, 1967), pp. 235-50.
- 5. *Sing Po* editorial commented that more and more Chinese merchants were interested in acquiring Ch'ing official titles because of their increasing consciousness of status and prestige. See *Sing Po*, 9 August 1892, pp. 1 and 8. For a discussion of the motives of acquiring Ch'ing titles by the Chinese in Singapore and Malaya during this period, see Yen Ching-hwang, 'Ch'ing's Sale of Honours and the Chinese Leadership in Singapore and Malaya, 1877-1912', in *Journal of Southeast Asian Studies*, Vol. 1, No. 2 (Singapore, 1970), pp. 20-32.
- 6. See Ping-ti Ho, *The Ladder of Success in Imperial China* (New York, 1964), pp. 18ff.
- 7. The wearing of Chinese jackets and robes can be seen from photographs of some wealthy Chinese in Singapore, in particular the photograph of Hoo Ah Kay, Tan Beng Sweet,

- Ong Sam Leong, Wee Ah Hood, and Lee Cheng Yan, see Song Ong Siang, *One Hundred Years' History of the Chinese in Singapore* (London 1923; Singapore, 1967, reprint), pp. 52-111; I guess that most of the jackets and robes of these wealthy Chinese were made of good quality silk, partly because a large quantity of Soochow and Hangchow silk (the best silk produced in China) was imported and sold in Singapore. Chop Mei Jui Ho, for instance, was famous for its dealing in Soochow and Hangchow silk. See Huang Shan-ju, 'Wu-Shih chiu nien te hui-ku' (Reminiscence of My Past Fifty-Nine Years), in Huang Chai-ning (ed.), *Hsin-chia-po Ning-yang hui-kuan i-pai san-shih chou-nien chin-nien t'e-k'an* (Souvenir Magazine of 130th Anniversary Celebration of the Ning Yeung Association of Singapore) (Singapore, 1952), 'lun-chu' column, pp. 9-12.
8. In February 1869, some wealthy Chinese merchants issued a circular requesting their friends to distinguish themselves from the members of the lower classes by wearing stockings. See Song Ong Siang, *op. cit.*, p. 153.
 9. See Siah U Chin (Seah Eu Chin), 'General Sketch of the Numbers, Tribes, and Avocations of the Chinese in Singapore', in *Journal of the Indian Archipelago and Eastern Asia*, Vol. 2 (Singapore, 1848), p. 288.
 10. In 1907, a skilled worker (fitter, moulder or brass worker) employed by the Messrs. Riley Hargreaves & Company Ltd earned at least \$1.40 per day. He worked 6 days a week or more, so his income must have been at least \$36 per month. A junior officer, such as clerk or draughtsman, earned between \$40 and \$50 a month in 1890. See 'Evidence given by C.E.F. Saunderson, Acting Managing Director of Messrs. Riley Hargreaves & Co. Ltd., on 10th August 1907', in *Straits Settlements and Federated Malay States Opium Commission 1908, Proceedings*, Vol. 2, p. 34; *The Perak Government Gazette*, 1890, Vol. 3, No. 14, p. 284; *The Perak Government Gazette*, 1891, Vol. 4, No. 4, p. 64.
 11. Siah U Chin, 'General Sketch' (see No. 9), pp. 288-9; in 1847, Dr R. Little interviewed a group of opium smokers in Singapore and found that most of them (29 out of 35) were coolies who spent most of their income on opium. The average monthly income was about S\$4. See R. Little, 'On the Habitual Use of Opium in Singapore', in *Journal of the Indian Archipelago and Eastern Asia*, Vol. 2 (1848), pp. 41-2.
 12. At the turn of the twentieth century, tin-mining workers in Malaya earned between S\$5 and S\$8 per month. In 1911, the agricultural workers were paid from S\$5 to S\$9 in Singapore and from S\$6 to S\$12 in Penang. See *Straits Settlements Blue Books*, 1911, p. W3; R.N. Jackson, *Immigrant Labour and the Development of Malaya, 1786-1920* (Kuala Lumpur, 1961), p. 89.
 13. Gan Ghoh Bee was the head of a syndicate which controlled the Penang Opium and Spirit Farms between 1901 and 1903. The net profit of the Farm was \$700,000. Gan held one-fourth share of the syndicate which amounted to \$150,000 for those three years. See 'Correspondence regarding the Reduction in the Rent of the Penang Opium and Spirit Farms', in *Straits Settlements Legislative Council Proceedings 1905*, appendix No. 10.
 14. See *Lat Pau* (*The Straits Daily*), 1 September 1888, p. 2.
 15. *Lat Pau*, 14 February 1889, p. 2.
 16. Under Cheang Hong Lim's name, a sum of S\$4,000 was donated, his son Jim Hean donated S\$1,725, another son Jim Kheng \$795, and another son Jim Chwan S\$1,450. See *The Straits Times*, 3 January 1890, p. 2; *Lat Pau*, 5 February 1890, pp. 5-6.

17. See Song Ong Siang, *op. cit.*, p. 169.
18. *Ibid.*, p. 184.
19. Obviously these donations for various relief funds in China were the payment for the purchase of Ch'ing honours. For details, see Yen Ching-hwang, 'Ch'ing Sale of Honours and the Chinese Leadership in Singapore and Malaya, 1877-1912', in *Journal of Southeast Asian Studies*, Vol. 1, No. 2 (September 1970), pp. 20-32.
20. This practice still can be seen in shops in Singapore and Malaysia.
21. See Siah U Chin, 'General Sketch' (see No. 9), p. 288.
22. See *Selangor Journal*, Vol. 4 (Kuala Lumpur, 1895), pp. 27-9.
23. See the 'Petition of House-Owners in Singapore to the Governor and the Members of the Legislative Council of the Straits Settlements dated 29 October, 1875', in *Straits Settlements Legislative Council Proceedings 1876*, appendix No. 9.
24. See Song Ong Siang, *op. cit.*, p. 20.
25. See a court case involved in the dispute over inheritance of the estate of Seah Eu Chin (Siah U Chin) between Seah Liang Seah and Seah Eng Kiat, in *Straits Settlements Law Reports*, Vol. 4 (1897), p. 28.
26. See 'Annual Report on the State of Selangor for the Year 1885', in *Straits Settlements Legislative Council Proceedings 1886*, appendix No. 22, p. 284.
27. See Siah U Chin, 'General Sketch' (see No. 9), p. 284.
28. For instance, a wealthy Chinese capitalist, Cheng Keng Kuei, once a Chinese Kapitan of Perak, had several wives and concubines; another wealthy Chinese in Penang, Hsueh Tseng-i also had at least five wives and concubines. See K'uang Kuo-hsiang, *Ping-ch'eng san-chi (Anecdotes of Penang)* (Hong Kong, 1958), pp. 113, 120.
29. A number of mansions were built in Singapore in the second half of the nineteenth century by these wealthy capitalists. One of the mansions which was built by a well-known Teochew, Ch'en Hsu-nien (Tan Hiok Nee), still exists in Singapore. See Chang Ch'ing-chiang, 'Ch'en Hsu-nien yu tsu-cheng ti' (Ch'en Hsu-nien and his Mansion), in Lin Hsiao-sheng (Lim How Seng) and others, *Shih-le ku-chi (The Historical Relics of Singapore)* (Singapore, 1975), pp. 225-30. Apart from mansions, the rich also built villas and gardens for enjoyment. Cheang Hong Lim had a famous 'Ming Yun villa', Wu Chin-ch'ing, also known as Wu I-ting had a villa named 'Teh Yuen Garden'. But the most famous garden was built by Hoo Ah Kay named 'Nam Sang Garden' which impressed many European and Chinese visiting dignitaries. See *Lat Pau*, 5 June 1888, p. 1; *Sing Po*, 3 May 1892, p. 1; Kuo Sung-t'ao, *Shih-hsi chi-ch'eng (The Record of an Envoy's Journey to the West)*; see also J.D. Frodsham's English translation, in J.D. Frodsham (trans.), *The First Chinese Embassy to the West: The Journals of Kuo Sung-t'ao, Liu Hsi-hung and Chang Te-yi* (Oxford, 1974), pp. 13-4.
30. See *Lat Pau*, 10 December 1890, p. 1; see also Yen Ching-hwang, 'Ch'ing Sale of Honours', p. 28.
31. For instance, a wealthy capitalist in Singapore, Choa Chong Long, celebrated his forty-fourth birthday by giving a grandiose dinner to all influential residents in the island, including many Europeans. European dishes and Chinese luxuries were served. See *The*

- Singapore Chronicle*, 9 June 1831; C.B. Buckley, *An Anecdotal History of Old Times in Singapore 1819-1867* (Kuala Lumpur, 1965, reprint), p. 215; Song Ong Siang, *op. cit.*, pp. 29-30.
32. For instance, a wealthy capitalist in Singapore, Wu Hsin-k'o (or known as Wu Chin-ch'ing, or Wu I-ting, and in Song Ong Siang's work romanized as Goh Sin Kho), celebrated the occasion of receiving a tablet deed from the Ch'ing court in June 1888. A big party was thrown in his villa, Teh Yuan Garden, with fireworks. Among those invited were other wealthy capitalists and the Ch'ing Consul, Tso Ping-lung. Wu was the proprietor of the firm Goh Guan Loo and Company owning several saw-mills at Kallang and owner of steamships. Another wealthy capitalist, Khoo Seok Wan, in October 1901 celebrated his acquisition of the Chu-shih title and the Fourth Rank, and more than 500 guests were invited. See 'Teh-yuan yuan t'i-ch'in chi' (The Gathering in the Teh Yuan Garden), in *Lat Pau*, 5 June 1888, p. 1; Song Ong Siang, *op. cit.*, p. 318; *Thien Nan Shin Pao*, 26 October 1901, p. 9, 29 October 1901, p. 2.
 33. See *Sing Po*, 3 May 1892, p. 1.
 34. This practice is still common among shopkeepers in small towns in Malaysia.
 35. See J.D. Vaughan, *The Manners and Customs of the Chinese of the Straits Settlements* (Taipei, 1971, reprint), p. 26.
 36. Coolie is the transliteration of a Chinese term K'u-li which means labourers. The term coolie became so popular in the West because of the massive number of Chinese labourers shipped to the new world. For a discussion of this term, see R.L. Irick, 'Ch'ing Policy Toward The Coolie Trade, 1847-1878' (an unpublished Ph.D. thesis of Harvard University, 1971), Vol. 1, p. 3.
 37. The term *sinkheh* seems to be the romanization according to a Southern Fukienese dialect of Hsin-k'e which literally means new guests.
 38. See R.N. Jackson, *Immigrant Labour and The Development of Malaya*, p. 51.
 39. Both official and private records have indicated that gambling and opium-smoking were rife in the overseas Chinese community during this period. See J.D. Vaughan, 'Notes on Chinese of Pinang', in *Journal of The Indian Archipelago and Eastern Asia*, Vol. 8 (1854), pp. 25-7; J.D. Vaughan, *The Manners and Customs of the Chinese of the Straits Settlements*, pp. 58-62; *Lat Pau*, 27 November 1887, p. 1; C.O. 273/257, p. 625. *Annual Departmental Reports of the Straits Settlements*, 1904, pp. 108-9; *Annual Departmental Reports of the Straits Settlements*, 1908, pp. 87-98.
 40. The need of this large number of single male workers was reflected in the number of brothels and prostitutes. In 1905, there were 383 brothels in Singapore, 144 in Penang and 21 in Malacca; and there were 2,710 prostitutes in Singapore, 1,201 in Penang and 158 in Malacca. This gives a total number of 548 brothels in these 3 cities, and the total number of prostitutes was 4,069. Apart from these registered brothels and prostitutes, there were also many illegal brothels and prostitutes. See *Annual Departmental Reports of the Straits Settlements*, 1905, p. 631; *Lat Pau*, 24 December 1887, p. 2, 13 December 1888, p. 1.
 41. See Siah U Chin, 'General Sketch', p. 285.
 42. See Yen Ching-hwang, 'Early Chinese Clan Organizations in Singapore and Malaya,

- 1819-1911', in *Journal of Southeast Asian Studies*, Vol. 12, No. 1 (March 1981), p. 81; J.D. Vaughan, 'Notes on Chinese of Pinang', p. 15; 'Hsueh-lan-ngo Char-yang hui-ch'un kuan shih' (A History of the Char Yang Recuperation Centre of Selangor), in *Hsueh-lan-ngo Char Yang hui-kuan yu Char-yang hui-ch'un kuan pai-nien ta-ch'ing t'e-k'an* (Souvenir Magazine of Centenary Celebration of the Char-Yang Association and the Char Yang Recuperation Centre of Selangor) (Kuala Lumpur, 1977), p. 8.
43. For instance, a charitable organization named Chung-hua chi k'un-chi hui (The Chinese Charitable Association of Malacca) was founded by a British Missionary, William Milne, in 1819. Most of the recipients were crippled, old men and women. See William Milne (ed.), *Ch'a-shih shu mei-yueh t'ung-chi chuan* (The Examiner), Vol. 7, 1st year of Tao-kuang reign (1821), pp. 5a-5b.
 44. In September 1849, there was a report in *The Singapore Free Press* about a serious problem created by beggars in Singapore streets. They become visible in Market, Malacca and Hill Streets. They became more active on Sundays in Bras Basah Road, Queen, Victoria, Church, Bencoolen and Middle Streets after divine service. Presumably they begged from Europeans and created a great nuisance for the general public. See *The Singapore Free Press*, 28 September 1849; for others reports on beggars, see also *Lat Pau*, 23 January 1908, p. 1.
 45. For instance, a coolie in Jelabu, Negri Sembilan, named Lim Nyun died in Jelabu hospital as the result of cutting his own throat. He was an old man emaciated by disease and opium-smoking. See 'Negri Sembilan Secretariat Files' (British Resident's Office), 1902, No. 4413.
 46. See Yong Ching Fatt, 'Chinese Leadership in Nineteenth Century Singapore', in *Hsin-she hsueh-pao* (Journal of the Island Society) (Singapore, 1967), Vol. 1, pp. 6-10.
 47. See Yen Ching-hwang, 'Early Chinese Clan Organizations in Singapore and Malaya', pp. 73-5.
 48. For instance, Raffles placed greater value on merchants than ordinary Chinese, and prepared to give merchants special treatment in the allocation of areas for their residence. See 'Notices of Singapore', in *Journal of Indian Archipelago and Eastern Asia*, Vol. 8 (1854), p. 102.
 49. For instance, on the Po Leong Kuk Committee in Singapore for the year 1898, well-known capitalists such as Tan Jiak Kim, Lee Cheng Yan, Gan Eng Seng and Ngo Siu Tin (Goh Siew Tin), Wee Kim Yam and Seah Song Seah were among those who were selected to represent different dialect groups. See 'Annual Report on the Chinese Protectorate for the year 1898', in *Straits Settlements Annual Departmental Report 1898*, p. 115.
 50. For example, Hoo Ah Kay and Tan Jiak Kim were conferred both British honours of C.M.G. and M.L.C., Seah Liang Seah, M.L.C., Lee Choon Guan, M.L.C., Eu Tong Seng, O.B.E., in Song Ong Siang, *op. cit.*, pp. 55, 112, 194, 213, 332.
 51. For instance, Hoo Ah Kay was made a member of Executive Council in 1869, later an extraordinary member of the Executive Council; Seah Liang Seah was appointed a member of the Legislative Council in 1883; Tan Jiak Kim was appointed a member of the Council in 1889. *Ibid.*, pp. 55, 194, 213.
 52. See 'Annual Report on the Chinese Protectorate, Singapore, for the Year 1889', in *Straits Settlements Annual Departmental Reports 1889*, p. 188.

53. For instance, in the 1899 Chinese Advisory Board of Singapore, well-known capitalists such as Tan Jiak Kim, Lee Cheng Yan, Tan Cheng Tuan, Go Sin Kho represented the Hokkien group, while Seah Liang Seah, Wee Kim Yam, Chua Tzu Yong, represented the Teochew group. See 'Report on the Chinese Protectorate', in *Straits Settlements Annual Departmental Reports 1899*, p. 302.
54. See 'Annual Report of the Chinese Protectorate, for the year 1894', in *Straits Settlements Annual Departmental Reports 1894*, p. 349.
55. For instance, the Penang Chinese Advisory Board in 1894 expressed its strong disapproval of the Women and Girls' Protection Ordinance Amendment, and insisted upon the necessity for a Reformatory. *Ibid.*
56. Since 1874, the Penang government had appointed some respectable Chinese as Jurors of the local court, many of them were clerks of foreign firms, on the Penang Juror list for the year 1882, Cheah Hay Seang was a cashier, Charter Bank; Lee Ah Seng, clerk of the Chartered Bank; Goh Quan Leam, clerk to A.M. Watson; Hoh Tek Cheong, clerk S. Kustermann & Co., Hoh Tek Keng, clerk, Brown & Co.; Koh Ah Fat, clerk, Brown & Co.; Neo Choo chye, cashier, Mercantile Bank; Pan Ah Fat, clerk, Chartered Bank; Soh Teng Gan, clerk, Mercantile Bank, and others. See 'List of Penang Jurors for 1882', in *Straits Settlements Legislative Council Proceedings 1881*, appendix No. 35. In 1881, eleven Chinese were appointed Jurors by the Malacca government for the year 1882, three of them belonged to the upper Shih group. They were Chua Cheng Wee, clerk, Chua Kim Swee, auctioneer and Kho Choon Seng, Shroff of the Treasury Department. See 'List of Malacca Jurors for 1882', in *ibid.*, appendix No. 36.
57. For the power and influence of the Yamen clerks and runners in Ch'ing China, see Tung-tsu Chu, *Local Government in China under the Ch'ing* (Cambridge, Massachusetts, 1962), pp. 36-73.
58. For factors leading to the founding of the Chinese Protectorates in the Straits Settlements, see Eunice Thio, 'The Singapore Chinese Protectorate: Events and Conditions Leading to its Establishment, 1823-1877', in *Journal of the South Seas Society* (Singapore), Vol. XVI, pts. 1 and 2 (1960), pp. 40-80.
59. The office of the Singapore Chinese Protectorate was opened on 1 June 1877. See 'Annual Report of the Protector of Chinese for the Year 1877 by W.A. Pickering dated 12th January 1878', in *Straits Settlements Legislative Council Proceedings 1878*, appendix No. 6.
60. In Kinta district, Perak, for instance, the Chinese Affairs office consisted of five people, the Acting Protector of Chinese, a Junior officer and three Chinese clerks. See *The Perak Government Gazette 1891*, Vol. 4, No. 26, p. 765.
61. See 'High Commissioner's Office Files (Federated Malay States)', 105/1896.
62. See 'Selangor Secretariat Files' (British Resident's Office), 6746/1900.
63. See *Lat Pau*, 23 January 1908, p. 1.
64. See Siah U Chin, 'General Sketch' (see No. 9), p. 285.
65. See *Thien Nan Shin Pao*, 15 May 1900, p. 2.

66. See Song Ong Siang, *Chinese in Singapore*, p. 96; see also Yen Ching-hwang, *The Overseas Chinese and the 1911 Revolution: With Special Reference to Singapore and Malaya* (Kuala Lumpur, 1976), p. 4; for a similar situation in the Chinese community in the Philippines, see E. Wickburg, *The Chinese in Philippine Life* (New Haven and London, 1965), p. 172.
67. Kapitan Yap Kwan Seng of Selangor, a Hakka, employed mostly Hakka coolies in his mines. In 1889, he had 7,000 coolies on his payroll. See 'Evidence given by Yip Kim Sheng (Yap Kwan Seng) to the commission on 10th January 1891' (Evidence 174), in 'Report of the Commissioner Appointed to Enquire into the State of Labour in the Straits Settlements and the Protected Native States, 1891', C.O. 275/41, also in *Straits Settlements Legislative Council Proceedings 1891*, appendix.
68. Sung Tzu-chiang, an employee of Wu Hsin-k'o, of Chop Teh Yuan in Singapore, appealed against Wu for his failure to pay verbally promised wages. This took place in 1888 or earlier. See 'Petition of Sung Tzu-chiang to the Protector of Chinese of the Straits Settlements', in G.T. Hare (ed.), *Text Book of Documentary Chinese*, pt. 1, Vol. 1, pp. 13-4.
69. See 'Chinese Labourers in Province Wellesley: A Report by G.C. Wray, Acting Assistant Protector of Chinese, to the Resident Councillor of Penang dated 2nd June, 1890' in *Straits Settlements Legislative Council Proceedings 1890*, appendix No. 21.
70. This was the evidence given by the Acting Senior District Officer of Province Wellesley, W. Egerton to the Labour Commission on 18 December 1890. Egerton stated that ill-treatment of Chinese coolies took place in both Chinese and European estates, and some coolies were tied up and beaten. See 'Report of the Commissioners Appointed to enquire into the State of Labour in the Straits Settlements and the Protected Native States, 1891', in C.O. 275/41.
71. See Michael Stenson, *Industrial Conflict in Malaya: Prelude to the Communist Revolt in 1948* (London, 1970), pp. 1-10.
72. See Wong Lin Ken, *The Malayan Tin Industry to 1914* (Tucson, 1965), p. 74.
73. See 'Annual Report for the State of Jelabu for 1890', in *British Parliamentary Papers: Accounts and Papers*, C. 6576, 1892, p. 79.
74. See 'The Administration Report of the State of Selangor for the year 1893', in *British Parliamentary Papers: Accounts and Papers*, C. 7546, 1894, p. 27.
75. In 1899, the continued high price of tin created great competition for labour in Selangor. High wages had been demanded by the coolies in tin mines. See 'Annual Report of the Chinese Secretariat of Selangor for 1899', in 'Selangor Secretariat Files' (British Resident's Office), 905/1900.
76. See 'Chinese Labourers in Province Wellesley: A Report by G.C. Wray, Acting Assistant Protector of Chinese, to the Resident Councillor of Penang dated 2nd June, 1890', in *Straits Settlements Legislative Council Proceedings 1890*, appendix No. 21; 'Evidence given by W. Egerton, Acting Senior district Officer, Province Wellesley, to the Labour Commission on 18th December, 1890', in 'Report of the Commissioners Appointed to Enquire into the State of Labour in the Straits Settlements and the Protected Native States, 1891', C.O. 275/41.
77. See *The Perak Government Gazette 1899*, Vol. 2, No. 6, pp. 190-1.

78. See 'Evidence given by Kho Bu Ann to the Labour Commission on 27th November, 1890', in 'Report of the Commissioners Appointed to Enquire into the State of Labour in the Straits Settlements and the Protected Native States, 1891', C.O. 275/41.
79. See 'The Administration Report of the State of Selangor for the year 1890', in *British Parliamentary Papers: Accounts and Papers*, C.6576, pp. 39-40.
80. According to a report, the British colonial officer took the initiative to organize a meeting in September 1888 to discuss the question of absconding. Those invited were the Chinese Kapitan Yeh Chih-ying, prominent Chinese leaders Chao I-yung, Yap Kwan Seng and Yeh Li-wang; the leader of Teochew group, K'o Ch'un-po; the leaders of Hokkien groups, Chao Shih-chu, Ch'iu Lien-ch'i, Ch'en Hsiang-p'u and Ch'en Chin-lan; the leader of Ta P'u Hakka group, Chang Kao-ying and the leader of Chia Ying Hakka group, Li Ch'i-jen. The meeting resolved to raise money among Chinese merchants, and a fund-raising committee was formed. See *Lat Pau*, 10 October 1888, p. 1.
81. See 'The Administration Report of the State of Selangor for the year 1890', in *British Parliamentary Papers: Accounts and Papers*, C.6576, p. 40.
82. *Ibid.*
83. In giving evidence to the Labour Commission on 10 January 1891, the Chinese Kapitan of Selangor, Yap Kwan Seng (Yip Kim Sheng), stated that no Chinese coolie could leave the state unless provided with a pass issued by him. See 'Report of the Commissioners Appointed to Enquire into the State of Labour in the Straits Settlements and the Protected Native States, 1891', in C.O. 275/41.
84. See 'The Administration Report of the State of Selangor for the Year 1890', in *British Parliamentary Papers: Accounts and Papers*, C.6576, p. 40.
85. *Ibid.*
86. See John Butcher, *The British in Malaya 1880-1941: The Social History of a European Community in Colonial Southeast Asia* (Kuala Lumpur, 1979), pp. 67-8.
87. See Wong Lin Ken, *The Malayan Tin Industry to 1914*, p. 73.
88. According to Song Ong Siang, Tan Che Sang was a Cantonese born in Canton in 1763. But Professor Hsu Yun-ts'iao claims that Tan Che Sang's real name was Tan Sang (Ch'en Sung), the word Che was the transliteration of a Southern Fukien term *Shu* (uncle) which was a title of respect given to an older person, and Tan Sang was a Southern Fukienese. Strong evidence given by Professor Hsu to his claim is that Tan Che Sang was buried in the Heng Shan Cemetery which was controlled by the Chang Chou and Ch'uan Chou people of southern Fukien. I think Professor Hsu's claim can be supported further by the fact that 'Tan' is the romanization of the surname 'Ch'en' of Southern Fukienese or Teochews. If Tan Che Sang was a Cantonese, his surname should normally be romanized as 'Chan' rather than 'Tan'. See Hsu Yun-ts'iao, *Ma-lai-ya ts'ung-t'an (Anecdotal History of Malaya)* (Singapore, 1961) pp. 27-8; Song Ong Siang, *op. cit.*, p. 13.
89. Song Ong Siang, *op. cit.*
90. See C.B. Buckely, *An Anecdotal History of Old Times in Singapore* (Kuala Lumpur, 1965, reprint), p. 216; Hsu Yun-ts'iao, *Ma-lai-ya ts'ung-t'an*, p. 28.

91. It was reported in the *Singapore Chronicle* that Che Sang was asked to settle a dispute involving three Chinese men who struck down a poor woman into the gutter. With the permission of the government, he sentenced the three men to receive a dozen lashes each, inflicted on them publicly with a ratan. See *Singapore Chronicle*, 3 March 1831.
92. Song Ong Siang, *op. cit.*, pp. 19-20; 'She Yu-chin hsien-sheng' (Mr Sean Eu Chin), in P'an Hsing-nung (ed.), *Ma-lai-ya Ch'ao-ch'iao t'ung-chien* (*The Teochews in Malaya*) (Singapore, 1950), pp. 78-80.
93. Song Ong Siang, *ibid.*; P'an Hsing-nung (ed.), *ibid.*
94. See 'letter from Yang Chan-wen to the Directors of the Singapore Teo Chew Poit Ip Huay Kuan and the Ngee Ann Kongsi dated 28 October 1965', in P'an Hsing-nung (ed.), *Souvenir Magazine of 40th Anniversary of the Singapore Teo Chew (Poit Ip) Huay Kuan and the Commemoration of the 150th Anniversary of the Founding of Singapore* (Singapore, 1969), p. 164.
95. In May 1873, leaders of the three powerful dialect groups in Singapore petitioned the government to suppress the kidnapping of new immigrants in Singapore. Tan Kim Cheng and Cheang Hong Lim represented the Hokkien group, Seah Eu Chin and Tan Seng Poh represented the Teochew community, and Hoo Ah Kay (listed as Hoo Ah Kee) represented the Cantonese group. See 'Petition from Chinese merchants relative to the Treatment of Chinese Immigrants dated 30 May, 1873', in *Straits Settlements Legislative Council Proceedings 1873*, appendix No. 33.
96. Song Ong Siang, *op. cit.*, pp. 19-20; Yong Ching Fatt, 'Chinese Leadership in Nineteenth Century Singapore', in *Journal of the Island Society* (Singapore), Vol. 1 (1967), pp. 4-6.
97. See *The Singapore Free Press*, 1 March 1849.
98. See Wilfred Blythe, *The Impact of Chinese Secret Societies in Malaya: A Historical Study* (London, 1969), p. 156.
99. See *Straits Settlements Law Reports*, Vol. 4 (1897), p. 28.
100. Hsiao-ts'ai was the title given to those who had passed the first stage of the imperial examination in Ch'ing China.
101. See K'uang Kuo-hsiang, 'Chang Pi-shih ch'i-jen' (The Man Chang Pi-shih), in K'uang Kuo-hsiang, *Pin-ch'eng san-chi* (*Anecdotal History of Penang*) (Hong Kong, 1958), pp. 98-9.
102. See 'Chang Pi-shih', in H.L. Boorman and R.C. Howard (eds.), *Biographical Dictionary of Republican China* (New York, 1967), p. 90.
103. See Anthony Reid, *The Contest for North Sumatra: Aceh, the Netherlands, and Britain 1858-1898* (Kuala Lumpur, 1969), pp. 194, 260.
104. See Anonymous, 'Chang Pi-shih', in K'e Chia: P'i-li K'e-hsu kung hui k'ai-mu chi-nien t'e-k'an (Hakka: *Souvenir Magazine of the Opening Celebration of the Hakka Association of Perak*) (Penang, 1951), p. 506.
105. See Hsueh Fu-ch'eng, *Ch'u-shih kung-tu* (*Correspondence of My Diplomatic Mission*), Vol. 2, pp. 25a-25b.
106. *Ibid.*

107. See *Sing Po*, 1 November 1895, p. 8.
108. See 'Memorial of Governor-General Wang Wen-shao and others to the Court dated 26th day of 2nd moon of 29th year of Kwang-hsu (24 March, 1903)', in *Yu-chi hui-tsun* (Collected Records of Imperial Decrees and Memorials) (Taipei, 1967, reprint) Vol. 51, pp. 1487-8.
109. Directors and Sub-Directors of the Court of Sacrificial Worship were generally designated as 'Ching-t'ang'. See H.S. Brunnert and V.V. Hagelstrom, *Present Day Political Organization of China* (Taipei, reprint).
110. See *Ta-ch'ing te-tsung ching-huang-ti shih-lu* (Veritable Records of the Emperor Kuang-hsu of the Great Ch'ing Empire) (Ch'ang ch'un, 1935), Vol. 516, p. 5b.
111. *Ibid.*, Vol. 535, p. 6b; Cheng Kuan-ying, *Chang Pi-shih hsien sheng-sheng-p'ing shih-lueh* (A Brief Biography of Mr Chang Pi-shih), p. 14.
112. See Michael R. Godley, 'Chang Pi-shih and Nanyang Chinese Involvement in South China's Railroads 1896-1911', in *Journal of Southeast Asian Studies*, Vol. 4, No. 1 (March 1973), pp. 16-30; see also Michael R. Godley, *The Mandarin-Capitalists from Nanyang: Overseas Chinese Enterprise in the Modernization of China 1893-1911* (Cambridge U.P., Cambridge, 1981), pp. 149-72.
113. See S.M. Middlebrook, Yap Ah Loy, published as an independent copy of the *Journal of the Malayan Branch of Royal Asiatic Society*, Vol. 24, pt. 2 (July 1951), p. 12; Yap Ah Loy, 'Yeh Ah-lai cha-chi' (Miscellaneous Records of Yap Ah Loy by his Subordinates, trans. by Hsu Yun-ts'iao), in *Nanyang Hsueh-pao* (*Journal of the South Seas Society*) (Singapore, June 1957), Vol. 13, pt. 1, p. 70.
114. See Wang Chih-yuan, *Yeh Teh Lai Chuan* (A Biography of Yap Ah Loy) (Kuala Lumpur, 1958), pp. 19-20.
115. Yap Ah Loy (trans. by Hsu Yun-ts'iao, see No. 113), pp. 22-5; Middlebrook, pp. 14-5.
116. Kapitan Sheng Ming-li was deified after his death to become Hsien shih-yeh who has been popularly worshipped by the Chinese in Kuala Lumpur and Seremban areas. For a biography of Kapitan Sheng, see Chang Ching-wen, 'Hsien shih-yeh chia-pi-tan Sheng Ming-li kung shih-lueh' (A Brief History of Hsien shih-yeh Kapitan Sheng Ming-li), in Yang Ku-t'ing (ed.), *Chi-lung-po Hsien-ssu shih-yeh kung ch'ang-miao shih-lueh* (A Concise History of the Founding of the Hsien-ssu shih-yeh Temple of Kuala Lumpur) (Kuala Lumpur, 1959), n.p.
117. See Wang Chih-yuan, *Yeh Teh Lai Chuan*, pp. 30-1.
118. *Ibid.*, pp. 44-7.
119. See Middlebrook, Yap Ah Loy, pp. 26-36; Yap Ah Loy (trans. by Hsu Yun-ts'iao), p. 71. Official recognition of Yap Ah Loy as Kapitan China by the Sultan of Selangor took place in 1873. See a short biographical note of Yap Ah Loy in 'Annual Report on the State of Selangor for the Year 1885', in *Straits Settlement Legislative Council Proceedings* 1886, appendix No. 22.
120. Yap Ah Loy (The Chinese Kapitan) was reported to be the main producer of tin in Selangor in 1879. See 'Report on the Revenue and Expenditure of the State of Selangor for the Year 1879 by the British Resident dated 12 May, 1880', in *Straits Settlements Legislative Council Proceedings* 1880, appendix No. 15.

121. For a good discussion of political and economic setting of this civil war, see Khoo Kay Kim, *The Western Malay States 1850-1873: The Effects of Commercial Development on Malay Politics* (Kuala Lumpur, 1975), pp. 53-143.
122. Wang Chih-yuan, *Yeh Teh Lai Chuan*, pp. 69-171; Middlebrook, Yap Ah Loy, pp. 36-96; 'Hsueh-lan-ngo chia-pi-tan Yeh kung teh-lai fen-chan shih-lueh' (A Short History of Battles of Yeh Teh-lai, the Kapitan of Kuala Lumpur), in Yang K'u-ting (ed.), (see Note 116), n.p.
123. Wang Chih-yuan, *Yeh Teh Lai Chuan*, p. 189.
124. For a short biography of Yau Tat Shin, see 'Yao kung teh-sheng' (Mr Yau Tat Shin), in *P'i-li chia-ying hui-kuan ch'i-shih chou-nien chi-nien, hsin-sha lo-ch'eng k'ai-mu t'e-k'an* (Souvenir Magazine of 70th Anniversary Celebration of the Chia Ying Association of Perak and the Opening of its New Club House) (Ipoh, 1974), pp. 512-14.
125. In 1898 Yau appeared in the government records as tin miner and farmer (opium and liquor!). See 'High Commissioner's Office Files (Federated Malay States)', 454/1898.
126. See Song Ong Siang, *op. cit.*, pp. 33, 46, 52, 102, 168.
127. See C.M. Turnbull, *The Straits Settlements 1826-67* (London, 1972), pp. 31-3.
128. This can be found in 'The Kwang Chao (Kwong Siew) Records' (unpublished, kept at the Kwang Chao Association (Kwong Siew Hui Kun), Kuala Lumpur). Many of these partnerships led to continuous disputes. Part of this 'The Kwang Chao Records' was published in *Chi-lung-po Kwang Chao hui-kuan ch'i-shih chou-nien chi-nien t'e-k'an* (Souvenir Magazine of the 70th Anniversary Celebration of the Kwong Siew Association of Kuala Lumpur) (Kuala Lumpur, 1957), pp. 42-4.
129. This process of transformation can still be found in country towns in Malaysia and other Chinese communities in Southeast Asia today.
130. See R. Little, 'On the Habitual Use of Opium in Singapore', in *Journal of the Indian Archipelago and Eastern Asia*, Vol. 2 (1848), p. 20; Siah U Chin, 'General Sketch' (see No. 9), p. 295; in September 1846, *The Singapore Free Press* reported that a large number of coolies from gambier and pepper plantations used to visit the town for the purpose of indulging in gambling, and spent their surplus cash in the different shops in town. But their visits ceased probably because a better opportunity for amusement had been provided in the jungle. See *The Singapore Free Press*, 17 September 1846.
131. See 'Evidence given by W.E. Hooper, Registrar of Hackney Carriage, Jinrickshas, Singapore on 10th August, 1907', in *Straits Settlements and Federated Malay States Opium Commission 1908, Proceedings*, Vol. 2 (Singapore, 1908), pp. 28-9.
132. It appears that at the end of the nineteenth and the beginning of the twentieth centuries, many Ying Chun immigrants (southern Hokkien dialect speakers) became transient peddlers between trading centres and distant villages; they also started small shops *kedai* in the Malay kampongs for trading. See Tan Tek Soon, 'Chinese Local Trade', in *The Straits Chinese Magazine*, Vol. 6, No. 23 (September 1902), p. 90.
133. See J.D. Vaughan, *The Manners and Customs of the Chinese of the Straits Settlements*, p. 15.

CHAPTER 2

Early Chinese Clan Organizations in Singapore and Malaya, 1819-1911*

The Chinese have always been known to have elaborate family and clan systems. In traditional Chinese society, the family was a close-knit group with four or five generations under the same roof. It was a biological and economic unit, which was the nucleus of all important social activities.¹ The clan, which comprised various kinship-bound families, also formed an important part of the social fabric of the traditional Chinese society.²

Formation of Clan Organizations in Singapore and Malaya

Coming from village communities where family and kinship ties were stronger than those in the urban areas,³ the Chinese immigrants in Singapore and Malaya naturally maintained close ties with their families and clans in South China. This loyalty to family and clan was clearly reflected in their annual remittances to support family members and relatives in China.⁴ Through the kinship pattern of migration,⁵ the elaborate kinship system was transplanted into the Chinese communities in Singapore and Malaya. The kinship ties which were strong in the villages of Kwangtung and Fukien Provinces,⁶ where most of the immigrants came from, appeared to be even stronger overseas. As analysed by a sociologist, kin groups represented the individual's second line of defence. When a person was in danger or in trouble, when he needed help in the performance of an economic task or a ceremonial obligation, and when he required a measure of assistance beyond what his own immediate family could provide, he could turn to the members of his larger kin group for aid or succour.⁷ The need

for a second line of defence seems to have been keenly felt among the early Chinese immigrants who lived under a foreign government and among groups of people whose languages were unintelligible to them. The immigrants had a common desire to establish clan organizations.

The formation of Chinese clan organizations overseas was also the result of the practical needs of the immigrants. Although most immigrants had no desire to settle permanently, many of them were forced to live overseas for a considerable length of time. They wished to observe traditional Chinese customs such as ancestral worship and festivals.⁸ That called for some kind of organization. More important, an organization was needed to deal with death. The rich who could afford to send their coffins back to China for burial needed an organization to arrange it for them;⁹ the poor needed help to raise money for a decent burial overseas.

Among wealthy Chinese, the desire for prestige was another factor. The colonial society offered them little opportunity in officialdom. Therefore, community leadership such as positions as clan leaders, was coveted as an alternative source of prestige and influence. The drive for social status and prestige¹⁰ prompted some wealthy Chinese to take the initiative to found clan organizations.

It is difficult to establish which was the earliest Chinese clan organization in Singapore and Malaya. One source claims that the earliest in the region was the Ts'ao clan organization (Ts'ao Clan House (曹家馆)) which was founded in 1819.¹¹ The founder was Ts'ao Ah-chih (曹亚志), also known as Chow Ah Chi (曹亚珠), who was said to be one of the few Chinese who accompanied Raffles when he landed on the island of Singapore in 1819.¹² The Ts'ao Clan House was founded as a meeting place for the growing Ts'ao clansmen in Singapore who claimed their origins from the T'ai Shan district of the Kwangtung Province, China.¹³ But the evidence supporting this claim is not conclusive. Another source indicates that the earliest clan organization was the Kang Har Ancestral Temple of Malacca which was founded in 1825.¹⁴ The temple was founded by a group of five Huang clansmen led by Huang Fu-jung (黄福荣),¹⁵ with the main purpose of worshipping the progenitor of the Huang clan in China, Huang hsiao-shan (黄峭山).¹⁶ But this claim is negated by another claim that the founding of this clan temple was in 1841.¹⁷ Another possibility as the earliest clan organization is the Koong Har Tong Ancestral Temple of Penang (檳榔嶼江夏堂黃氏宗祠) which was founded in 1828.¹⁸ Very little is known about this organization except that it was located at the Kwangtung Street, Penang.¹⁹

Any of the abovementioned could have been the earliest clan organization in Singapore and Malaya. But owing to the lack of detailed

and reliable records, we cannot establish which was the earliest Chinese clan organization.

One of the earliest clan organizations which has preserved reliable records and continues to exist today is the Khoo (Ch'iu 邱) clan which was formed in 1835 in Penang under the name of Leong San Tong Khoo Kongsi (龙山堂邱公司). In that year, Khoo clansmen gathered to celebrate the birthday of Tua Sai Yah (大便爷), the Protector God of the Khoo clan in China, on the May festival day (the fifth day of the fifth moon), and a desire was generally expressed to found a clan temple for the benefits of the Khoo clansmen.²⁰ Three days later (the eighth day of the fifth moon), all 102 Khoo clansmen in Penang met to form the *kongsi*; a committee was set up, and a sum of \$528 was raised on the spot.²¹ In 1850, a block of land of 97,035 square feet was purchased. In 1851, the Leong San Tong Khoo Clan Temple was inaugurated; the shrines for the Protector God and ten progenitors and their wives of the clan were installed for worship.²²

After the Khoo, the Yeoh (Yang, 杨) clan of Penang founded the Har Yang Sit Teik Tong Yeoh Kongsi (霞阳植德堂杨公司) in 1842.²³ It was followed by the Ng (Wu, 伍) clan of Penang in 1848,²⁴ the Sze Yap Chan (Ch'en, 陈) clan of Singapore in the same year,²⁵ and the Khaw (Hsu, 许) clan of Penang in 1849.²⁶ In the 1850s, the clansmen of Lee (Li, 李), Tan (Ch'en, 陈) and Cheah (Hsieh, 谢) of Penang also founded their respective organizations.²⁷ They were followed by the Wong (Huang, 黄 1854) and Lim (Lin, 林 1857) in Singapore.²⁸ Another seven clan organizations were founded in Singapore and Penang in the 1860s, five in the 1870s, one in the 1880s, four in the 1890s, and eight after the turn of the twentieth century (see Appendix Table 1).

Two types of clan organizations can be discerned. First, a localized lineage based on blood, geographical, and dialect ties,²⁹ its members claimed common recent ancestry, came from the same village or district, and spoke a common dialect. Second, a non-localized lineage based on broader kinship and geographical ties or on a special tie of traditional brotherhood alliance; its members derived from a few neighbouring districts or prefectures, claimed a relatively remote ancestry, and were able to communicate among themselves. Among 38 clan organizations on the list, 5 cannot be identified.³⁰ Out of 33 identifiable clans, 24 can be classified as localized lineages, while 9 are non-localized lineages.³¹ The localized lineages became predominant in the period under study, it accounted for more than 75 per cent of those identifiable clan organizations. All non-localized lineages were located in Singapore except one in Kuala Lumpur.³² Among the 8 non-localized lineages in Singapore, 4 could be classified as Cantonese dialect speaking,³³

2 Southern Fukien dialect speaking,³⁴ 1 Hainanese, and 1 Teochew.³⁵ The main reason for the formation of these non-localized lineage organizations was probably the lack of numbers. As some kin groups lacked sufficient numbers to form their respective localized lineages, they grouped together on a larger geographical unit but within the dialect boundary. This enhanced their numerical strength, and made them viable in the local Chinese communities. The Sze Yap Chan Si Wuikun of Singapore, the first non-localized clan in the region, embraced kinsmen from Toisun (T'ai-shan 台山), Sunwui (Hsin-hui 新会), Yenping (En-p'ing 恩平), and Hoiping (K'ai-p'ing 开平), the four neighbouring districts in the southwest of Canton. The people of the Four Districts (See Yap 四邑) shared long historical traditions, possessed similar customs, and spoke similar dialects. More important, they had in the past developed close ties in emigrating to Southeast Asia, the United States, and Australia.³⁶ These historical, social, and migratory ties made possible the formation of the non-localized lineage. The traditional brotherhood alliance of the four sworn brothers: Liu Pei (刘备), Kuan Kung (关公), Chang Fei (张飞), and Chao Tze-lung (赵子龙) which originated in the *Romance of the Three Kingdoms*, provided the historical basis for the grouping of the clansmen of the four surnames – the Liu, the Kuan, the Chang, and the Chao.³⁷ The founding of the Lau Kwan Cheong Chew Ku Seng Wuikun (The Liu Kuan Chang Chao Four Surname Association 刘关张赵古城会馆) in Singapore in 1866 marked the beginning of the grouping of multi-surname clans in the region. Although there was no restriction on the dialects spoken by the clansmen of these four surnames, it is clear that members of this organization derived entirely from the Cantonese-speaking group.³⁸

The leading position of the Cantonese among the non-localized lineages in Singapore can be explained in terms of power alignment in the local Chinese community. As the population of Singapore at this time was predominantly southern Fukienese and Teochews,³⁹ and the power of the Chinese community was largely in the hands of the southern Fukienese,⁴⁰ the minority Cantonese felt threatened. When a minority feels insecure, group consciousness would develop, and would lead to the expression of a group solidarity by forming an organization which would meet the psychological need of the members as well as to protect the interests of the group. The Cantonese in nineteenth-century Singapore expressed this early group solidarity by founding the Ning-yeung Association (宁阳会馆) in 1822, the first dialect association in Singapore,⁴¹ and then the Hsiang Kongsi in 1838,⁴² the Nam Shun Association in 1839,⁴³ and the Kong Chow Association in 1843.⁴⁴

Although the Cantonese in Singapore were looked after by their dialect associations, some specific needs such as ancestral worship could not be catered for. Therefore, a clan organization based on both kinship and dialect ties would not only provide special facilities to some people but would also give them additional assistance and protection in times of need. This explains why the Cantonese clansmen of the Chan, the Lau, the Kwan, the Cheong, and the Chew were prepared to extend the geographical and kinship ties to form the non-localized lineages.

In contrast to the non-localized lineage, the localized lineage confined its membership to clansmen coming from the same village or district in China; kinship relations among the members were clearly defined, and traditional obligations to kinsmen and religious rituals for the ancestors were more strictly observed.⁴⁵ In some cases, further distinctions were drawn between clansmen from different localities in the same village, with different clan organizations to represent the sub-groups. Although they worshipped the same ancestors and cherished the same aims, they restricted membership to people who claimed ancestry from the particular localities in a small village in China. The existence of two Lim clan organizations in Penang is a case in point. The two Lim sub-localized lineages were established in 1863.⁴⁶ The Lim Sz Bian Soot Tong (林氏勉述堂) only admitted clansmen who claimed ancestry from two particular localities, Keong Cheng (Kong-ch'ien in Mandarin, 宮前) and Eh Ho (Hsia-h'o in Mandarin, 下河) in the village of Goe Kuan (鰲冠社), H'ai-ch'eng district, Fukien; while the Lim Toon Pun Tong (林氏敦本堂) accepted all clansmen from the Goe Kuan village irrespective of their localities.⁴⁷ Ironically, the two lineages were founded by the same gentleman named Lim Cheng Kah (林清甲) who came from Keong Cheng and Eh Ho. When the Lim ancestral temple, the Lim Kongsí Keo Leong Tong (林公司九龍堂) was inaugurated in 1866, both had offices there.⁴⁸ Both lineages also worshipped the same deities named Tua Chor (大祖) and Jee Chor (二祖),⁴⁹ and the same ancestor Lim Jiong Kong (林让公), the founder of the Lim clan in Goe Kuan village. Despite these common grounds, the two lineages failed to merge, and have maintained separate organizations and management.⁵⁰

One major reason for the formation of the sub-localized lineages in Singapore and Malaya was the influence of the parental clan structure in China. There existed two separate Lim clans in Goe Kuan village long before Chinese immigration to Penang. It was natural for the immigrants to follow the same line. At the practical level, because there had been close ties between clans in China and overseas, any amalgamation of the sub-localized groups overseas would complicate inter-clan relationship in China, particularly in finance.⁵¹

The dominant position of localized lineage organizations in Singapore and Malaya reflected not only the strength of kinship ties based on blood relationship and territorial origins but also the state of divisiveness of the local Chinese community. Kinship-sponsored schemes were an important form of early Chinese immigration to Southeast Asia,⁵² and kinsmen lived closely together and depended on each other for protection and for economic advancement. The kinship ties thus became stronger overseas than in the home villages in China. In China, the village was surrounded by other villages sharing common dialects and customs.⁵³ In the new land, the immigrants were confronted with language problems, strange people and customs, and sometimes hostility. This unfriendly environment compelled them to rely more exclusively on their kinsmen for support.⁵⁴ In the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, Chinese society in Singapore and Malaya was so rigidly segregated by dialect differences⁵⁵ that the Chinese tended to socialize exclusively within the dialect groups to which they belonged. People of the same surnames but speaking different dialects did not trust one another, and excluded one another from the lineage organizations. On another level, to admit somebody who did not speak the same dialect would not only create a communication problem but also create problems such as selecting a common dialect for conducting meetings as well as rituals. This divisive nature of the Chinese society provided the right climate for the growth of the dialect-based localized lineage organizations, and partly explains why the localized lineages were predominant in the Chinese society.

These lineages retained many of the characteristics of the clans in China such as the group cohesion, the age and generation hierarchy, common property, the promotion of group prestige, and the perpetuation of generation line. They also retained some of the special features of the parental clans in their internal structure, selection of leaders, and their functions in the society.

Structure and Leadership of the Clan Organizations

The formal structure of the clan organizations was a three-tier model: a standing committee, a managing committee, and the rank-and-file membership. The standing committee consisted of the clan head, *tsu-chang* (族长) who was sometimes addressed as *chia-chang* (家长)⁵⁶ a deputy *tsu-chang* (副族长) or deputy *chia-chang*, an honorary secretary, an honorary treasurer, and an honorary auditor.⁵⁷ These few top office bearers were elected among the members of the management committee who were

themselves elected by the rank-and-file members. The number of members of both committees varied according to the size and the needs of different clan organizations; a larger and more active clan had more members elected on the committees which were more elaborate in their functions. The actual size of the rank-and-file membership is difficult to ascertain. Because of their localized nature, the clans varied from a hundred to few hundred members. The Khoo Kongsì in Penang had more than 100 members when it first came into being in 1835.⁵⁸ The Chan Kongsì in Kuala Lumpur was reported in 1897 to have mobilized more than 300 people in a procession of pilgrimage to the Chan clan cemetery during the Ch'ing Ming festival.⁵⁹

As the Chinese population in Singapore and Malaya was made up of bits and pieces of various localized lineages in China,⁶⁰ there was no direct transplant of a complete localized lineage. But the incomplete lineage organizations overseas had retained many features of the structure of the parental bodies in China. One of these was the *fang* system. In China, each localized lineage was usually subdivided into *fang* (meaning room or house). The subdivision took place at any particular point of time when the lineage matured at its multiplication. The number of *fang* was determined by the number of sons of the person at the time of division. It could be three or more, and each *fang* had a particular name referred to in general and in genealogical records, and the *fangs* were designated either by number or place names in which they settled. The descendants of the whole clan were thus subgrouped according to *fang*, and gradually developed their *fang* loyalty and identity.⁶¹ Feuds and fightings between sub-groups of a clan were occasionally found in some parts of South China as a result of the development of this inter-*fang* distinction.⁶²

In the overseas communities, although the *fang* system was retained, it did not develop to the extent of creating feuds and fighting. Members of a localized lineage were divided into groups according to *fang* origins; they were grouped together as units for distribution of responsibility and power within the structure of the lineage; members of the same *fang* tended to mingle socially, cared about each other more, and tended to offer more generous assistance in times of need. This of course strengthened *fang* ties and fostered *fang* identity, and the result of this trend was the formation of separate sub-clans within these localized lineages. The structure of the Khoo clan in Penang exemplifies this trend. The Khoo clan generally retained a nine *fang* structure which originated from the San Tu village (三都) of H'ai Ch'eng district, Fukien Province. The nine *fangs* were H'ai *fang* (Hai pang in Southern Fukien dialect, 海房) Wu *fang* (Goh pang 梧房), Ching *fang* (Chneh pang 井房), Chai *fang* (Thay pang 宅房), Ch'in *fang* (Gim pang 岑

房), T'ien fang (Ch'an pang 田房), Shung fang (Cheng pang 松房), Men fang (Mooi pang 厝房), and Yu fang (Soo pang 岫房),⁶³ and they were organized into four sectional groups: Hai Kee Kak, Goh-Thay-Chneh, Gim-Ch'an-Cheng, and Mooi-Soo.⁶⁴ Each of these sectional groups was made up of one or more fangs. The Hai Kee Kak, the first sectional group, is made up of only one fang, the H'ai fang. The second consisted of Wu fang, Ching fang, and Chai fang. The third group was composed of Ch'in fang, T'ien fang, and Shung fang. The fourth was made up of Men fang and Yu fang. Six out of the nine fangs further organized themselves into two sub-clans: Wen Shan T'ang (Boon San Tong 文山堂) and Tun Ching T'ang (Toon Keng Tong 敦敬堂), the former consisting only H'ai fang, while the latter comprised Men fang, Yu fang, Wu fang, Chai fang, and Shung fang.⁶⁵ It is noteworthy that the H'ai fang constituted not only one sectional group but also a sub-clan in the structure of the Khoo clan. This obviously reflected the numerical strength of the H'ai fang which was also the largest fang in the San Tu village in China.⁶⁶ Numerical dominance of one fang gave rise to the alignment of other small fangs into sectional groups and a sub-clan in order to achieve some kind of balance in the power structure of the Khoo clan. At the same time, these small fangs still retained and developed their individual identities.⁶⁷ Once they achieved their numerical strength, they would organize their own sub-clans in order to play a more important role both within the Khoo clan and in the community at large. One of these over-grown sub-clans was Shen Teh T'ang (Sin Tiek Tong 绳德堂) which was organized by members of the Wu fang in 1931 as a result of the increase of fang clansmen as well as the need for special worship for the fang's founder, Wen-fu, in China.⁶⁸

Apart from inter-fang ties, the relationship between members within a localized lineage was clearly defined by generation and age in hierarchical order. As pointed out by a leading Chinese sociologist, the kinship organization in China operated mainly by 'a system of status ascribed on the basis of age and generational levels ... and the system offered a practical device for clearly establishing the status of every member in a kinship group whether it consisted of a small family or of a clan with 10,000 members'.⁶⁹ Under this system, all members were divided into different generation layers and age groups, and status and authority were according to seniority. Members in a senior generation layer thus enjoyed higher status and possessed authority over those in a junior generation, and among members of the same generation, older members took precedence over younger ones.⁷⁰ The authority delegated to members senior in generation and age reinforced the values of generation hierarchy and the respect for the old, and also helped to perpetuate certain norms of behaviour and life-styles in the clan. For the purpose of differentiation,

genealogical code words were selected by the clan committee, and each generation was given a written character which was required to be incorporated into the names of members belonging to the same generation.⁷¹

A similar situation existed in the overseas Chinese communities, except that the overseas lineages did not coin their own genealogical code words but directly obtained them from their parental bodies in China and distributed them among members.⁷² This act should not be taken as evidence to suggest that the overseas clans were controlled by their parental bodies; it should be seen as an indication of their desire to continue the clan's lines started in China, and as an effort to bring members spiritually closer to the parental bodies. The desire for continuing the generation name system is clearly reflected in the act of the *Khoo Kongsi* in Penang which has widely distributed genealogical code words in both Chinese and English to its members. The list obtained by the author in 1971 contains 40 characters representing 40 generations. It starts with the eighth generation and ends with the forty-seventh generation.⁷³ But this should not be confused with the generation depth of the *Khoo* clan. In fact, the clan only had a depth of 23 generations in the 1960s.⁷⁴ The *Yeoh Kongsi*, another localized lineage in Penang, has also widely distributed genealogical code words both in Chinese and in English to its members, and the list also contains 40 code words which include some for future generations.⁷⁵ The degree of seriousness with which the generation name system was observed seems to have varied. Some not only distributed genealogical code words but also openly required members to incorporate those words in their names.⁷⁶ But a study of the names of 16 generations of *Wu fang Khoo* clansmen reveals that many of them did not comply with the request of using genealogical code words,⁷⁷ and there was even confusion in the name system.⁷⁸ This irregularity can be taken as a sign of decline of the generation name system which was probably the result of the lack of a rigid control over clansmen by a clan in an overseas community. Unlike clans in China, the overseas clans possessed no judicial power over their members and found it difficult to coerce members to comply with their rules.⁷⁹ Moreover, the growing number of Chinese receiving English education undermined the generation name system, for they used their names in romanized forms, and the original meanings of the genealogical code words were completely lost.

Leadership

In China, three main criteria determined the choice of a clan head: seniority in generation and age, social standing, and integrity.⁸⁰ Seniority in generation

and age was important because it grew out of the kinship principle. Social standing was important because it was connected with the clan's standing, influence, and power in the community. Personal integrity was taken into serious account because it assured the clan that its leader will not abuse his power.⁸¹ Although time had eroded the clan's power in China generally, there does not seem to have been much change in the principle for selecting heads of clans. Writing in the 1930s about a northern Fukien village, Lin Yueh-hua, a Chinese anthropologist, indicated that there was still firm adherence to the principle of seniority. The same was true in the overseas Chinese communities in nineteenth- and early twentieth-century Singapore and Malaya. At the beginning of 1971 when the head of the Khoo Kongsi in Penang, Mr Khoo Eu Chai (邱有才) was interviewed, he told the author that seniority in generation and age was important in selecting clan heads in the past, and would continue to be important in the future.⁸² The principle of social standing seems to have played a greater role in deciding the leadership of the overseas clans. The most important component of social standing was wealth. Among overseas Chinese in Singapore and Malaya during this period, wealth determined social mobility and enabled people to acquire titles and political influence.⁸³ Therefore, wealth facilitated the acquisition of clan leadership. A close study of the Lim clan leadership in Penang shows that social standing was of overriding importance. After founding the clan organization in 1863, Lim Cheng Kah (Lin Ch'ing-chia 林清甲), a wealthy merchant, became its first clan head.⁸⁴ He was succeeded by Lim Hua Chiam (Lin Hua-tuan 林花钻) in 1878.⁸⁵ Lim Hua Chiam, also known as Lin Ju-chou (林汝舟),⁸⁶ was a recognized community leader in Penang; he was a leader of the Chinese Town Hall (P'ing Chang Kung Kuan 平章公馆) which was the highest public body representing the Chinese community,⁸⁷ and in 1905 and 1907 was elected as the Deputy Superintendent (*fu chien-tu*) of the Chung Hua school which was run by the local Chinese community.⁸⁸ His wealth and influence in the community brought him the coveted title of J.P. (Justice of Peace) from the British colonial government,⁸⁹ and also brought him the prestigious title of *Tao-yuan* (道员衔) in 1908.⁹⁰ After Lim Hua Chiam's death in 1912, his son Lim Seng Hooi (Lin Ch'eng-hui 林成辉) succeeded him as the acting head of the clan, and his position was confirmed in 1914.⁹¹ Lim Seng Hooi was another recognized community leader; he was an Executive Member of the Chinese Chamber of Commerce of Penang in 1903 when it was founded,⁹² and was a leader of the Chinese Town Hall;⁹³ he was also awarded the title J.P. by the British colonial government.⁹⁴ Lim Seng Hooi was then succeeded by Lim Keong Lay (Lin Kung-li 林恭礼), another J.P. in 1943. The first post-war clan head of the

Lim Kongsí was Lim Hong Khim (Lin Hung-ch'in 林鴻欽) who died in 1949. He was succeeded by Lim Sin Hock (Lin Ch'eng-fu 林承福) who appears to have retained the position up to the time the centenary souvenir issue was published in 1963.⁹⁵ Three features stand out from this brief survey of the Lim clan leadership over 100 years. First, all six leaders were wealthy businessmen; second, three out of the six were recognized community leaders who were awarded the J.P. title, and one of them was honoured by the Ch'ing government; third, both father (Lim Hua Chiam) and son (Lim Seng Hooi) became clan leaders. The fact that Lim Seng Hooi succeeded his father to lead the clan points to the overriding importance of social standing over seniority in generation and age when the two principles were in direct conflict – Lim Seng Hooi could not possibly have been the person senior in generation and age at the time of his father's death.

A study of the leadership of Khoo Kongsí from 1850 to 1966 confirms the impression that wealth, the major component of social standing, was a determining factor. Among the 39 trustees of the Kongsí during this period, there were 26 wealthy or well-to-do businessmen, 8 clerks, and 1 teacher; the remaining 3 could not be identified.⁹⁶

Apart from the principles discussed above, the numerical strength of *fangs* within a clan seems to be another factor to be reckoned with. As noted earlier, the overseas clans were patched together from fragments of clans in China. Natural increase in numbers combined with patterns of immigration provided *fangs* with very different numerical strength within a clan. Among the 9 *fangs* of the Khoo Kongsí, Hai *fang* and Wu *fang* had bigger numbers,⁹⁷ which provided them with strength to dominate the leadership of the Kongsí. Among 64 leaders listed from 1891 to 1965, the 2 dominant *fangs* produced 28 which accounted for nearly half of the total, whereas the remaining 7 *fangs* jointly shared 36, slightly more than half of the total.⁹⁸

Functions of the Clans

Like their parental bodies in China, the overseas clans were basically social and cultural organizations, and their aims were primarily to perpetuate descent lines, to promote clan solidarity, and to foster traditional values which in turn uphold the idea of kinship. The traditional values such as filial piety, loyalty, virtue, harmony, reverence for the old, and exaltation of educational achievement derived mostly from Confucianism, and were in some ways reflected in the genealogical code words and the names of sub-clans for *fangs*. Genealogical code words such as *Teh* (Virtue), *Shih* (Generation), *Hsiao* (Filial), and *Wen* (Culture) were commonly adopted by

the overseas clans;⁹⁹ and names for sub-clans or *fangs* such as *Chung Hsiao T'ang* (Hall of Loyalty and Filial Piety),¹⁰⁰ *Yao Teh T'ang* (Hall of Glorifying Virtues), *Shen Teh T'ang* (Hall of Continuing Virtues), and *Shui T'ung T'ang* (Hall of Continuing Generations) were indications of the desire to uphold these values.¹⁰¹ But the desire was most concretely expressed in the functions of the clans. Five major functions can be listed: ancestral worship and worship of protector gods, observance of traditional festivities, helping destitute members, arbitration of disputes, and legalization of marriage and promotion of education.

Ancestral Worship and Worship of Protector Gods

The worship of ancestors and protector gods was the prime function of all the overseas clans which gave strong emphasis to it in their rules and regulations.¹⁰² The worship of Khoo Chian Eng (Ch'iu Ch'ien-jung 邱迁策), Yeoh Teck Keng (Yang Teh-ch'ing 杨德卿), Lim Jiong Kong (Lin Jang-kung 林让公), Ong Sim Chi (Wang Shen-chih 王审知), Tan Guan Kong (Ch'en Yuan-kuang 陈元光), and Ng Shiao San (Huang Hsiao-shan 黄峭山) by various localized clans in Singapore and Malaya points to the fact that those worshipped were the founders of the parental clans in South China,¹⁰³ and the last three were also the progenitors of all Ong (Wang), Tan (Ch'en), and Ng (Huang) clans in the whole Fukien Province.¹⁰⁴ The fact that the worship was confined to the progenitors of post-Fukien settlements indicates that these clans in China had made a clear break with the history of their pre-Fukien period. Their pre-Fukien ancestry appeared to be too remote or less relevant to them, or perhaps it was due to the lack of reliable genealogical records. Whatever the reason, the genealogical history of post-Fukien settlements provided the clans with new identity and new descent lines branched out from the main bodies in North and Central China.

Unlike ancestral worship in the family shrine which was used as a device for emotional relief,¹⁰⁵ ancestral worship in the clan represented efforts to bring all clansmen spiritually closer to their origins, and to express their gratitude to the progenitor. At the same time, the worship produced a psychological impact on the members' attitudes towards the descent line, and helped them to increase their awareness of their duty to the clan. Like their parental bodies in China, the overseas clans worshipped their progenitors in clan temples. Usually the back hall of the clan temples housed statues or portraits of progenitors and ancestral tablets. The hall is subdivided into three parts: central, left, and right. The central hall contains three shrines, each terraced. The central shrine is occupied by the statues or pictures of

the progenitor and of other prominent ancestors and their wives.¹⁰⁶ On the left and right shrines, ancestral tablets belonging to recent clansmen are deposited. Tradition attached greatest importance and prestige to the central shrine, and then to the left and right shrines. Which tablets should go to which shrine was decided by the clan management committee in the light of certain criteria. In China, the main criterion seems to be a person's achievement in an official position.¹⁰⁷ Because few overseas Chinese could achieve official prominence either locally or in China, wealth thus became the most important criterion. The wealth of the deceased was important, but more important was the wealth of his descendants, because it was chiefly their donation that decided his position in the shrines.¹⁰⁸ Within the shrines, ancestral tablets were arranged hierarchically according to seniority of generation. The position and arrangement of ancestral tablets thus reflected the values of the clans, the influence and power of the deceased, and the wealth of their descendants.

As concrete expressions of respect and gratitude towards ancestors, two sacrifices were held annually. Dates for sacrifice varied among the overseas clans, but it seems that most commonly they fell in spring and autumn, and were known as 'Spring Sacrifice' (Ch'un-chi 春祭) and 'Autumn Sacrifice' (Ch'iu-chi 秋祭).¹⁰⁹ Because there are no seasons in Singapore and Malaya, the sacrifices therefore took in the months ranging from March, April, and May to August, September, and October.¹¹⁰ Sacrifices comprised offerings and a solemn ceremony conducted by the clan head.¹¹¹ Because of their importance, members were required to participate in these ceremonies. The ceremony was held in the clan temple, and was followed by a feast attended by all members.¹¹² A feast of this kind not only provided opportunity for clansmen to meet but also served to foster a sense of solidarity.

Together with ancestral worship was the worship of the protector god or goddess. Religious worship within the clans was as important as ancestral worship. The statue of the protector god or goddess was given a prominent place in the clan temple, and it was given sacrificial offerings once or twice every year. The clan members were required to attend these ceremonies to pay their homage.¹¹³

Religious worship within the clan was probably connected with the nature of early Chinese immigration to Singapore and Malaya. As a number of the early immigrants were fishermen, their experience at sea led them to believe that there were supernatural powers presiding over them. They either appeased the supernatural powers by performing certain rites according to custom or sought help from a protector god or goddess.¹¹⁴ In the southern part of Fukien Province where many of the early Chinese immigrants came

from, a common protector for sea voyages was a goddess named 'T'ien Fei' (Heavenly Concubine 天妃) or 'T'ien Hou' (Heavenly Queen 天后).¹¹⁵ Apart from a common protector goddess, many clans in Southern Fukien had their own gods. The origins of clan gods were closely related to the history of the particular clan, and they were worshipped in the clan temples in China.¹¹⁶ Whatever the origins of the protector god or goddess, the psychological need for a protector among these early Chinese immigrants can be fully understood. Their first voyages to the Malay Peninsula, and the voyages back to China which many of them made or hoped to make, were frightening prospects, and sometimes very frightening in reality. The people firmly believed that if they did not worship appropriate protectors, protection would not be rendered when it was needed. As the protector god and goddess occupied such important places in the spiritual life of the immigrants, they obviously needed to be properly housed. Common protector gods and goddesses were placed in special temples for public worship, but particular gods and goddesses pose problems. The erection of clan temples was the obvious answer. The founding of some early clan temples such as Khoo Kongsi and Yeoh Kongsi in Penang was partly due to such considerations.¹¹⁷ While some clans had particular gods, others worshipped a common god or goddess in their clan temples. Both the Tan clan in Singapore and the Lim clan in Penang worshipped the popular sea protector goddess, T'ien Fei, in their temples.¹¹⁸ They may have lacked their own clan gods, or they may have wanted to develop a special relationship with the sea goddess.

Observance of Seasonal Festivals

Unlike the Christian festivals, Christmas and Easter, which have a strong religious flavour, most Chinese festivals were connected with tradition or with peasant economic activities. As China was a predominantly agrarian economy, seasonal changes dominated the thinking of the peasants. This was clearly reflected in the celebration of spring festival, Winter Solstice Day, and the Chinese New Year.¹¹⁹ The Ch'ing-ming festival (visiting ancestral graves), the May festival (Dragon Boat Festival in memory of the patriotic poet Ch'u Yuan), the Chung-yuan festival in the seventh moon (feeding the hungry ghosts), and the Moon festival in the eighth moon were closely connected with Chinese tradition and history. The early Chinese immigrants tended to observe all these festivals despite changes in environment and climate. This strict observance was partly due to their unquestioning loyalty to tradition, and partly due to social factors. In a society where regular holidays were lacking,¹²⁰ festivals became substitutes

which would give employees a break from work, and helped to regulate the normal relationship between employers and employees. From the clan's point of view, the observance of festivals not only preserved Chinese tradition, but also provided social gatherings for members to mix so as to promote a sense of clan solidarity. The most commonly observed festivals in the Chinese communities in nineteenth- and early twentieth-century Singapore and Malaya were the Chinese New Year, the Shang-yuan festival (the fifteenth day of the first moon), the Ch'ing-ming festival, the May Festival, the Chung-yuan festival, and the Moon festival.¹²¹ Among these festivals, the Ch'ing-ming was the most concrete expression of ancestral worship in the Chinese communities, and it was therefore most strictly observed by the clans. The festival normally fell on the fifth day of April of the solar year. Tradition required family members to make pilgrimages to cemeteries to pay homage and lay sacrifices at the ancestral tombs. Since most kinsmen had a common cemetery,¹²² and since all Chinese families were obliged to visit their ancestral graves, the clans took the initiative to organize a common function and make it a real clan occasion. Ancestral worship involved a ceremony to offer sacrifices to the founding progenitors, a collective visit to the clan cemetery,¹²³ and a feast. An occasion of this nature provided not only an opportunity for kinsmen to meet, to develop a sense of belonging, but also an occasion to reinforce some traditional values which the clan upheld. It was also an opportunity to show off the clan's wealth and strength. Wealthy and powerful clans spent thousands of dollars, indulged in elaborate ceremonies and rich feasts, and mobilized hundreds of kinsmen for the function. In 1897, the wealthy Chan clan in Kuala Lumpur mobilized more than 300 clansmen for a collective visit to the cemetery. Roads were crowded with many well-decorated carriages and onlookers, and it left a deep impression in the 'Chinese community as a whole'.¹²⁴

Helping Destitute Members

Although clan organization was based on blood relations, it grew and developed in certain given socio-economic conditions. In the traditional society where most people lived on subsistence level and social welfare programmes were unknown, the Chinese had to rely on family members and clansmen for support in times of need. Without modern pension systems, they had to worry about their livelihood in their old age. Without unemployment benefits, they had to fear disability and unemployment. It was in these circumstances that the clans developed welfare functions, each clan aiming for self-sufficiency. In China, most clans had common property

and a clan granary from which subsidies or relief were given to aged and needy clansmen.¹²⁵ In the overseas communities, the need for welfare relief was even more pressing. Many early immigrants were single and had left their families in China. Their need for material support from the clan organization was imperative in times of sickness, unemployment, and death. Because of this need, most early clan organizations in Singapore and Malaya had clearly expressed welfare obligations to clansmen in rules and by-laws. The Lim Kongsí, for instance, made clear in its by-laws that 'the Kongsí may, wherever possible, render pecuniary assistance to any clansmen who is unable to earn his living in consequence of decrepitude, destitution, or sickness. Such clansman may, if he desires, be repatriated to China at the expense of the Kongsí'.¹²⁶ Indeed, the Khoo Kongsí provided regular financial assistance to the poor, the destitute, the aged, and widows within the clan. In the event of a clansman dying without close kin, the Kongsí also provided a simple funeral and a proper burial in the clan cemetery.¹²⁷ Material assistance was also given to new clansmen who had just arrived in Singapore and Malaya. The clans usually provided lodging, food, and clothes and helped them to find employment.¹²⁸ The material assistance was the most concrete expression of the spirit of clan solidarity. By so doing, the clan rescued members from the fear of being unemployed, incapacitated, old, and helpless, and gave members a strong sense of security. In return, the members closely identified with the clan, supported it whenever they could, and gave it their unreserved loyalty. In this way, the continuing existence of the clan was assured.

Material assistance to the poor and distressed was extended not only to immigrants but also to needy clansmen in China. In the rules and regulations of the Khoo Kongsí of Penang, a clause specified that 'if any member of the Khoo clan either in China or in Penang be both poor and destitute, if they be in distress and helplessness, the Kongsí would render assistance and relief as a token of goodwill'.¹²⁹ Indeed, the Khoo Kongsí had consistently helped the needy clansmen in China. In December 1910, the board of management of the Khoo Kongsí decided to send monthly remittances to the parental body in H'ai Ch'eng district, Fukien Province, for the relief of widows, widowers, and orphans.¹³⁰ An act of this kind not only reflected genuine concern for the kinsmen as a whole but also indicated the desire of the overseas clans to forge close ties with parental bodies in China.

Arbitration of Disputes

Arbitration of disputes was an important function of most of the early clans in Singapore and Malaya. The Eng Chuan Tong Tan clan, an early clan

which was founded in 1854 in Penang, claims that arbitration of internal disputes, and of disputes between Tan clansmen and members of other clans, was its most important work in its early decades.¹³¹ This function has maintained its importance, even among those clans founded after the Second World War.¹³² There were two types of dispute: the dispute within the clan, and the dispute between clans. Internal disputes, usually over money or personal matters, would disrupt clan solidarity if there were no ways of resolving them. Parties to internal disputes were required to report to the investigation sub-committee of the clan. The clan head and his deputy would then have the dispute thoroughly investigated, and try to mediate and settle it. Punishment would be given to the mischievous, and reward to the virtuous.¹³³ Whether such internal arbitration was designed to preserve clan solidarity, or to claim judicial authority over clan members is a matter for conjecture. Given the nature of the Chinese communities in nineteenth- and early twentieth-century Singapore and Malaya, the clans probably aimed at both. The communities were, to a certain extent, self-governed. The *kapitan* system adopted by the British colonial authority in dealing with the Chinese communities before the end of the nineteenth century reinforced such a tendency.¹³⁴ It is unlikely that the clans intended to acquire immense judicial power over their members, like some powerful clans in China had enjoyed.¹³⁵ But the use of headings like *tzu-chih* (self-governing or autonomy) in some clan rules about the arbitration of disputes suggests that some degree of self-government was aimed at.¹³⁶

If internal disputes could undermine clan solidarity, external disputes, if unchecked, could threaten the survival of the clan as a whole. This was particularly so in nineteenth- and early twentieth-century Singapore and Malaya. Because most overseas clans were offshoots of the clans in China, they were invariably affected by the inter-clan relationship of their parental bodies. Frequent clan wars in South China strained the relationships of the overseas clans.¹³⁷ Trivial disputes between the strained clans could flare up into large-scale clan fights.¹³⁸ Such fights could threaten clans directly, and they could also provoke hostile interventions by the local government authority. This could also result in the banishment of the clan leaders and bans on the clans involved. Because of these serious implications, most overseas clans were very cautious. If disputes between clans arose, members were required by clan rules to leave them to the clans. A clan managing committee under the chairmanship of the clan head would convene a meeting when it was deemed necessary.¹³⁹ After a thorough investigation, the committee would then decide what course of action should be taken to settle the dispute. Sometimes, understanding and cooperation could be

reached among powerful clans which dominated the local Chinese community. In nineteenth-century Penang, for instance, the five powerful clans – the Khoo, the Lim, the Chieh, the Yeoh, and the Tan – agreed to cooperate in settling inter-clan disputes so as to bring peace and order to the community.¹⁴⁰ The Khoo, the Chieh, and the Yeoh – the three clans which came from the same village San Tu (Sam To 三都) of H'ai Ch'eng district, Fukien, and whose members had inter-married in China and overseas – further strengthened their relationship by forming an organization named Sam Quay Tong Kongsì (San K'uei T'ang kung-ssu, 三魁堂公司) in 1881.¹⁴¹ The three clans were equally represented on a board of management comprising twelve trustees who dealt with inter-clan matters.¹⁴² Organizations of this kind helped to stabilize the immigrant community. It could not only prevent serious disputes which tended to disrupt social order and threaten the survival of the clans but also positively promote cordial relationships pointing to the development of social units larger than clans in the overseas Chinese communities. At the same time, the organization also helped to improve inter-clan relationships in China. It promoted the spirit of inter-clan cooperation in the home village by providing money for building rest places and night patrol for the whole village.¹⁴³ Sometimes, it also used its financial power to force the parental clans to come to terms with each other in order to avoid large-scale clan war.¹⁴⁴

Legalization of Marriage and Promotion of Education

In the second half of the nineteenth and the beginning of twentieth centuries, the Chinese communities in Singapore and Malaya became more viable and self-sufficient, and the Chinese tended to adhere more to their traditions. There was a cultural resistance to local influences that were seen as foreign.¹⁴⁵ Cultural mixing, from the clans' point of view, was undesirable and was seen as a direct threat to the values which the clans sought to preserve. Although cultural mixing was viewed as disruptive, it was an inevitable process that overseas Chinese communities had to undergo. Local-born Chinese tended to lose some of the values their parents cherished, and tended to mix more with Chinese of other dialect groups and people of other races. A trend towards inter-ethnic marriages, especially between Chinese men and Malay women, took place in the community and was clearly reflected in the existence of a group called *Babas*.¹⁴⁶ Most clans realized that if the trend towards *Baba-ization* of Chinese descendants was unchecked, the principles on which the clans were organized would be greatly undermined, and would eventually result in the loss of Chinese

identity. As the shortage of Chinese girls in the communities was the main cause of Sino-Malay marriages,¹⁴⁷ it seemed desirable to bring in more young Chinese girls from China to arrest the trend towards *Baba-ization*. The clans proceeded to do so. Through frequent contacts with China, the clan was well placed to arrange a suitable marriage between an overseas member and a girl from China; and as the branch of its parental body in China, it could legalize an overseas marriage which would assure the couple a 'legal status' if they had to return to the home village in some distant future. Clan-arranged marriages usually took place in clan temples where ceremonies were held, and the couples were blessed by the clan head. This helped to publicize and dignify the marriage among the clansmen. The Lim Kongsí of Penang, for instance, annually solemnized marriages of its members in the clan temple.¹⁴⁸ By so doing, the clans exercised considerable influence over the choice of spouses of its members, and prevented inter-dialect and inter-racial marriages from taking place.

Like their parental bodies in China, the clans in Singapore and Malaya placed great value on education. Education in the traditional Chinese society was the most important stepping-stone to upward social mobility. Men with good education might pass the imperial examinations and move to the top in the society.¹⁴⁹ Scholars were respected within the clan, and the clansmen who had passed higher stages of imperial examinations brought honour to the clan as a whole.¹⁵⁰ At the same time, clans with more scholars and imperial degree-holders enjoyed more prestige and influence than clans without learned members.¹⁵¹ Education thus became the yardstick of the social status of an individual and a clan in the society. The interest in education by the overseas clans was clearly reflected in their encouragement given to those members who had successfully passed the imperial examinations; the imperial degree-holders were honoured by having their names engraved on a eulogy board on the walls of the clan temples.¹⁵² As a further expression of the clans' interest in education, combined with the impact of the spread of modern Chinese education and the rise of modern Chinese nationalism,¹⁵³ the clans began to found schools to educate the young. The first clan school that ever existed in Singapore and Malaya was the Sin Kang School (Hsin Chiang Hsueh Hsiao 新江学校). It was founded by the Khoo Kongsí of Penang in 1907.¹⁵⁴ Free education was provided for children of Khoo clansmen, and classes were conducted within the compound of the clan temple.¹⁵⁵ The step taken by the Khoo Kongsí was soon followed by other clans in Penang. The Kew Leong Tong Lim Kongsí founded a school in 1908,¹⁵⁶ followed by the Yeoh clan school in 1909,¹⁵⁷ and the Eng Chuan Tong Tan clan also founded a school in 1911.¹⁵⁸ The clan school was run

by a separate board under the control of the clan committee. The school only admitted children of members irrespective of their social and economic backgrounds. The curricula generally followed those modern primary schools in China,¹⁵⁹ and were similar to those schools founded by dialect organizations in Singapore and Malaya during this period.¹⁶⁰ A study of the curricula and syllabus of the clan schools shows a strong China orientation in most of the subjects. Students were indoctrinated to regard themselves as Chinese and to be loyal to China.¹⁶¹ Modern concepts of education for practical use and for physical fitness were introduced to students through the subjects of geography, mathematics, music, and physical education.¹⁶² But the most important influence on students was still the traditional notions of filial piety and loyalty to the emperor which were inculcated into their minds through the subjects of 'self-cultivation' (Hsiu-shen 修身) and 'Reading of Classics' (Tu-ching 读经). The Classics of Filial Piety (Hsiao Ching 孝经) and Confucius' Analects (Lun-yu 论语) were the two classics taught under the former, while the words and deeds of early Chinese sages and philosophers were the main contents of the latter.¹⁶³ Further, rules and regulations of these early clan schools were geared to foster the values of respect for the learned and the old (tsun-lao ching-hsien 尊老敬贤) and veneration for ancestors. Students were required to pay regular homage to the portraits of Confucius and the clan's progenitors,¹⁶⁴ and they were also required to pay respect to teachers and the clan's leaders under pain of punishment.¹⁶⁵ Rules of this kind could help to consolidate the clan's control over the minds of its youth, and to perpetuate traditional Chinese values in the society.

Conclusion

Chinese clan organizations in Singapore and Malaya grew out of needs in overseas environment, and established strong connections with their parental bodies in China. Most overseas clans were localized lineages based on geographical and dialect origins; they retained many characteristics of their parental bodies in structure and function. The clans played an important role in the functioning of the overseas Chinese communities. They functioned in part as self-governing bodies, providing social welfare and assistance for members and helping to maintain law and order in the society at large. But most important of all, they perpetuated Chinese descent lines, preserved Chinese tradition and Confucian values, maintained the identity of the Chinese communities, and served as an important transmitter of Chinese culture as a whole. Although they existed physically overseas, they strove to mould a type of society similar to the one they knew in China. From this

perspective, they lived in the world of China, regarded the overseas Chinese communities as a part of that world, and wanted to ensure that the traditional Chinese world continued to exist overseas. Because of their preoccupation with Chinese tradition, they resisted change and tended to slow down the process of acculturation in the overseas Chinese communities.

Endnotes

- * This article was first published in the *Journal of Southeast Asian Studies*, Vol. 12, No. 1 (Singapore University Press, 1981), pp. 62-87.
1. For a good discussion on the traditional Chinese family system, see Olga Lang, *Chinese Family and Society* (New Haven, 1946). See also Lin Yueh-hua, *The Golden Wing: A Sociological Study of Chinese Familism* (London, 1948); Francis L.K. Hsu, *Under the Ancestor's Shadow: Chinese Culture and Personality* (New York, 1948).
2. See two important studies on traditional Chinese clan organizations: one by Hsien Chin Hu entitled *The Common Descent Group in China and Its Functions* (New York, 1948) and the other by Liu Wang Hu-chen entitled *The Traditional Chinese Clan Rules* (New York, 1959).
3. See D.H. Kulp, *Country Life in South China: The Sociology of Familism* (New York, 1925) (reprinted in Taipei, 1966).
4. See T.J. Newbold, *Political and Statistical Account of the British Settlements of the Straits of Malacca* (London, 1839), Vol. 1, p. 11; Siah U Chin, 'Annual Remittances by Chinese Immigrants to Their Families in China', *Journal of the Indian Archipelago and Eastern Asia* (Singapore) 1 (1847), pp. 35-6.
5. See Song Ong Siang, *One Hundred Years' History of the Chinese in Singapore* (London, 1923), p. 96; Yen Ching-hwang, *The Overseas Chinese and the 1911 Revolution: With Special Reference to Singapore and Malaya* (Kuala Lumpur and New York, 1976), p. 4.
6. See Maurice Freedman, *Lineage Organization in Southeastern China* (London, 1958), pp. 1-8; *idem*, *Chinese Lineage and Society: Fukien and Kwangtung* (London, 1966), pp. 1-42.
7. See G.P. Murdock, *Social Structure* (New York, 1965), p. 43.
8. See J.D. Vaughan, *The Manners and Customs of the Chinese of the Straits Settlements* (Singapore, 1879), (reprinted 1971), pp. 34-5, 42-47; *idem*, 'Notes on Chinese of Penang', *Journal of the Indian Archipelago and Eastern Asia* 8 (1854), pp. 8-13.
9. For the custom of sending back bodies of relatives to China for burial by rich Chinese merchants, see Vaughan, *Manners and Customs*, p. 31.
10. For a study on the psychological need of wealthy Chinese merchants for community leadership, see Yen Ching-hwang, 'Ch'ing Sale of Honours and the Chinese Leadership in Singapore and Malaya, 1877-1912', *Journal of Southeast Asian Studies* Vol. 1, No. 2 (September 1970), pp. 20-32.

11. See Wu Hua, *Hsin-chia-po hua-tsu hui-kuan chih* (Records of Chinese Associations in Singapore), Vol. 2 (Singapore, 1975), p. 1.
12. See Chang Hsia-wei, 'Ts'ao Ah-chih yu Ts'ao Chia Kuan' (Ts'ao Ah-Chih and the Ts'ao Clan House), in Lin Hsiao-sheng (Lim How Seng) et al., *Shih-le ku-chi* (Historical Relics of Singapore) (Singapore, 1975), pp. 171-75.
13. *Ibid.*, pp. 1-4.
14. See 'Ma-liu-chia chiang-hsia-t'ang Huang-shih tsung-ch'ih shih-lueh' (A Short History of the Kang Har Ancestral Temple of Malacca), in Pin-lang-yu Chiang-hsia-t'ang Huang-shih tsung-ch'ih (ed.), *Huang-shih tsu-p'u chih pai ssu-shih chou-nien chi-nien t'e-k'an* (Genealogy of the Huang Clan and the Souvenir Magazine of its 140th Anniversary) (Penang, 1970), no page number.
15. Other founders were Huang Chu-ch'eng (黄主成), Huang Lung-ch'eng (黄隆成), Huang Wen-ch'eng (黄温成), and Huang Fu-chen (黄福寅). *Ibid.*
16. *Ibid.*
17. See Huang Chih-li, 'Ma-liu-chia chiang-hsia-t'ang Huang-shih tsung-ch'ih shih-lueh' (A Short History of the Kang Har Ancestral Temple of Malacca), in *Nan-yang Huang-shih tsung-hui yin-hsi chi-nien t'e-k'an* (Souvenir Magazine of Silver Jubilee Celebration of the Huang Clan Federation of South-east Asia) (Singapore, 1976), p. D 19.
18. See Huang Wan-hsiang, 'Pin-lang-yu chiang-hsia-t'ang Huang-shih tsung-ch'ih shih-lueh' (A Short History of the Koong Har Tong Ancestral Temple of Penang), in Pin-lang-yu chiang-hsia-t'ang Huang-shih tsung-ts'u (ed.), *op. cit.*
19. *Ibid.*
20. See Khoo Hock Siew, 'Ma-lai-hsi-ya Pin-lang-yu Ch'iu-shih lung-shan-t'ang chi-lueh' (A Brief Record of the Leong San Tong Khoo Clan of Penang, Malaysia), in Ch'iu Hsiu-ch'iang and Ch'iu Shang-yao (eds.), *Ch'iu-shih jen-wen chi-lueh* (A Brief Record of History and Biographies of the Ch'iu People), Vol. 1 (Taipei, 1969), p. 33.
21. At that time, \$528 was a large sum of money. A quarter cent could buy a good meal. See C.L. Cheah, *Penang's Dragon Mountain Hall* (Penang, 1968?), p. 2.
22. The five progenitors worshipped in the Khoo clan temple were the founder of the Khoo clan in the Hsin Chiang village of the Hai Ch'eng district of Fukien Province, China; Khoo Chian Eng and his wife; the second-generation ancestor Khoo Buan Sheng and his two wives; the third-generation ancestor Khoo Guan Heng and his wife, another third-generation ancestor Khoo Guan Tiong and his wife; the fourth-generation ancestor Khoo Seng Chung and his wife, another fourth-generation ancestor Khoo Chin Chung and his wife, another fourth-generation ancestor Khoo Hsien Chung and his wife; the fifth-generation ancestor Khoo Kung Leong and his wife, another fifth-generation ancestor Khoo Kung Wen and his two wives, and another fifth-generation ancestor Khoo Kung Tiong and his wife. See Khoo Hock Siew, 'Pin-lang-yu Ch'iu-shih lung-shan-t'ang shih-lueh chih t'ang-wu fa-chan k'ai-k'uang ko chih t'ang-chih shih-mo' (A Short History of the Leong San Tong Khoo Clan and its Development), in Pin-ch'eng hsen-teh-t'ang Ch'iu-kung-ssu (ed.), *Hsin-chiang wu-fang yu-teh-t'ang wen-fu-kung p'ai-hsi p'u-tia* (Genealogical Record of Goh Pang Khoo Clansmen) (Penang, 1974?), no page number.

23. See 'Pin hsia-yang chih-teh-t'ang Yang kung-su ch'ang-chien shih' (A Short History of the Founding of the Har Yang Sit Teik Tong Yeoh Kongsi of Penang), the inscription of the stone tablet of Yeoh Kongsi copied by the author on 5 February 1971; interview with Mr Yeoh Seng Chan, President of the Yeoh Kongsi of Penang, at the Yeoh Kongsi Clan House at No. 3, Chulia Ghaut, Penang, on 17 July 1974.
24. See 'Pin Wu-shih chia-miao ch'ung-hsiu pei chih hsi', (inscription of the stone tablet to the restoration of Ng Clan House of Penang), copied by the author on 4 February 1971.
25. See Anon., 'Hsin-chia-po ssu-i Ch'en-shih hui-kuan shih-lueh' (A Short History of the Sze Yap Chan Si Wuikun of Singapore), in Ch'en Wei-jui et al. (eds.), *Ch'en shih hui-kuan i-pai i-shih-erh chou-nien chi-nien t'e-k'an* (Souvenir Magazine of 112nd Anniversary of the Chan Si Wuikun) (Singapore, 1961), pp. 24-5; Wu Hua, *op. cit.*, p. 5.
26. See the inscription of stone tablet of the Koe Yang Tong society dated 8 January 1921, erected in the Koe Yang Tong Clan Temple at No. 36, Burmah Road, Penang, copied by the author on 17 July 1974.
27. The names of these clan organizations were mentioned by J.D. Vaughan in an article published in 1854; therefore, these clans must have been established in the early 1850s. See J.D. Vaughan, 'Notes on the Chinese of Penang', *Journal of the Indian Archipelago and Eastern Asia* 8 (1854), p. 16.
28. See Wu Hua, *op. cit.*, pp. 7-9.
29. For a detailed discussion on localized lineage, see Maurice Freedman, *Lineage Organization in Southeastern China*, pp. 1-8.
30. These five are the Koong Har Tong Ancestral Temple of Penang, Lee Long Say Tong of Penang, Eng Chuan Tong Tan Kongsi of Penang, Long Say Kong So of Singapore, and Kwangtung Wu Shih Shu She of Singapore.
31. Nine non-localized lineages are Sze Yap Chan Si Wuikun of Singapore, Hokkien Kew Leong Tong of Singapore, Chou Chia Ch'ih of Singapore, Lau Kwan Cheong Chew Ku Seng Wuikun of Singapore, Teo Chew Kang Hay T'ng of Singapore, Li Shih Shu She of Singapore, Po-chia-keng Tan Clan Temple of Singapore, Chan Kongsi of Kuala Lumpur, and the Ch'iu'ng-yai Huang Clan Association of Singapore.
32. The one located in Kuala Lumpur is the Chan Kongsi.
33. The four Cantonese-speaking clans are the Sze Yap Chan Si Wuikun, Chou Chia Ch'ih, Lau Kwan Cheong Chew Ku Seng Wuikun, and Li Shih Shu She.
34. The two Southern Fukien dialect-speaking clans are the Hokkien Kew Leong Tong and the Po-chia-keng Tan Clan Temple.
35. The Hainanese dialect clan is the Ch'iu'ng-yai Huang Clan Association, and the Teochew dialect clan is the Teo Chew Kang Hay T'ng.
36. See Victor Purcell, *The Chinese in Malaya* (Kuala Lumpur, 1967), pp. 104-5; Gunther Barth, *Bitter Strength: A History of the Chinese in the United States, 1850-1870* (Cambridge, Mass., 1964), pp. 9-31, 50-76; C.F. Yong, *The New Gold Mountain: The Chinese in Australia, 1901-21* (Adelaide, 1977), p. 1.
37. For the history of the sworn brotherhood among Liu Pei, Kuan Kung, Chang Fei, and Chao Tze-lung, and genealogies of the four clans, see the various articles contained in

- a souvenir magazine of the Liu Kuan Chang Chao Clan Association of Singapore and Malaysia, entitled *Hsin-chia-po Ma-lai-hsi-ya Liu Kuan Chang Chao t'ao-t'ang kung-so chi-nien k'an* (Penang, 1968).
38. Early membership lists of this organization cannot be obtained, but from the lists since 1949 we can be assured that the association belongs to the Cantonese-speaking group. For instance, the 1949 list contains 770 names, all of them came from Nan-hai, P'an-yu, Shun-te, Tai-shan, Tung-kuan, K'ai-p'ing, San-shui, Tseng-ch'eng, Hsin-hui and Chung-shan. See *Liu Kuan Chang Chao Ku-Ch'eng Hui-kuan ti ch'i-shih liu chou-nien chi-nien t'e-k'an* (*Souvenir Magazine of 76th Anniversary of the Lau Kuan Cheong Chew Ku Seng Wuikun of Singapore*) (Singapore, 1949), pp. 47-59.
 39. The Census of Singapore in 1881 shows that there were 47,625 Fukienese and Teochews out of 86,766 total Chinese population, while the Cantonese only numbered 14,853. See *Census of the Straits Settlements 1881* (Singapore), quoted in Maurice Freedman, 'Immigrants and Associations: Chinese in Nineteenth-Century Singapore', in L.A. Fallers, *Immigrants and Associations* (The Hague, 1967), p. 19.
 40. See Lin Hsiao-sheng (Lim How Seng), 'Shih-chiu shih-chi Hsing-hua she-hui te pang-ch'uan cheng-chih', in Lin Hsiao-sheng (Lim How Seng) et al. (eds.), *Shih-le-ku-chi*, pp. 5, 37.
 41. See Huang Wen-yu, 'Ling-yang hui-kuan shih-lueh' (A Short History of the Ning Yeung Association), in Huang Tsai-ning et al., *Hsin-chia-po Ning-yang hui-kuan i-pai san-shih chou-nien chi-nien t'e-k'an* (*Souvenir Magazine of 130th Anniversary of the Ning Yeung Association of Singapore*) (Singapore, 1952), p. 1.
 42. The Hsiang Kongs which was founded for the people from the Hsiang-shan district, Kwangtung Province, is the predecessor of the Chung-shan Association of Singapore. The Hsiang-shan district, where Dr Sun Yat-sen came from, had its name changed to Chung-shan district in memory of Dr Sun Yat-sen whose other name was Sun Chung-shan. See Liu Ch'u-ch'ai et al. (eds.), *Hsin-chia-po Chung-shan hui-kuan ti i-pai i-shih san chou-nien chi-nien t'e-k'an* (*Souvenir Magazine of 113th Anniversary of the Chung Shan Association of Singapore*) (Singapore, 1950).
 43. The Nam Shun Association was founded by the Cantonese from the Nan-h'ai and Shun-te districts. This association celebrated its 123rd anniversary in 1962; that meant its founding year was 1839. See Liang Yuan-h'ao, 'Pen-kuan shih-lueh' (A Short History of the Nan Shun Association), in *Hsin-chia-po Nam-shun hui-kuan i-pai nien san chou-nien chi-nien t'e-k'an* (*Souvenir Magazine of 123rd Anniversary of the Nam Shun Association of Singapore*) (Singapore, 1964), p. 52.
 44. See Wu hua, *Hsin-chia-po hua-tsu hui-kuan chih*, Vol. 1, p. 60.
 45. A study of the rules and regulations of the Khoo Kongs of Penang (representing localized lineages) and the Lau Kuan Cheong Chew Ku Seng Wuikun of Singapore (representing non localized lineages) led to the above conclusions. See Pin-lang-yu Liang-shan-t'ang Ch'iu kung-su chang-ch'eng (*Rules and Regulations of the Leong San Tong Khoo Kongs of Penang*) (Penang, 1921!); *Hsin-chia-po Liu Kuan Chang Chao Ku Ch'eng hui-kuan ch'ang-ch'eng* (*Rules and Regulations of the Lau Kuan Cheong Chew Ku Seng Wuikun of Singapore*) (Singapore, 1963).
 46. See Lim Teong Aik, 'Pin-ch'eng Lin kung-ssu Tun-pen-t'ang chih Lin-shih mien-shu-

- t'ang chien-shih' (A Short History of Lim Kongsi Toon Pun Tong and Lim Sz Bian Soot Tong, Penang), in Lim Teong Aik (ed.), *Ma-lai-hsi-ya Pin-ch'eng Lin-shih tian-pen chih mien-shu-t'ang i-pai chou-nien chi-nien k'an* (Centenary Souvenir of Lim Kongsi Toon Pun Tong and Lim Sz Bian Soot Tong, 1863-1963) (Penang, 1963), pp. 12, 16.
47. See *Rules and Regulations of Lim Sz Bian Soot Tong, Penang* (Penang, 1952), p. 2; *Rules and Regulations of Lim Kongsi Toon Pun Tong, Penang* (Penang, 1952), p. 2.
 48. See Lim Teong Aik, 'A Short History of Lim Kongsi Toon Pun Tong and Lim Sz Bian Soot Tong, Penang' (English version), in Lim Teong Aik, *Centenary Souvenir of Lim Kongsi Toon Pun Tong and Lim Sz Bian Soot Tong* (English version) (Penang, 1963), p. 13.
 49. The two deities were the gods of Goe Kuan village. See the inside cover of the *Centenary Souvenir of Lim Kongsi Toon Pun Tong and Lim Sz Bian Soot Tong*.
 50. See Lim Teong Aik, *op. cit.*, p. 14.
 51. Interview with Mr Lim Teong Aik, Secretary of the Lim Kongsi, in his residence in Penang on 18 July 1974.
 52. See E. Wickberg, *The Chinese in Philippine Life, 1850-1898* (New Haven, 1965), p. 172; Song Ong Siang, *One Hundred Years' History of the Chinese in Singapore*, p. 96.
 53. See Maurice Freedman, *Lineage Organization in Southeastern China*; *idem*, *Chinese Lineage and Society: Fukien and Kwangtung*.
 54. See W.H. Newell, *Treacherous River: A Study of Rural Chinese in North Malaya* (Kuala Lumpur, 1962), p. 20.
 55. See Yen Ching-hwang, *The Overseas Chinese and the 1911 Revolution, With Special Reference to Singapore and Malaya*, pp. 7-9.
 56. See, e.g., the Thye Guan Tong Ong Kongsi of Penang which had its clan head addressed as *chia-chang*. This term is still used nowadays. See *Pin-lang-yu t'ai-yuan-t'ang wang-shih tsu-miao chang-ch'eng* (*Rules and Regulations of Thye Guan Tong Ong Kongsi, Penang*) (the copy obtained by the author in July 1974).
 57. See, e.g., the structure of the Lim clan in Penang. See *Rules and By-laws of Kew Leong Tong Lim Kongsi*, an undated pamphlet in both Chinese and English.
 58. See Khoo Hock Siew, 'Ma-lai-hsi-ya Pin-lang-yu Ch'iu-shih lung-shan-t'ang chi-lueh', in Ch'iu Hsiu-ch'iang and Ch'iu Shang-yao (eds.), *Ch'iu-shih jen-wen chi-lueh*, Vol. 1, p. 33; see also Khoo Hock Siew, 'Pin-lang-yu Ch'iu-shih lung-shan-t'ang shih-lueh chih t'ang-wu fa-chan k'ai-k'uang ko-chih t'ang-chih shih-mo', in Pin-ch'eng Hsen-teh-t'ang Ch'iu Kuing-sso (ed.), *Hsin-chiang wu-fang yu-teh-t'ang wen-fu-kang p'ai-hsi p'u-tia*, n.p.
 59. See *The Kong See Boo Poe* (*Chinese Daily News*), 22 March 1897, pp. 3-4.
 60. See Maurice Freedman, 'Kinship, Local Grouping and Migration: A Study in Social Realignment among Chinese Overseas' (Ph.D. dissertation, University of London, 1956), p. 10.
 61. See Francis L.K. Hsu, *Clan, Caste and Club* (New York, 1963), pp. 63-5.
 62. In 1910, two subgroups of Huang clan in a village of P'an Yu district, Kwangtung Province, engaged in serious fighting which involved more than 1,000 people. See *Lat Pau*, October 1910, p. 9. In 1934, two branches of a clan in an emigrant village in the

- region of East Kwangtung and South Fukien made warlike preparation for large-scale fighting because of disputes over children. See Ta Chen, *Emigrant Communities in South China: A Study of Overseas Migration and Its Influence on Standards of Living and Social Change* (New York, 1940), p. 129.
63. Interview with Khoo Eu Chai, the President of the Khoo Kongsi of Penang at the Khoo Kongsi administrative house on 3 February 1971.
 64. See Khoo Phaik Suat, 'The Clan Kongsis of Penang, with Particular Reference to the Leong San Tong Khoo Kongsi' (B.A. Hons. Academic Exercise, Universiti Sains Malaysia, Penang, February 1974), p. 10.
 65. *Ibid.*
 66. Interview with Khoo Eu Chai on 3 February 1971.
 67. These small *fangs* had retained names of their ancestral halls called T'ang (Tong 堂), they were the Shao Teh T'ang (Seow Teik Tong 紹德堂) of Shung fang, Yao Teh T'ang (Yeow Teik Tong 耀德堂) of Ching fang, Shen Teh T'ang (Sin Teik Tong 繩德堂) of Wu fang, Shui Teh T'ang (Swee Teik Tong 垂德堂) of Men fang, Shui Tung T'ang (Swee Thong Tong 垂統堂) of Yu fang, Shu Teh T'ang (Soo Teik Tong 樹德堂) of Chai fang, P'ei Chen T'ang (Pi Chun Tong 丕振堂) of T'ien fang, and Chin Shan T'ang (Kim Shan Tong 金山堂) of Ch'in fang. See Khoo Phaik Suat, *op. cit.*, p. 11; interview with Khoo Eu Chai on 3 February 1971.
 68. See Khoo Hock Siew, 'Hsin-chiang Wu-fang Shen-teh-t'ang Ch'iu kung-ssu chien-shih' (A Short History of the Wu Fang Shen-teh t'ang Khoo Kongsi), in Pin-ch'eng Shen-teh-t'ang Ch'iu kung-ssu (ed.), *Genealogical Record of Goh Pang Khoo Clansmen*, n.p.
 69. See C.K. Yang, *A Chinese Village in Early Communist Transition* (Cambridge, Mass., 1965), p. 86.
 70. *Ibid.*, p. 87.
 71. A Chinese name nearly always consists of three characters, of which the first is surname or family name, the middle one is generation name, the last is the personal name. Usually, generation name and personal name are combined to make a meaning.
 72. Interview with Khoo Eu Chai in Penang on 3 February 1971.
 73. The genealogical code word for the eighth generation of the Khoo clansmen is Kay (圭), and is followed by Phaik (璧, ninth generation), Theng (呈, tenth generation), Hoon (云, eleventh generation), Swee (瑞, twelve generation), Jin (人, thirteenth generation), Boon (文, fourteenth generation), and then followed by Huan (煥), Kok (國), Hua (華), Thai (台), Heng (衡), Soo (思), Kay (繼), Boo (武), Teng (鼎), Kah (甲), Lay (勳), Sin (承), Kar (家), It (一), Kuan (貫), Soo (書), Sin (紳), Aing (永), Chian (千), Chiew (秋), Saik (錫), Hock (福), Har (遐), Ee (帖), Boh (謀), Choo (蕉), Ean (燕), Ek (翼), Say (世), Giap (業), Giang (仰), Cheng (清), and Kah (嘉). All these names are romanized according to southern Fukien dialect. See 'A List of Genealogical Code Words for Members of Leong San Tong Khoo Kongsi', the same list is incorporated into a leaflet entitled *Hsin-chiang Ch'iu-shih ko-p'ai hsi chiao-chi tsu chien-p'u* (Brief Genealogy of 'Sin Kang' Seah Khoo's Ancestors of Various Branches) (Penang, 1967).
 74. See the genealogical chart of the Wu fang Khoo Kongsi, in Pin-ch'eng Shen-teh-t'ang Ch'iu kung-ssu (ed.), *Genealogical Record of Goh Pang Khoo Clansmen*, p. 74.

75. See Hsia-yang chih-teh-t'ang Yang Kung-ssu chang-ch'eng (*Rules and Regulations of Har Yang Sit Teik Tong Yeoh Kongsi*) (Penang, n.d.), appendix.
76. E.g., the list of genealogical code words printed by the Lim Kongsi of Penang made such a specific demand. See 'List of Generations of Goe Kuan Seah Lim Clan'; see also Lim Teong Aik (ed.), *Centenary Souvenir of Lim Kongsi Toon Pun Tong and Lim Sz Bian Soot Tong, 1863-1963* (Penang, 1963), pp. 25-6.
77. See the genealogical charts of the Wu fang Khoo clansmen from the 8th to 23rd generation, in Pin-Ch'eng Shen-teh-t'ang Ch'iu kung-ssu (ed.), *Genealogical Record of Goh Pang Khoo Clansmen*, pp. 1-84; 'A List of Genealogical Code Words for Members of Leong San Tong Khoo Kongsi'.
78. E.g., the genealogical code word of the Khoo Kongsi for the eighteen generation is *Thai* (T'ai in mandarin, 台), but some Wu fang Khoo clansmen who belonged to this generation used words like *Boon* (Wen, 文) and *Cheng* (Ch'ing, 清). According to the list distributed by the Khoo Kongsi, *Boon* is the code word for the 14th generation, and *Cheng* is the code word for the 46th generation. See Pin-ch'eng Shen-teh-t'ang Ch'iu Kung-ssu (ed.), *Genealogical Record of Goh Pang Khoo Clansmen*, pp. 69-72; 'A List of Genealogical Code Words for Members of Leong San Tong Khoo Kongsi'.
79. For a discussion on the judicial power of the Chinese clans in Late Ch'ing China, see S. van der Sprinkel, *Legal Institutions in Manchu China* (London, 1962).
80. See Hsien Chin Hu, *The Common Descent Group in China and Its Functions* (New York, 1948), p. 29.
81. *Ibid.*
82. Interview with Khoo Eu Chai in Penang on 3 February 1971.
83. See Yen Ching-hwang, 'Ch'ing Sale of Honours and the Chinese Leadership in Singapore and Malaya, 1877-1912', *Journal of Southeast Asian Studies* 1, No. 2 (September 1970), pp. 20-32.
84. See Lim Teong Aik, 'A Short History of Lim Kongsi Toon Pun Tong and Lim Sz Bian Soot Tong, Penang', in Lim Teong Aik (ed.), *Centenary Souvenir of Lim Kongsi Toon Pun Tong and Lim Sz Bian Soot Tong*, p. 13.
85. *Ibid.*
86. To identify Lin Ju-chou as Lim Hua Chiam, see 'Pin P'ing-chang kung-kuan kuang-hsu chia-ch'en la-yueh chih i-shih pu' (Minutes of the Chinese Town Hall, Penang), Vol. 2, 23 January 1905 to October 1913 (unpublished); *Hsueh-pu kuan-pao* (*Gazette of the Ministry of Education*), Vol. 9 (1st day of 11th moon of 32nd year of Kuang-hsu, 16 December 1906), p. 47.
87. See 'Minutes of the Chinese Town Hall, Penang', Vol. 2.
88. *Ibid.*; 'A List of Superintendents, Directors and Deputy Directors of the Chung Hua School, Penang', in *Gazette of the Ministry of Education*, Vol. 9 (December 1906), p. 47.
89. See Lim Teong Aik, *op. cit.*, p. 16.
90. In recommending Lim for the award of the title, the Ministry of Agriculture, Industry and Commerce praised him for his distinguished service to the local Chinese community, his leadership, and his efforts in promoting Chinese education. See 'Memorial of the

Ministry of Agriculture, Industry and Commerce to the Court, accepted and approved by the Empress Dowager on 18th day of 3rd moon of 34th year of Kuang-hsu (18 April 1908)', reproduced in *Lat Pau*, 30 May 1908, p. 9.

91. See Lim Teong Aik, *op. cit.*, p. 13.
92. See A. Wright, *Twentieth-century Impressions of British Malaya* (London, 1908), p. 744.
93. See 'Minutes of the Chinese Town Hall', Vol. 2, 23 January 1905 to October 1913.
94. See Lim Teong Aik, *op. cit.*, p. 16.
95. *Ibid.*
96. See 'List of Early Trustees of Leong San Tong Khoo Kongsi 1850-1910' and 'List of Surviving Trustees at 1970', in Khoo Phaik Suat, 'The Clan Kongsis of Penang, with Particular Reference to the Leong San Tong Khoo Kongsi' (unpublished), pp. 14-5.
97. The dominant position of the Hai fang and Wu fang still can be seen from the statistics compiled in 1969 for the period from January 1959 to September 1969. Hai fang had 2,486, Wu fang 844, Shung fang 624, Yu fang 448, Men fang 372, T'ien fang 272, Ch'in fang 244, Chai fang 107, and Ching fang 74. The combined number of Hai fang and Wu fang is 3,330, while the remaining 7 fangs number only 2,141. See 'Hsin-chiang Ch'iu-shih ko p'ai-hsi tsu-ch'in teng-chi t'ung-chi piao' (Statistics of the Various fangs of the Khoo Clansmen), in Pin-ch'eng Shen-teh-t'ang Ch'iu kung-ssu (ed.), *Genealogical Record of Goh Pang Khoo Clansmen*, appendix.
98. See 'Pin Ch'iu-shih chia-chang ming-lu' (A List of Khoo Clan Leaders) deposited at the Khoo Clan House, Penang.
99. E.g., the word *Teh* is found both on the lists of genealogical code words of Lim Kongsi and Yeoh Kongsi of Penang; the word *Shuh* (Generation) is found on the lists of genealogical code words of Lim Kongsi, Yeoh Kongsi, and Khoo Kongsi. See 'A List of Genealogical Code Words for Members of Leong San Tong Khoo Kongsi', 'A List of Genealogical Code Words for the Yeoh Kongsi', in *Rules and Regulations of Yeoh Kongsi, Penang*, appendix; and 'A List of Generations of Lim Kongsi Toon Pun Tong and Bian Soot Tong', in Lim Teong Aik (ed.), *Centenary Souvenir of Lim Kongsi Toon Pun Tong and Lim Sz Bian Soot Tong*, pp. 25-6.
100. See Pin-Ch'eng Lin-shih Chung-hsiao-t'ang chang-ch'eng (*Rules and Regulations of the Hall of Loyalty and Filial Piety of Lin Clan, Penang*) (1965).
101. 'Yao Teh T'ang' was the name for Ching fang (Chneh pang), 'Shen Teh T'ang' was the name for Wu fang (Goh pang) which is also the name of a sub-clan, and 'Shui T'ung T'ang' was the name for Yu fang (Soo pang). All these three fangs and sub-clan belonged to the Khoo Kongsi of Penang. Interview with Khoo Eu Chai in Penang on 3 February 1971; see also Khoo Phaik Suat, *op. cit.*, p. 11.
102. E.g., the Lim Kongsi of Penang, the Khoo Kongsi of Penang, and the Po-chia-keng Tan clan of Singapore have stated this very clearly in their rules and regulations. See *Rules and By-Laws of Kew Leong Tong Lim Kongsi* (an undated booklet in both Chinese and English), p. 13; *Pin-lang-yu lung-shan-t'ang Ch'iu kung-ssu chang' ch'eng* (n.d.), chapter five, sections 6 and 7.
103. Khoo Chian Eng was worshipped by the Khoo Kongsi of Penang, Yeoh Teck Keng was worshipped by the Yeoh Kongsi of Penang, Lim Jiong Kong was worshipped by Lim

Kongsi of Penang, Ong Sim Chi was worshipped by the Thye Guan Tong Ong Kongsi of Penang and Hokkien Ong Clan Temple of Singapore, Tan Guan Kong was worshipped by Eng Chuan Tong Tan Kongsi of Penang and Tan Eng Chuan Tong of Malacca, and Huang Hsiao-shan was worshipped by Kang Har Ancestral Temple of Malacca, Koong Har Tong Ancestral Temple of Penang and Teo Chew Kang Hay Tng of Singapore. See *Brief Genealogy of 'Sin Kang' Seah Khoo's Ancestors of Various Branches; Rules and Regulations of Yeoh Kongsi of Penang*, item 4; Lim Teong Aik, *Centenary Souvenir of Lim Kongsi Toon Pun Tong and Lim Sz Bian Soot Tong*; Wang Hsiu-nan (ed.), *Wang-shih k'ai-tsung pai-shih lu* (Singapore, 1971), pp. B30-32, C2; Ch'en Ch'i-yu (ed.), *Yun-ch'uan-t'ang Ch'en-shih tsu-p'u*, p. 5; Ch'en Yung-ch'ing (ed.), *Ma-liu-chia yun-ch'uan t'ang Ch'en-shih tsung-ch'ih ta-hsa lo-ch'eng k'ai-mo tien-li chih pai-chou-nien chi-nien t'e-k'an* (Malacca, 1974); Pin-lang-yu Huang-shih tsung-ch'ih (ed.), *Huang-shih tsu-p'u chih pai ssu-shih chou-nien chi-nien t'e-k'an*.

104. *Ibid.*
105. See C.K. Yang, *Religion in Chinese Society* (Berkeley, Calif., 1967), pp. 29-30.
106. E.g., the Khoo Kongsi in Penang placed the statue of Khoo Chian Eng, the progenitor of the Khoo clan in China, in the central shrine. Apart from this, tablets of the second, third, fourth, and fifth ancestors of the Khoo clan and their wives were also deposited there. See Khoo Hock Siew, 'ma-lai-hsi-ya Pin-lang-yu Ch'iu-shih lung-shan-t'ang chih-lueh', Ch'iu Hsiu-ch'iang and Ch'iu Shang-yao (eds.), *Ch'iu-shih jen-wen chi-lueh*, p. 33.
107. See Francis L.K. Hsu, *Under the Ancestor's Shadow: Kinship, Personality and Social Mobility in China* (Stanford, Calif., 1971), p. 53.
108. This practice has been continued among clans today; some of them have openly listed the prices of shrine positions for ancestral tablets. The Lim Kongsi of Penang stated in its by-laws the conditions and sums of money for various positions in the shrines. Those who could pay M\$1,000 or more could deposit their ancestral tablets in the central shrine; those who could pay \$240 or more in the left shrine; and those who could only pay \$120 had to deposit their ancestral tablets in the right shrine. See *Rules and By-laws of Kew Leong Tong Lim Kongsi* (enforced from 1 January 1948), English section, p. 14. This practice was also adopted by the Po-chia-keng Tan clan of Singapore. In its rules and regulations, it states that 'members who donate M\$300 each time could deposit their ancestral tablets in the central shrine and they themselves would become permanent members of the clan; those who donate \$200 each time could deposit their ancestral tablets in the left shrine and those who donate \$100 in the right shrine, and they themselves would be given permanent membership of the clan'. See *Hsin-chia-po yun-ch'uan kung-so shih-liu chou-nien chi-nien t'e-k'an* (*Souvenir Magazine of 16th Anniversary of the Eng Chuan Kong So of Singapore*) (Singapore, 1954), chapter 6, Tsung-hsien shih-chuan, p. 6.
109. See Pin-ch'eng Yun-ch'uan-t'ang Ch'en kang-ssu chang-ch'eng (*The Rules of the Eng Chuan Tong Tan Kongsi*, Penang), p. 2, item 8; Pin-lang-yu T'ai-yuan-t'ang Wang-shih tsu-miao chang-ch'eng (*Rules and Regulations of Thye Guan Tong Ong Kongsi*, Penang), p. 9, item 35; Hsueh-lan-ngo Yeh-shih tsung-ch'ih chang-ch'eng (*Rules and Regulations of the Yap Clan Temple*, Selangor), p. 6, item 31; interview with Yap Tan-po (aged 70) at Yap Clan Temple, Jalan Bandar, Kuala Lumpur, on 15 January 1974; interview with Chan Siew Hup at the Chan Clan Temple, 49 Jalan Cecil, Kuala Lumpur, on 15 January 1974.
110. *Ibid.*

111. According to C.S. Wong, a Malaysian historian who witnessed an ancestral worship ceremony conducted by the Khoo Kongsi in Penang in 1964, the ceremony consisted of two parts: installation of new spiritual tablets, and homage to the ancestors. See C.S. Wong, *A Cycle of Chinese Festivities* (Singapore, 1967), pp. 16-8.
112. *Ibid.*
113. The Lim Kongsi of Penang indicated in its by-laws that the clan's protector goddess, Thean Seong Seng Boe (T'ien Shang Sheng Mu 天上圣母, also known as T'ien Fei), had to be installed at the front hall of the clan temple, and two sacrificial ceremonies (on the Winter Solstice Day which falls on 23rd of 12th moon, and the Goddess's birthday which falls on the 23rd of 3rd moon) must be held every year. See *Rules and By-Laws of Kew Leong Tong Lim Kongsi*, p. 13.
114. See Ta Chen, *Emigrant Communities in South China* (New York, 1940), pp. 40-1.
115. The legend of T'ien Fei originated in the Sung Dynasty. According to the legend, the sixth daughter of Lin Yuan, a resident of the P'u T'ien district of Fukien Province, disappeared in a storm in an attempt to save her elder brother. She thus became the Protector Goddess for the sea-faring groups in coastal Fukien. Because of her alleged power, she was conferred the title of 'T'ien Fei' by Emperor Yung-lo of the Ming Dynasty. Later she was further conferred the title of 'T'ien Hou'. She was also known among sea-faring people as 'Ma Tsu Po' 妈祖婆). The worship of 'T'ien Fei' was popular in South China, Taiwan, Hong Kong and Southeast Asia. For the origins and cult of 'T'ien Fei'. See several articles contained in *Ma-liu-chia Hsing-an hui-kuan hsin-hsa lo-ch'eng T'ien-hou kung hsin-tien yu kao chun chi-nien k'an* (*Souvenir Magazine of the Founding of the New Building of Him Aun Association of Malacca and the Completion of the New T'ien Hou Temple*) (Malacca, 1973?), pp. 130-56; see also Hsu Yun-tsiao, *Pai-ta-nien shih* (*A History of Pattani*) (Singapore, 1946), p. 119.
116. For instance, the Khoo Kongsi's clan God was 'Tua Sai Yah' (Ta Shih Yeh 大德爷, the colloquial name of General Hsieh Hsien of the Chin Dynasty 晋朝谢玄) which was probably connected with the early migration of the Khoo clansmen from North to South China, and was worshipped in China. The clan gods of Yeoh Kongsi were Sye Thow Kong (Shih T'ou Kung 使头公) and Poe Seng Tai Tay (Pao Sheng Ta Ti 保生大帝) which were also worshipped by the Yeoh clan in the H'ai Ch'eng district of Fukien. See Khoo Hock Siew, 'Ma-lai-hsi-ya Pin-lang-yu Ch'iu-shih lung-shan-t'ang chi-lueh', in Ch'iu Hsiu-ch'iang and Ch'iu Shang-yao (eds.), *Ch'iu-shih jen-wen chi-lueh*, p. 33; Ong Ee Seng, 'Legends Surrounding the Yeoh Kongsi', *The Star* (Penang) 25 June 1973, p. 19.
117. See Khoo Hock Siew, op. cit.; 'Pin hsia-yang chih-teh-t'ang Yang kung-ssu ch'ang-chien shih' (*A Short History of the Founding of the Har Yang Sit Teik Tong Yeoh Kongsi of Penang*), the inscription of the stone tablet of Yeoh Kongsi copied by the author on 5 February 1971.
118. See *Souvenir Magazine of 16th Anniversary of the Eng Chuan Kong So of Singapore*, Section on Clan Leaders, p. 8; *Rules and By-Laws of Kew Leong Tong Lim Kongsi*, p. 13.
119. To the Chinese peasants, the new year festival was not just to start afresh a new hopeful year, but also to celebrate the passing of the severe winter and to welcome a lively spring in which their economic activities started again.

120. In the traditional Chinese society, the Christian week system in which Sunday is the rest day was unknown. In fact, the system was largely irrelevant to the predominantly non-Christian and agrarian population. Shop employees in country towns were given holidays to observe those most common festivals such as Chinese New Year, the May festival, and the Moon festival. Following this tradition, early Chinese immigrants in Singapore and Malaya worked most of the days throughout the year, except for a few festival days.
121. See Vaughan, *The Manners and Customs of the Chinese of the Straits Settlements*, pp. 42–44; *Sing Po*, 21 June 1890, p. 1, 5 October 1892, p. 1, 5 October 1892, p. 1, 6 March 1893, p. 1, 17 June 1893, p. 1, 23 September 1893, p. 1.
122. Many of the clan organizations in Singapore and Malaysia today still have their own clan cemeteries, e.g., the Jen Kuei Gan Clan Temple of Malaysia in Malacca has its own cemetery. See 'Ma-lai-hsi-ya Jen-kuei Yen-shih tsung-ch'ih yen-ke shih chi-lueh' (A Short History of the Jen Kuei Gan Clan Temple of Malaysia), in *Yen-shih tsung-chin shih-lu* (Historical Records of Gan Clansmen), (ed.) Yen Swee-chang (Johore Bahru, 1973?), n.p. The Hokkien Yeoh clan in Singapore has its own cemetery named 'Hiap Guan Mount'. See Yang Feng-shan, 'Fu-chien Yang-shih ts'ung-shan-Hsieh Yuan Shan shih-lueh' (A Short History of the Cemetery of Hokkien Yeoh Clan-Hiap Guan Mount), in Yang Ta-chin, (ed.), *Yang-shih Tsung-pa*, P.G. 16.
123. E.g., the Teo Chew Kang Hay T'ng of Singapore which was founded in 1867, still continues its tradition of mobilizing all clansmen to visit ancestral graves. See Huang Kuo-chih, 'Wu-chin ssu-hsi kan-yen', in Huang Shih-t'ung et al. (eds.), *Ch'ao-chou Chiang-hsia-t'ang chiu-shih wu chou-nien chi-nien t'e-k'an* (Souvenir Magazine of 95th Anniversary of the Teo Chew Kang Hay t'ng, Singapore) (Singapore, 1962), E-10.
124. See Kong See Boo Poe (Kuala Lumpur), 22 March 1897, pp. 3–4.
125. See Hsien Chin Hu, *The Common Descent Group in China and Its Functions*, pp. 184–85, Appendix 58.
126. See *Rules and By-Laws of Kew Leong Tong Lim Kongsí*, p. 9.
127. See Khoo Phaik Suat, 'The Clan Kongsis of Penang, with Particular Reference to the Leong San Tong Khoo Kongsí' (unpublished), p. 18.
128. Interview with Khoo Eu Chai in Penang on 3 February 1971.
129. See *Pin-lang-yu lung-shan-t'ang Ch'iu kung-ssu chang-ch'eng*, pp. 2–3.
130. See *Ssu-chou jih-pao* (Federated Malay States Daily Press) (Kuala Lumpur), 13 December 1910, p. 4.
131. See 'Pin-ch'eng Ch'en-shih yun-ch'uan-t'ang chien-shih' (A Short History of the Eng Chuan Tong Tan Kongsí, Penang), in Ch'en Ch'i-yu (ed.), *Yun-ch'uan-t'ang Ch'en-shih tsu-p'u* (The Genealogy of the Eng Chuan Tong Tan Clan) (Penang, 1967) (n.p.).
132. E.g., the Eng Choon Toh Teo Gan Ancestral Temple (永春桃场顔氏宗祠) of Malacca which was founded in 1949, has included this function in its rules and regulations. See *Ma-liu-chia yang-ch'un t'ao-ch'ang Yen-shih ts'ung-ch'ih chang-ch'eng* (Rules and Regulations of the Eng Choon Toh Teo Gan Ancestral Temple, Malacca) (Malacca, 1949), Chinese Section, p. 2, rule No. 12.

133. See 'Rules and Regulations of the Po-chia-keng Tan Clan of Singapore', chapter 9, in *Souvenir Magazine of 16th Anniversary of the Eng Chuan Kong So, Singapore*, chapter 6, p. 6.
134. The appointed Chinese Kapitans were given judicial and administrative power over their dialect groups or Chinese community as a whole. See C.S. Wong, *A Gallery of Chinese Kapitans* (Singapore, 1963).
135. See S. van der Sprinkel, *Legal Institutions in Manchu China*, pp. 80-7.
136. See, e.g., the rules and regulations of the Po-chia-keng Tan clan of Singapore, in *Souvenir Magazine of 16th Anniversary of the Eng Chuan Kong So of Singapore*, chapter 6, p. 6.
137. For a discussion on clan wars in Fukien and Kwangtung, see Maurice Freedman, *Lineage Organization in Southeastern China*, pp. 105-13; *Lat Pau* reported frequent clan fights in Fukien and Kwangtung; e.g., there were reports about clan fights in Shun Teh district, Kwangtung (28 October 1889, p. 6), clan fights in Tung An district, Fukien (29 October 1889, p. 6), clan fights in Ch'uan-chou prefecture, Fukien, (13 November 1889, p. 2, 26 November 1889, p. 2), the fights between Wu and Fu clans of Nan An district, Fukien (8 April 1891, p. 5) and the fights between Lim and Koh (Lin and Hsu) of the Feng Au village, Teochew prefecture, Kwangtung (1 May 1891, p. 5).
138. E.g., the fights between Li and Chua (Li and Ch'ai) clans in Singapore - both belonged to the Teochew dialect group (*Sing Po*, 20 April 1891, p. 8), and the fights between Teochew Lim and Tan (Lin and Ch'en) clans in Singapore (*Sing Po*, 8 March 1898, p. 8).
139. See rule no. 30 of the Kew Leong Tong Lim Kongsi of Penang, in *Rules and By-Laws of Kew Leong Tong Lim Kongsi*, p. 8; see also 'Rules and Regulations of the Pao-ch'ih-kung Tan Clan of Singapore', chapter 10, in *Souvenir Magazine of the 16th Anniversary Celebration of the Eng Chuan Kong So of Singapore*, chapter 6, p. 6.
140. See 'Pin-ch'eng Ch'en-shih yun-ch'uan-t'ang chien-shih', in Ch'en Ch'i-yu (ed.), *Yun-ch'uan-t'ang Ch'en-shih tsu-p'u* (n.p.).
141. See Khoo Phaik Suat, *op. cit.*, p. 21.
142. Interview with Yeoh Seng Chan in Penang on 17 July 1974.
143. *Ibid.*
144. According to Yeoh Seng Chan, clan war was rife in South China in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. There was a war between Khoo, Cheah, and Yeoh in H'ai Ch'eng, but the trustees of the Sam Quay Tong came to some kind of understanding, and used remittances as a means to threaten parental clans to settle the fight. *Ibid.* Yeoh did not specify the year of the big fight, his reference could be the one occurred in April 1891 between Khoo and Yeoh, reported in *Lat Pau*, 4 April 1891, p. 8.
145. See 'Notes on the Chinese of Penang', *Journal of Indian Archipelago and Eastern Asia* 8 (1854), p. 1.
146. The term *Baba* used here is to designate the people of Sino-Malay parentage and those 'Straits Chinese' who had acquired strong Sino-Malay culture. A useful discussion on this topic is found in Png Poh Seng, 'The Straits Chinese in Singapore: A Case of Local Identity and Socio-Cultural Accommodation', *Journal of Southeast Asian History* 10, No. 1 (March 1969), pp. 96-9.
147. See Maurice Freedman, *Chinese Family and Marriage in Singapore*, p. 124.

148. See *Rules and By-Laws of Kew Leong Tong Lim Kongsì*, p. 15.
149. See Ping-ti Ho, *The Ladder of Success in Imperial China* (New York, 1964), pp. 168–209.
150. Maurice Freedman, *Lineage Organization in Southeastern China*, p. 51.
151. See Maurice Freedman, *Chinese Lineage and Society: Fukien and Kwangtung*, pp. 69–75.
152. See Khoo Phaik Suat, 'The Clan Kongsis of Penang, with Particular Reference to the Leong San Tong Khoo Kongsì' (unpublished), p. 17; interview with Yeoh Seng Chan in Penang on 17 July 1974.
153. See Yen Ching-hwang, *The Overseas Chinese and the 1911 Revolution: With Special Reference to Singapore and Malaya*, pp. 154–57.
154. See Khoo Hock Siew, 'Pin-ch'eng lung-shan-t'ang Ch'iu kung-ssu shih-lueh chih t'ang-wu fa-chan k'ai-k'uang', in Pin-ch'eng Shen-teh-t'ang Ch'iu kung-ssu (ed.), *Genealogical Record of Goh Pang Khoo Clansmen*, Appendix; in the Ch'ing official record the Sin Kang School was known as the 'Khoo Clan School' (Ch'iu-shih chia-tsu hsueh-t'ang, 邱氏家族学堂). See 'Report of the Consul-General of the Straits Settlements, Sun Shih-ting about the Founding of Chinese Schools by Chinese Merchants in Southeast Asia', in *Cheng-chih kuan-pao* (Ch'ing Government Gazette), 28th day of 9th moon of 33rd year of Kuang-hsu (3 November 1907).
155. See Khoo Phaik Suat, *op. cit.*, p. 17.
156. See the enrolment advertisement of the Lim Clan School published in *Penang Sin Pao*, 18 February 1911, p. 4.
157. See *Chong Shing Yit Pao* (Singapore), 16 October 1909, p. 1.
158. See 'Pin-ch'eng Ch'en-shih Yun-ch'uan-t'ang chien-shih', in Ch'en Ch'i-yu (ed.), *Yun-ch'uan-t'ang Ch'en-shih tsu-p'ü* (n.p.).
159. This conclusion is drawn after comparing the curricula of the Ts'un Ku Hsueh Tang, a modern primary school in Hupeh Province, with the curricula of the Lim Clan School. See Chang Chih-tung, *Chang Wen-hsiang kang ch'uan-chi* (Complete Works of Chang Chih-tung) (Taipei, 1963), Vol. 3, pp. 2000–2002; *Penang Sin Pao*, 18 February 1911, p. 4.
160. This conclusion is drawn after comparing the curricula of the Ying Sin School (founded by the Hakka dialect group in Singapore in 1907) and the Lim Clan School. See Hsing-chia-po Yin-hsin hsueh-t'ang chueh kai chien-ming chang-ch'eng (Modified Comprehensive Rules and Regulations of the Ying Sin School, Singapore) (Singapore, 1907), pp. 2–7; *Penang Sin Pao*, 18 February 1911, p. 4.
161. See *Penang Sin Pao*, 18 February 1911, p. 4.
162. *Ibid.*
163. The syllabi of the Lim Clan School were not published in the newspaper, but the similar syllabi of the Ying Sin school in Singapore can be used to illustrate this point. See *Modified Comprehensive Rules and Regulations of the Ying Sin School, Singapore*, p. 3.
164. The Rules and Regulations of the Kew Leong Tong Lim Clan School stated that students were to be guided by their teachers to pay homage to Confucius' portrait on the first and fifth days of every month. Moreover, they were required to bow to the portraits of Confucius and progenitors of the clan after classes were dismissed every day. See *Penang Sin Pao*, 18 February 1911, p. 4.
165. *Ibid.*

Appendix Table 1:
Early Chinese Clan Organizations in Singapore and Malaya, 1819-1911

	Name of the Clan Organization	Surname	Locality	Geographical and Dialect Origin	Year	Name of Founder
1.	T'sao Clan House 曹家馆	T'sao 曹	Singapore	T'ai Shan, Kwang-tung, Cantonese	1819?	Ts'ao Ah Chih 曹亚志
2.	Kang Har Ancestral Temple 江夏堂黄氏宗祠	Huang 黄	Malacca	S. Fukien	1825?	Huang Wen-ch'eng 黄温成 Huang Lung-ch'eng 黄隆成 Huang chu-ch'eng 黄主成
3.	Koong Har Tong Ancestral Temple 江夏堂黄氏宗祠	Huang 黄	Penang	S. Fukien	1828	
4.	Leong San Tong Khoo Kongsi 龙山堂邱公司	Khoo (Chiu 邱)	Penang	Ha'i Ch'eng district Fukien, S. Fukien	1835	Khoo Hua Tong 邱华东 Khoo Chun Boon 邱峻文 Khoo Sim Bee 邱心美 Khoo Kang Swee and others 邱江水等
5.	Har Yang Sit Teik Tong Yeoh Kongsi 霞阳植德堂杨公司	Yeoh (Yang 杨)	Penang	Ha'i Cheng district, Fukien, S. Fukien	1842	
6.	Ng Clan House 伍氏馆	Ng (Wu 伍)	Penang	Cantonese	1848	

Appendix Table 1 (cont'd)

7.	Sze Yap Chan Si Wuikun 四邑陈氏会馆	Chan (Ch'en 陈)	Singapore	Tai Shan, Hsin Hui, K'ai P'ing, Yern P'ing	1848	Chan Nam?	陈南
8.	The Koe Yang Tong Society 许氏高阳堂	Khaw (Hsu 许)	Penang	S. Fukien	1849	Khaw Sim Kim	许心钦
9.	Lee Long Say Tong 李陇西堂	Lee (Li 李)	Penang	S. Fukien	1854		
10.	Eng Chuan Tong Tan Kongs 颖川堂陈公司	Tan (Ch'en 陈)	Penang	S. Fukien	1854	Tan Swee Kiat Tan Long So Tan Boon Yao Tan Lian Ki Tan Koan Lun	陈瑞吉 陈隆所 陈文要 陈连枝 陈官润
11.	Poe Soo Tong Cheah Kongs 谢公司	Cheah (Hsieh 谢)	Penang	H'ai Ch'eng, Fukien, S. Fukien	1854		
12.	Wong Ka Koon 黄家馆	Wong (Huang 黄)	Singapore	Tai shan, Kwang-tung, Cantonese	1854		
13.	Hokkien Kew Leong Tong 福建九龙堂	Lim (Lin 林)	Singapore	S. Fukien	1857		
14.	Chou Chia Ch'ih 周家祠	Chou (周)	Singapore	Kwangchou & Chao Ch'ing prefectures. Cantonese	1861?	Chou H'o-kung	周活
15.	Lim Sz Bian Soot Tong	Lim (Lin 林)	Penang	H'ai Ch'eng, Fukien, S. Fukien	1863	Lim Cheng Kah	林清甲

Appendix Table 1 (cont'd)

16.	Lim Kongsí Toon Pun Tong 林公司敦本堂	Lim (Lin 林)	Penang	H'ai Ch'eng, Fukien, S. Fukien	1863	Lim Cheng Kah	林清甲
17.	Fen Yang Kongsí 汾阳公司	Kuo (郭)	Singapore	Ch'ao An, Kwang- tung, Teochew	1865		
18.	Lau Kwan Cheong Chew Ku Seng Wuikun 刘关张赵古城会馆	Lau (Liu 刘) Kwan (Kuan 关) Cheong (Chang 张) Chew (Chao 赵)	Singapore	Cantonese	1866	Liu Ta-chiu Liu Ch'ih-chang Kuan Ah-lo Chang Shih-i Chao I-jen	刘大就 刘池长 关亚乐 张士煜 赵以仁
19.	Kew Leong Tong Lim Kongsí 九龙堂林公司	Lim (Lin 林)	Penang	H'ai Ch'eng, Fukien, S. Fukien	1866		
20.	Teo Chew Kang Hay T'ng 潮州江夏堂	Ooi (Huang 黄)	Singapore	Teochew	1867		
21.	Hokkien Ong Clan Temple 闽王祠	Ong (Wang 王)	Singapore	T'ung An, Fukien	1872	Ong Eu Hai Ong Kew Ho Ong Chong Chew	王友海 王求和 王宗周
22.	Li Shih Shu Shih 李氏书室	Li (李)	Singapore	Cantonese	1874		
23.	Tan Eng Chuan Tong 陈赖川堂	Tan (Ch'en 陈)	Malacca	S. Fukien	1875		

Appendix Table 1 (cont'd)

24. Po-chia-keng, Tan Clan Temple 保赤宮陳氏宗祠	Tan (Ch'en 陳)	Singapore	S. Fukien	1878	Tan Kim Cheng Tan Beng Swee	陈金钟 陈明水
25. Teo Chew Say Ho Kongsì 潮州西河公司	Lim (Lin 林)	Singapore	Teochew	1879		
26. Fu Shih She 符氏社	Fu (符)	Singapore	Hainanese	1887	Fu Yu-kuei Fu Yün-cheng Fu Fu-chi Fu Ch'ang-wen	符愈贵 符运政 符福基 符昌文
27. Lee Choo Kongsì 李厝公司	Lee (Li 李)	Singapore	Teochew	1890		
28. Yap Clan Temple 叶氏宗祠	Yap (Yeh 叶)	Kuala Lumpur	Hui Yang, Kwang-tung, Hakka	1892	Yeh Ch'eng	叶城
29. Ong Chi Huai Tong 王植槐堂	Ong (Wang 王)	Malacca	S. Fukien	1896	Ong Keng Hoon	王庆云
30. Chan Kongsì 陈公司	Chan (Ch'en 陈)	Kuala Lumpur	Hakka & S. Fukien Cantonese	1897	Chan Shao Lien Chan Chun Tan Sin Hee	陈秀莲 陈春 陈新禧
31. Han Clan Temple 韩氏祠	Han (韩)	Singapore	Hainanese	1900		
32. Thye Guan Tong Ong Kongsì 太原堂王公司	Ong (Wang 王)	Penang	S. Fukien	1900	Ong Han Ting Ong Han Chong Ong Han Siew	王汉鼎 王汉宗 王汉寿

Appendix Table 1 (cont'd)

33. Lung Clan Temple 龙氏祠	Lung (龙)	Singapore	Hainanese	1903	Lung Ch'i-chang	龙其章
34. Long Say Kong So 陇西公所	Li (李)	Singapore	S. Fukien	1907	Lee Cheng Yan	李清渊
35. Wang Ping Yang Tang 汪平阳堂	Wang (汪)	Singapore	Tung An, Fukien, S. Fukien	1908		
36. Kwangtung Wu Shih Shu She 广东吴氏书室	Wu (吴)	Singapore	Cantonese	1910		
37. Chiung-yai Huang Clan Association 琼崖黄氏公会	Huang (黄)	Singapore	Hainanese	1910	Huang Yu-yen (黄有渊)	
38. Yeoh Shi Ti Tong 杨四知堂	Yeoh (Yang 杨)	Singapore	S. Fukien	1911		

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CHAPTER 3

Early Fukienese Migration and Social Organization in Singapore and Malaya before 1900*

Early Fukienese Migration and Settlements in Singapore and Malaya before 1850

Chinese trade with the Malay Peninsula existed long before Europeans came to Southeast Asia in the early sixteenth century. It is reasonable to suggest that many of these early Chinese traders were Fukienese, for they were the most active Chinese traders on the Southeast China coast during the Ming and early Ch'ing periods.¹ The rise of Ch'uan-chou as China's largest port on the Southeast coast during the Southern Sung and Yuan dynasties signified the importance of the Fukienese trade in the national economy. The Fukienese traders were thus able to dominate the trade in both East and Southeast Asia during the period.² The state monopoly of overseas trade and the ban on overseas travel imposed by the early Ming rulers saw the decline of Fukienese trade in general.³ The decline was arrested with the relaxation of the Ming seafaring restrictive policy and the rise of Yueh Kang (Port Moon) of Changchou during the mid-Ming period. The rise of Yueh Kang as a major trading port in Southern Fukien not only restored the dominant position of Fukienese traders in China's overseas trade, but also saw the further spread of Fukienese in East and Southeast Asia.⁴ At the same time, the presence of Portuguese and Spaniards in Southeast and East Asia opened up new opportunities for trade in the vast Southeast coast of China. In response to this new trading opportunity, Fukienese gentry-merchants and peasant-peddlers rose in large number engaging in illegal trade with the Europeans.⁵

Against this background of Fukienese active participation in illegal trade with Europeans and their further diaspora overseas, the Fukienese migration and settlement in the Straits of Malacca was a logical consequence. Located strategically in the Straits of Malacca, port Malacca which emerged as a leading entrepôt in the East in the fifteenth century, became a central place for exchange of products from India, China and Southeast Asia. Products which were well-known to Chinese and found a great market in Southern China such as spices, sanderwood, talipans (sea cucumbers) and birds' nests were readily found in Malacca.⁶ The great trading opportunity of port Malacca on which the Malacca Sultanate was built must not have escaped the attention of the Fukienese traders who had been active in Southeast Asia. Portuguese records claim that up to ten Chinese junks called at port Malacca annually carrying Chinese products such as silks, copper and iron wares and rhubarb for exchange.⁷ Some of these Chinese junks could well have been owned by Fukienese. Portuguese sources also claim that the Malacca Sultanate had appointed four *Shahbandars* (port officials) to help administer foreigners, and one of these four officials was a Chinese.⁸ From these records, it is reasonable to suggest that there existed a small Chinese trading community in port Malacca, and its leader was appointed by the Sultan of Malacca to control its commercial activities. Among these early Chinese in Malacca, many of them were most likely Fukienese traders of a transient nature.

A more definite claim of existence of a predominant Fukienese community in Malacca also came from Portuguese sources. The Portuguese cosmographer and explorer, de Eredia, who lived in Malacca for the first four years of the seventeenth century, recorded the existence of a *Campon China* which formed part of the suburb of Upe. The *Campon China* lived the *Chincheos*, or Chinese of the Fukien province of South-eastern China.⁹ The term *Chincheos* is undoubtedly Portuguese romanization of southern Fukienese term *Chiangchew* (漳洲) which was referred to the southern Fukienese from Changchou prefecture at that time.

The rise of Yueh Kang (Port Moon) of Changchou to its prominence during 1465 and 1505 covered half of the Malacca Sultanate, and the Fukienese traders from Changchou seemed to have accounted for the increase of the Chinese population in early Malacca. The partial lifting of seafaring ban by the Ming Court in 1567,¹⁰ further stimulated migration of Fukienese to Malacca and other ports in Southeast Asia. The growth of this predominant Fukienese settlement in Malacca was thus recorded by the Portuguese cosmographer de Eredia in the early seventeenth century.

When Malacca came under Dutch rule after 1641, the shape of the Chinese settlement in Malacca appeared to be clearer and more definite. Dutch sources claimed that when the Dutch took over the city of Malacca, the population of the Chinese there was about 300 to 400.¹¹ After more than three and a half decades, the Chinese population in Dutch Malacca did not seem to increase. The Governor of Malacca, Balthasar Bort, reported 426 Chinese among the total population of 4,884 in 1678. The Chinese population consisted of 127 men, 140 women and 159 children.¹² Dutch inducement policy was partly responsible for the growth of the Chinese population in Malacca after 1678. By 1750, almost a century after Dutch rule, the size of the Chinese settlement in Malacca expanded about five-fold to an estimated population of 2,161.¹³

Although Dutch sources provided more detailed information than Portuguese sources about the Chinese settlement in Malacca, they did not provide any breakdown along dialect lines. It is difficult to gauge how large the Fukienese settlement was. Fortunately, our knowledge of the Fukienese migration and settlement in early Malacca has been enhanced by the availability of Chinese epigraphic materials. The founding of the Cheng Hoon Teng temple in 1673 marked the beginning of the earliest history of Chinese temples in Malaya and Singapore. It also preserved many valuable epigraphic materials for the study of Chinese in the region. The pioneering work of Professor Jao Tsung-i on the Chinese inscriptions published in 1969, and later the publication of Professors Wolfgang Franke and Chen Tieh Fan on Chinese epigraphic materials in Malaya from 1982 to 1987 in three volumes, have made the study on the Fukienese migration and settlement in early Malacca easier.¹⁴ Whatever views held by different scholars over the founding date of the Cheng Hoon Teng and the identifications of various Chinese Kapitans of Malacca, one undeniable fact derived from the epigraphic materials is that almost all identifiable Chinese Kapitans of early Malacca were of southern Fukienese origin. They were either from Changchou, Ch'uian-chou or Amoy.¹⁵

The monopoly of Kapitan position by the Fukienese can be taken as a clear indication of predominant Fukienese in the Malacca Chinese population. In any overseas Chinese community, no minority dialect group could monopolize leadership of the community for a long and continuous period. The reason is simple, no minority dialect group, no matter how strong its economic position was, could have survived the challenge of the majority dialect group in numerical strength. The monopoly of the Fukienese over the leadership of the Chinese community in early Malacca can be interpreted as reflecting both the numerical and economic strength of the Fukienese in the community.

When Malacca was taken over by the British from the Dutch in 1824 as a result of implementation of the Anglo-Dutch treaty of 1824, the Chinese in Malacca was estimated at 3,989, about one-third of the total population of the city. The Chinese population grew rapidly under the British rule from 3,989 in 1824, to 5,200 in 1827, 6,882 in 1842 and to 10,608 in 1852.¹⁶ We have no statistics to show how many Fukienese were among these Chinese. It can be seen from the Portuguese and Dutch periods and a demographic survey taken in a later period, 1911, it is safe to suggest that 50% were Fukienese.¹⁷ Therefore, we can arrive at a figure of about 5,000 Fukienese in Malacca around 1850.

The founding of Penang in 1786 marked the beginning of an important era of Chinese migration to Southeast Asia. The British, as the newcomer on the scene of Asian trade, were keen to increase trade volume with the region. The founding of Penang, though intended to service the China trade,¹⁸ was nevertheless developed as a free port. Penang's free trade policy and the policy of Francis Light of encouraging Chinese immigration attracted large numbers of Chinese from adjacent areas and China. In January 1794, about 8 years after the founding of Penang, Francis Light was able to report to the Governor-General of Bengal that there were about 3,000 Chinese on the island, and they constituted the most valuable part of the inhabitants.¹⁹ How many of these Chinese in Penang were Fukienese? Where did they come from and how did they come? These are the questions to be explored.

It is difficult to gauge how many of these 3,000 Chinese in Penang in 1795 were Fukienese. But given the fact that Fukienese traders had been active in Southeast Asia since the sixteenth century, many of them would not have escaped the opportunity offered by the British in the new free port. It is, therefore, reasonable to suggest that a substantial number of the 3,000 Chinese must have been of southern Fukienese origin. In connection with the questions where and how did these Fukienese come from, it seemed that they were attracted from places such as Kedah, Malacca and China. The founding of Penang offered new and exciting opportunity for trade, and it also offered the alternatives for Fukienese merchants in the Straits of Malacca and the Malay Peninsula to escape the stringent and rapacious Dutch or Malay rulers. The immediate reaction taken by a Chinese leader named Koh Lay Huan, a Chinese Kapitan from Kuala Muda, Kedah, indicates such a trend. Koh Lay Huan, also known in British records as Cheko, Chewan and Che Kay,²⁰ was a native of Changchou, Fukien. He was claimed by his descendant to be an anti-Manchu hero and a scholar who migrated to Siam 'with an entourage in three of his own junks, with three

big chests containing books on many subjects'.²¹ Whether Koh Lay Huan was one of the anti-Manchu heroes or not is not our concern here, but we are interested to know whether he was running away from the Manchu rule, and brought along a group of his relatives and friends from Changchou to Siam (Thailand) and then to Kedah. When Koh heard of the founding of the free port, he was one of the very first men who, together with some Indian Christians who came to Penang and presented Francis Light with a fishing net.²² Koh Lay Huan was later appointed by Francis Light as Chinese Kapitan to help administer the local Chinese community. Koh had a close relationship with Captain Light, and was entrusted by Light to introduce a pepper plant from Aceh. He later became a leading merchant, a planter and liquor farmer under his popular known name 'Chewan' in the early history of Penang.²³

The story of Kapitan Koh Lay Huan and his Changchou men in early Penang was one of the best examples of Fukienese migration and settlement in Penang. The Fukienese from Changchou and Ch'uanchou, perhaps in response to the increasing social political unrest of Southern Fukien in the second half of the eighteenth century,²⁴ migrated in groups to Southeast Asia such as Philippines, Thailand, Dutch East Indies and the Malay Peninsula. We have no records about the activities of Kapitan Koh Lay Huan and his Changchou men in Siam and Kedah, but undoubtedly they must have been involved in trade, and were prepared to settle in a land where trading opportunities existed. They seized the opportunity offered by the British in Penang, and moved from Kedah to the island. Similarly, some enterprising Fukienese merchants in Dutch Malacca saw the new trading opportunities in the British new port and they also left Malacca for Penang.

Some powerful Fukienese clans in Penang claimed their ancestors arrived in the island around 1800. One of these powerful Fukienese clan, the Leong San Tong Khoo Kongsí, even claimed that their ancestors came to the island before the founding of Penang in 1786.²⁵ Responding to the new economic opportunities in the new British settlement, the Khoo clansmen and the clansmen of other early Fukienese clans, the Cheah, the Yeoh, the Lim and the Tan, all of them from the Hai Cheng district of the Changchou prefecture, Fukien Province, migrated to the island in groups. The precise number of these Changchou migrants in the first few decades after the founding of Penang is unknown. But we can presume that the number must be quite substantial, for their number were substantial enough to enable them to found their respective clan organizations. These included the founding of the earliest clan organization on the island, the Cheah (Hsieh) Kongsí, in 1840.²⁶

Whether the early migration and settlement of the Khoo, Cheah, Yeoh, Lim and Tan, the so-called Five Powerful Chinese Clans in Penang, had anything to do with Kapitan Koh Lay Huan or not is a matter of conjecture. The fact that Koh also came from the Changchou prefecture and had settled successfully in Thailand and Kedah, must have gained him some reputation at home in China. His appointment to the position of Chinese Kapitan in Penang enabled him to help his countrymen from Changchou who wished to migrate to the island. The Koh clan seemed to have been outnumbered by the members of the Five Powerful Clans after the turn of the eighteenth century.

The Fukienese majority in the Chinese population of early Penang reflected not only in the supreme status of the Five Powerful Fukienese Clans in the Chinese society, but also reflected in their domination of the Managing Board of the Kuang Fu Kung, the earliest Chinese temple in Penang founded in 1800.²⁷ The temple was founded jointly by the members of the Fukien and Kwangtung communities for the purpose of popular worship. The two only directors of the managing board of the temple seemed to be equally shared by the leaders of the both communities.²⁸ But when the temple was restored and renovated in 1824, at least six out of the eight directors of the managing board were identified as Fukienese.²⁹

The predominance of Fukienese among the donors for the founding of the Kuang Fu temple in 1800 probably also reflects the predominance of the Fukienese in early Penang society. Professors Wolfgang Franke and Chen Tieh Fan have found that more than half of the donors come from the nine surname groups which included the Five Powerful Fukienese clans. In addition, the use of word *kuan* after many names of the donors, indicates a clear southern Fukienese origin.³⁰

All this evidence points to the dominance of the Southern Fukienese of the early Penang Chinese society in terms of number and wealth. Thus we can assume that the powerful Fukienese community took the initiative to raise money and found the famous Kuang Fu temple with the support of some members of the Kwangtung community.

The founding of Singapore as the second British free port in Southeast Asia attracted a large number of Chinese to trade and to work, and this undoubtedly included a number of Fukienese. Where did these Fukienese come from? How many Fukienese were there? What occupations did they pursue in the Chinese society in early Singapore? These are the few questions which we are going to explore. The potential for trade of the new port seemed to have first attracted the attention of the Chinese traders from Riau, Malacca and Penang. As both Malacca and Penang were predominated by

Fukienese, those who were attracted to the new port were most likely Fukienese traders. One of these Fukienese traders was Tan Sang (or known as Tan Che Sang, Che Sang or Chi Sang), a Fukienese who was probably from Changchou.³¹ At the age of 15, he left China for Riau, and later moved to Penang where he stayed for ten years. He then moved to Malacca. He was one of the earliest Fukienese traders who moved from Malacca to Singapore. He was a wealthy Chinese known to the British, and was probably powerful among the underworld.³²

Another early Fukienese trader from Malacca was Si Hoo Keh (Hsieh Fu-chi). Si was born in 1793 in Malacca of a merchant family. He was a native of Tung Shan district of Changchou prefecture, Fukien. He, together with some of his relatives, moved to Singapore around 1826, and became one of the biggest landowners in Singapore. Si was a powerful Fukien leader, and an important director of earliest Fukien cemetery in Singapore, the Heng Shan T'ing. Si retired later from Singapore to Malacca.³³

To reconstruct from personal sketches of Tan Sang and Si Hoo Keh, two most important Fukienese leaders of early Singapore, we can assume Fukienese immigrants went to Riau or other places for trade and work, and when Penang was open as a free port, many of them were attracted to that port, and then to Malacca. Many of the far-sighted Fukienese traders and merchants seized the opportunities offered by the opening of Singapore as another British free port, and shifted from Malacca to Singapore. But apart from those Fukienese traders and merchants from Penang and Malacca, there were also traders and probably immigrants from the southern part of Fukien who were also attracted by the opening of Singapore. There was a report that first junk from Amoy arrived in February 1821, two years after the opening of the port.³⁴ At the end of the same year, it was estimated that 2,889 vessels had called at the new port in the two and half years since its inception, apart from 383 vessels which were owned and commanded by Europeans, the other 2,506 were owned by the natives.³⁵ The native vessels mentioned in Buckley's work must have included Chinese ships, and most probably some of them carried Fukienese traders and immigrants to Singapore in search of wealth and work.³⁶

In connection with the number of Fukienese in early Singapore and their proportion to the existing Chinese population, we can only arrive at a rough estimate. T. Braddell's estimate of Singapore population in 1821 at 4,724, with the Chinese population of 1,150, and for 1823 at 10,683 with Chinese population of 3,317, has been considered by scholars to be close to the truth.³⁷ Presumably the substantial number among these Chinese were Fukienese from Malacca, Penang and China. Due to the lack of information

on the breakdown of numbers of Chinese population in early Singapore, we would not be able to state precisely what was the proportion of the Fukienese among the slightly more than 3,000 Chinese in Singapore in 1823. Fortunately this problem has been partly solved by the publication of an article in 1848 by Siah U. Chin. Siah, or more popularly known as Seah Eu Chin, was the leader of Teochew community in early Singapore, and was also regarded as an important leader of the entire Chinese community in the colony.³⁸ Seah in his article, 'General Sketch of the Numbers, Tribes and Avocations of the Chinese in Singapore' claimed there were 9,000 Hokkiens (including Ang Chun people) and 1,000 Malacca Chinese (descendants of Hokkien immigrants). He also claimed there were more than 40,000 Chinese on the island. The breakdown of the Chinese population along dialect lines was estimated as follows: the Teochews 19,000, Hokkien (including Ang Chun people) 9,000, Macao (Cantonese) 6,000, Keh (Hakka) 4,000, Malacca Chinese (descendants of Hokkien immigrants) 1,000 and Hailam (Hainanese) 700.³⁹ Being a top leader of the Chinese Community, Seah must have been very familiar with the community affairs. His estimate of the entire Chinese population and the number of various dialect groups was probably close to the truth. His figure of the Hokkien (Fukienese), including the Ang Chun people was 9,000. The term Ang Chun must be the misspelling of Eng Chun which was a district of southern Fukien. Obviously what he referred to as 'Hokkien' must mainly include those from Changchou and Ch'uanchou prefectures and those from Eng Chun district. His reference to Malacca Chinese with a bracket descendants of Hokkien immigrants also indicates that these Malacca Chinese were mostly the descendants of Fukienese though they were local born. The combined Hokkien and Malacca Chinese population was 10,000. Thus we can safely suggest that the Fukienese in Singapore by 1847 was about 10,000 which accounted for about 25 per cent of the total Chinese population of the island.

With regard to the occupations of Fukienese in early Singapore, we can safely suggest that the majority of them were involved in local and overseas trade. They were traders, merchants and shopkeepers. In addition, they were also agriculturists, porters, coolies, boatmen and venders. We have no statistics to show the occupational breakdown of the Fukienese in the first three decades after the founding of Singapore. Again, we have to rely on Seah Eu Chin's estimate when he wrote his article around 1847. According to him, among 9,000 Hokkiens, there were 1,850 shopkeepers selling rice, cloth, crockery and other items, 750 petty traders, 500 sago manufacturers, 100 gambier and pepper dealers, 300 venders in public market, 2,000

agriculturists, 800 porters, 700 coolies employed in assisting masons, 700 boatmen, 200 fishermen and 100 masons, etc. Among 1,000 Malacca Chinese, there were 300 merchants and shopkeepers, 300 householders employed variously, 200 petty traders, 100 agriculturists and 100 cash keepers and others employed by Europeans.⁴⁰

From Seah Eu Chin's estimate, it is clear that close to half of the Fukienese (about 4,200) in 1847 were involved in trade, business and manufacturing, and their importance in trade and business in early Singapore seemed to be unmatched by any other Chinese dialect groups. Although the Teochews had about 4,400 involved in trade and business, the majority of them seemed to have been involved in retailing trade, and business operations appeared to be on smaller scale. Proportionally, the Teochews had smaller percentage of merchants and traders than the Fukienese.⁴¹ The Cantonese (Macao) and Hakkas (Keh) had even less people involved in trade and business, the former had only 350 traders out of an estimated population of 6,000, while the latter had 300 petty traders out of 4,000, and none was considered as traders among 700 Hainanese (Hailam).⁴²

Numerical strength of the Fukienese in trade and business in early Singapore probably did not fully reflect the predominant position of the Fukienese in the economy of the island. The importance of the Fukienese traders and merchants in early Singapore was quickly recognized by the founder of the settlement, Sir Stamford Raffles. Raffles in 1822, three years after the founding of Singapore, instructed the town planning committee to allocate a special area for the Chinese from Amoy who were traders and merchants, and belonged to a respectable class.⁴³ The fact that the Chinese from Amoy (the Fukienese) who were spelled out by Raffles for special treatment in the allocation of suburbs, indicates the importance and influence of the Fukienese in the economy of early Singapore. The rapid increase of the Fukienese from Malacca to Singapore in the period between 1824 and 1827 saw the rise of a powerful Fukienese economic group. Members of this group were mainly descendants of the immigrants from Changchou and Ch'uanchou.⁴⁴ Many of them came from business families with a strong financial base and ample trading experience. They spoke English, and had good contacts with Europeans. They also possessed excellent knowledge about international trade.⁴⁵ With these backgrounds and expertise, they had no difficulty in forming a powerful financial and trading group in the Chinese society in Singapore. Their wealth and power were clearly reflected in land ownership and philanthropic activities. In April 1826, for instance, all 24 valuable commercial blocks purchased by Chinese in Singapore were owned by Fukienese merchants, wealthy business

magnates such as Tan Che Sang, Si Hoo Keh and Choa Chong Long were the major landowners.⁴⁶ In the period between 1830 and 1860, Fukienese wealthy merchants like Si Hoo Keh, Tan Che Sang and Tan Tock Seng were among the most generous philanthropists donating thousands of dollars to public institutions such as temples, cemeteries and hospitals.⁴⁷

Early Fukienese Clan Organizations

Early Fukienese social organizations were not very much different from other dialect groups in Singapore and Malaya during this period. Their social life seemed to have revolved around the organizations such as clan and dialect associations, and secret societies. The reasons for this are obvious: the Fukienese were a major component part of the Chinese society in Singapore and Malaya, and they shared with other dialect groups some common cultural traits, had similar immigration experience and overseas environment.

Fukienese in the nineteenth century Singapore and Malaya were known for their powerful clan organizations and lavish clan temples. The five powerful Fukienese clans, the Khoo, the Yeoh, the Lim, the Cheah and the Tan, and some powerful Fukienese clans in Singapore invariably made a profound impression in the Chinese community and on outside observers.⁴⁸ Early Fukienese clan organizations did not seem to have come into existence before nineteenth century. Although the Fukienese predominated among the population of the Chinese in Malacca, there is no evidence to suggest that any Fukienese clan organization was established in that colony before 1825, a year after its transfer from Dutch to the British. It is not absolutely certain whether the earliest Fukienese clan organization in Singapore and Malaya can be named. But there are suggestions that the first Fukienese clan organization was the Cheah *Kongsi* of Penang, which was claimed to have been established in or before 1820. The main evidence for this claim is that Cheah *Kongsi*' earliest land title was dated March 1820, and its second land title was dated 25 June 1824. Presumably a Cheah clan organization must have preceded the acquisition of the land for the construction of a clan temple for that organization.⁴⁹ The members of the Cheah clan came from the shih-t'ang sub village of the San Tu village of H'ai Ch'eng district, Changchou prefecture, Fukien Province. They probably settled in Penang after the founding of the port by Captain Francis Light, and grew in substantial numbers. The need for the welfare and other assistance of the Cheah clan members prompted them to found an organization before 1820, and it acquired its first block of land for the construction of a clan temple

on 5 March 1820. Later, this clan organization was popularly known as Hsieh-shih shih-t'ang shih-teh-t'ang.⁵⁰

Other claims for earliest Fukienese clan status include the Kang Har Ancestral Temple of Huang clan in Malacca founded in 1825, and the Koong Har Tong Ancestral Temple of Huang clan in Penang which was founded in 1828. The former was said to have been founded by a group of Huang clansmen led by Huang Fu-yung with the main purpose of worshipping the progenitor of Huang clan in China, Huang Hsiao-shan;⁵¹ while the latter was said to have been founded by the Fukienese Huang clansmen in Penang, presumably for the same purpose of worshipping the Huang progenitor, Huang Hsiao-shan as well. Very little was known about this organization except it was located in Kwangtung Street, Penang.⁵²

The Leong San Tong Khoo Kongsi, which is the best known Chinese clan organization in Singapore and Malaya, provides us some insight into the history of early Fukienese clans in the region. Khoo clansmen migrated from the San Tu village of the H'ai Ch'eng district, Fukien Province around 1800, in response to the economic opportunities available at the new port. In 1835, Khoo clansmen gathered to celebrate the birthday of the Tua Sai Yah, the protector god of the Khoo clan in China, on the May Festival day. The desire to found a clan temple to house the protector god was generally expressed. Three days later (on the eight day of the fifth moon), all 102 Khoo clansmen on the island met to found a *kongsi*, a committee was elected, and a sum of \$528 was donated on the spot.⁵³ In 1850, a big block of land was purchased, and the work for constructing a clan temple was started. In the following year 1851, a beautiful clan temple in the traditional lavish Chinese architectural design was inaugurated, and the shrines for the protector god and the ten Khoo clan progenitors and their wives were installed for worship.⁵⁴ This rare piece of information enables us to reconstruct the early history of the Khoo clansmen activities in Penang. After arriving in Penang around 1800, the Khoo clansmen had kept in close touch with each other for help and companionship. This enabled them to mobilize most of their clansmen on the island for the celebration of an important function such as the birthday of Tua Sai Yah. The Khoo clansmen probably numbered more than 102 in 1835, for those women and children did not attend the celebration and the meeting. Further, the Khoo clansmen appeared to be quite wealthy, as they were able to raise a large sum of money for the construction of a beautiful and spacious clan temple.

Following the founding of the Khoo Kongsi, other Fukienese clan organizations also appeared on the scene. The Yeoh Kongsi was founded in 1842 by the Yeoh clansmen in Penang, and the Koe Yang Tong Society was

founded in Penang by the Khaw clansmen in 1849. After the 1850s, several Fukienese clan organizations were also founded in the Straits Settlements. They were the Long Say Tong by Lee clansmen in 1854, and the Tan Kongsí by the Tan clansmen in the same year, both were in Penang. In 1857, the Lim clansmen in Singapore founded the Kew Leong Tong, probably the earliest Fukienese clan organization in Singapore. In 1863, two Lim clan organizations, the Lim Sz Bian Soot Tong and Lim Kongsí Toon Pun Tong were founded by Lim clansmen in Penang, while the Kew Leong Tong Lim Kongsí was also founded by Lim clansmen in Penang in 1866. In 1872, an Ong clan temple was founded by Ong clansmen in Singapore led by Ong Eu Hai. In 1875, Tan Eng Chuan Tong was founded in Malacca by the Tan clansmen. Three years later in 1878, the Tan clansmen led by famous Tan Kim Ching and Tan Beng Swee, founded the famous Po-chia-keng Tan clan temple in Singapore. This was followed by the Ong Chih Huai Tong in Malacca in 1896 and the Thye Guan Tong Ong Kongsí in Penang in 1900, both were founded by the Ong clansmen of Southern Fukien.⁵⁵

Most early Fukienese clan organizations in Singapore and Malaya were localized lineages based on strong blood, geographical and dialect ties. It appears that except the Po-chia-keng Tan clan temple and the Ong clan temple in Singapore, the rest of the early Fukienese clan organizations were of localized lineages. Their members claimed common ancestry from the post Fukien settlement period, came from the same village or district, and spoke the same dialect. They confined their membership strictly to clansmen from the same village or district. Kinship relations among members were clearly drawn, and traditional obligations to kinsmen and religious rituals for the ancestors were strictly observed.⁵⁶

The reasons for the early Fukienese to have more localized lineages than other dialect groups in comparison with Cantonese and Hakka clans which were predominantly non-localized lineages,⁵⁷ were probably the combination of factors of such as the domination of Fukienese in trade in the Straits Settlements, the patterns of immigration, and the nature of the overseas environment. Fukienese domination of trade in the Chinese communities in the Straits Settlements provided a sound economic foundation for the growth of Fukienese community. The continuous expansion of business and financial power required the Fukienese merchants and traders to look to their homeland for recruitment.⁵⁸ The domination in trade meant Fukienese control of business activities in the region which needed to be rekindled continuously by free immigrants based on kinship. That meant more kinsmen from China were sponsored to come overseas to staff the shops and business enterprises. After learning the required skill and knowledge, the

kinsmen started new shops in a similar line. Although there was competition and sometimes rivalry in the same business, common kinship bond reduced such economic conflict. The clan organizations which promoted kinship solidarity among kinsmen fulfilled this role. The overseas environment, whether in Malacca, Penang, Singapore or other towns in the Malay Peninsula, posed a serious challenge to the newly arrived immigrants. An urban setting with many unfamiliar faces and unintelligible dialects invariably forced them to depend more on their kinsmen for economic and emotional support. When the strong need for kinship support was keenly felt and the number of kinsmen was strong enough to form an organization, localized lineage organization were created to meet such a need.

Like other early overseas Chinese clans, the early Fukienese clans in Singapore and Malaya had their primary aims of perpetuating descent lines, promoting clan solidarity and preserving traditional Chinese values. These fundamental aims were achieved through their main functions such as ancestral worship and worship of protector gods, observance of traditional Chinese festivities, helping destitute clansmen, arbitration of disputes, legalization of marriages and promotion of education.⁵⁹ With the effective functioning of these early clan organizations, the Fukienese were brought together under the protection wings of the clans, and they lived close together, socialized together, and fought for common interests. With the overseas environment and the British policy of leaving Chinese to look after themselves, the early Fukienese clans in Singapore and Malaya possessed a desire for self-government. This desire was probably derived from the immigrants' own experience in the villages in Southern Fukien. There is no evidence to suggest that the Fukienese clans in Southern Fukien had ever encouraged the overseas clans to become independent from the local authorities. The semi self-government practices by the early Fukienese clans were the result of a combination of need in the overseas environment and subjective desire. These semi self-governing practices included arbitration of disputes, legalization of marriages and the founding of clan schools. The Eng Chuan Tong Tan clan of Penang claimed their arbitration of internal disputes among its own members was the most important function of the clan in its early decades.⁶⁰

Perhaps I was too conservative to suggest that it was unlikely the early Chinese clans in Singapore and Malaya did not attempt to acquire immense judicial power over their members.⁶¹ A recent study of a Fukienese clan has established that many clans in Southern Fukien, particularly in Changchou areas achieved a high degree of self-government, including the possession of armed forces.⁶² This practice must have been in existence earlier than the

mid-Ming period.⁶³ Since many early Fukienese in the Straits and the Malay Peninsula came mainly from the Changchou area, it is natural for the Fukienese immigrants to construct their clan organizations overseas on the experience they had in China. The model on which the Fukienese clans had implemented, undoubtedly had great impact on the thinking of the Fukienese immigrants. The building of a clan temple for worship, the compilation of clan genealogy for records, the purchase of land or shop houses as clan properties, and the founding of clan schools for educating the young, were followed closely by the overseas Fukienese clans. The use of headings like *Tsū-chih* (self-governing or autonomous) in some early Fukienese clan rules can be interpreted as the reflection of a strong desire on the part of clans to achieve such aims.⁶⁴

The internal feud among members of a clan, though undermining clan solidarity, did not lead the clan into a large-scale open fight. But the external dispute of a clan, particularly a dispute between two or more clans, could start a feud which might develop into a catastrophe for the entire Chinese community. This danger of inter-clan disputes was constantly fuelled by incessant clan fights in Southern Fukien in the nineteenth century.⁶⁵ Leaders of the early Fukienese clans were well aware of that danger, and if it was not carefully handled, it would prompt the intervention of the local authorities. This could result in the government control of clan activities and the banishment of clan leaders. All these were the most undesirable prospects for the Fukienese clans. To prevent disasters occurring, the Fukienese clans were very cautious in handling external disputes. When a dispute involved members of other clan arose, members were required by clan rules to leave the matter to a special committee chaired by the clan head.⁶⁶ The committee tried to find out the truth and the solution to the dispute. It was through arbitration and conciliation that many inter-clan disputes were resolved.

It is clear that the threat of government intervention served as a deterrent to large-scale clan fights in Singapore and Malaya. But a common dialect bond among early Fukienese clans also helped to prevent clan brawls. In Penang, the Five Powerful Clans, the Khoo, the Lim, the Cheah, the Yeoh and the Tan agreed to cooperate in the settling of inter-clan disputes so as to bring peace and order to the community.⁶⁷ The Khoo, the Cheah and the Yeoh, the three clans coming from the same San Tu village of the H'ai Ch'eng district, and whose members had intermarried in China and overseas, further strengthened their cooperation by forming an organization named Sam Quaye Tong Kongsi (San K'uei T'ang Kung-ssu) in 1881.⁶⁸ They were equally represented on a management board consisting of 12 trustees who were responsible for handling inter-clan matters, including disputes.⁶⁹

The inter-clan cooperation helped to stabilize the immigrant community. It not only prevented any serious inter-clan conflict, but also positively promoted good will among the clans. It also expressed a strong desire for self-government among the early Fukienese clans.⁷⁰

Early Fukienese Dialect Organizations

Perhaps it is not important to try to establish which was the earliest Fukienese dialect association in Singapore and Malaya. One possible earliest Fukienese dialect organization in Singapore and Malaya was the Malacca Fukien Association which was certainly founded before 1843, and it could have been founded in 1830s or earlier.⁷¹ We know nothing about this organization except a plaque deposited in the T'ien Fu Kung temple within the Malacca Fukien Association building, carried the date of 23rd year of the reign of emperor Tao Kuang that is 1843.⁷² The plaque was obviously dedicated to the Goddess T'ien H'ou, a Goddess popularly worshipped by Southern Fukienese and other seafarers of South China. What can be gathered from this plaque is that the early Fukienese population in Malacca built the T'ien Fu Kung temple to house the Goddess T'ien H'ou sometime before 1843. The Goddess could also be worshipped by members of other dialect groups in Malacca, but the Fukienese would be predominant among the worshippers. From this T'ien Fu Kung temple developed later to become the Malacca Fukien Association.

One early Fukienese dialect association which possesses more reliable records is the Singapore Fukien Association. Like the Malacca Fukien Association, the forerunner of the Singapore Fukien Association was the T'ien Fu Kung temple which was founded in 1839. The Singapore T'ien Fu Kung temple, which may have its originated as early as 1821,⁷³ began its construction in 1839, but did not complete the project until 1842.⁷⁴ What is obvious is that the T'ien Fu Kung temple management committee must have existed in 1839 or earlier. The founding of the Singapore T'ien Fu Kung temple, though in the name of the entire Chinese community, was dominated by the Fukienese led by famous Tan Tock Seng. This domination was clearly reflected in the amount of donation to the construction of the temple, and the monopoly of the Fukienese of the management board of the temple.⁷⁵ The domination of the Fukienese of the T'ien Fu Kung temple logically led to the conversion of the temple into the Singapore Fukien Association in 1860 with the name of 'T'ien Fu Kung Fukien Association', and the famous Tan Kim Ching, son of Tan Tock Seng, was elected its first president.⁷⁶

The founding of the T'ien Fu Kung temple, the forerunner of the Singapore Fukien Association, was then followed by the establishment of the Taiping Fukien Association in 1859, the Singapore Yung Ch'un (Eng Choon) Association in 1867, the Malacca Yung Ch'un Association in 1875, the Selangor Yung Ch'un Kung So in Klang in 1892, the Muar Yung Ch'un Association in 1894 and the Negri Sembilan Yung Ch'un Association in 1898.⁷⁷

The early Fukienese dialect organization was basically no different from similar organizations in other dialect groups. It was partly created to meet the needs of early Fukienese immigrants. It organized common religious worship and religious activities, social activities during Chinese festivals, provided help to new arrivals, acted as an information centre for jobs, business opportunities and other news, and arbitrated disputes within and outside the dialect group.⁷⁸ These functions seemed to have duplicated the function of the Fukienese clan organization. The strong localized Fukienese clans in early Singapore and Malaya, no matter how strong numerically and economically, had difficulty to match an organization broadly based on dialect line. This was why the dialect organization represented second social circle which was wider in scope for the early Fukienese immigrants. The value of the dialect organization to the early Fukienese immigrants might not have been as great as those to other dialect groups which were weak in kinship affiliation, it nevertheless served some useful purposes. For instance, religious worship in clan organization was rigidly confined to ancestral worship and protection god which were entirely irrelevant to people outside the clan. But the religious worship within the dialect organization would accommodate regional deities commonly worshipped by a dialect group.⁷⁹ In business, an additional social link provided by the dialect organization would still be useful for contacts and business transactions. Furthermore, the government's policy in treating Chinese-speaking from the same dialect as a group and dealing with them through their representatives also helped early Fukienese to come together. The French colonial government in dividing Chinese in Indo-China into different congregations based on dialect difference was a good example of this kind.⁸⁰

In contrast with the clan organization, the Fukienese dialect organizations appeared to be weaker. Compared with other dialect groups, the Fukienese dialect organizations appeared to be even more weaker, because they were founded relatively late and in smaller number.⁸¹ For instance, the Changchou Fukienese who were numerically strong and had dominated the Fukien community in Singapore did not found their dialect organization until 1929.⁸² This rather contradictory situation was probably the result of a

combination of various factors. The Fukienese, being the majority in the Chinese population in Malacca, Penang, and Singapore, had no sense of urgency of establishing dialect organizations to protect their community interests. Secondly, a dialect organization was a new invention of Chinese immigrants overseas, and it grew out of new social environment and need. As the functions of the dialect organization duplicated many of the functions of clan organization, early Fukienese basic social needs in the new land had been well met by the clan organization. Thus, dialect affiliation was treated as a bonus rather than an urgent need. Thirdly, since inter-dialect relationship was one of the major factors for the minor dialect groups to found their relatively early dialect organizations,⁸³ it had in fact a negative effect on the Fukienese who considered themselves to be in the majority. Further, the Fukienese were economically powerful and had almost monopolized Kapitan positions in the Straits Settlements.⁸⁴ This gave the Fukienese a strong sense of security, and they found no need to compete with other minor dialect groups in actively founding dialect associations.

Early Fukienese Secret Societies

Social stigma has created problems for scholars trying to gather information on Chinese secret societies, and forced them to rely heavily on government records. However, British government authorities were never able to depict a complete picture of the secret societies, partly because of their restricted access to information, and partly because of their one-sided perspective. They tended to project a polarization between two large powerful secret societies: the Ghee Hin and the Hai San, the former was dominated by the Cantonese, while the latter consisted mainly of the Hakkas. The Fukienese, the Teochews and the Hainanese seem to have received relatively less attention.

This picture is obviously incomplete. What can be discerned here is the fact that secret societies did exist among dialect groups other than the Cantonese and Hakkas. Though they were not as active and notorious, they nevertheless created problems for the society and government.

Some years ago I introduced in my book, *A Social History of the Chinese in Singapore and Malaya, 1800-1911*, a new dimension in looking at Chinese secret societies by linking them with social structure of the Chinese society, and suggested that they were an integrated part of the Chinese social structure. I also suggested they were used as an effective mechanism for social control at a time when British control over Chinese society was weak. I also established that there was a close link between them and the Chinese

Kapitans, and even a link with Chinese dialect or clan organizations.⁸⁵ What can be elaborated about the Fukienese secret societies here is that they co-existed with the Fukienese clan and dialect organizations, and were integrated with them to defend the interests of the Fukienese community, and to achieve a certain degree of self-government.

The Fukienese secret societies were relatively inactive in comparison with the Cantonese or Hakka secret societies because of the patterns of occupation and migration. The Fukienese who were predominantly traders and merchants, had no urgent and immediate need for secret society protection like the Cantonese and Hakkas who were predominantly artisans and mining workers. In possession of wealth and recognized social status in the community, the Fukienese immigrants had relatively more access to government protection in addition the protection provided by their clans and dialect organizations. While the Cantonese artisans and Hakka mining workers had lower social status and little access to government protection, resorted to secret society for protection. Furthermore, many Fukienese new immigrants who came through kinship recruitment, were invariably guided and protected by their kinsmen overseas; while the Cantonese artisans and Hakka mining workers had to protect themselves from rapacious exploitation of their employers and to counter the influence and control imposed by the government on them.

The Fukienese had relatively less need for the protection of secret societies but this does not mean they had no need at all for such secret society power. The coercive and violent power of secret societies could be conveniently used by some Fukienese merchants and traders to enforce their business contracts or to maintain a monopoly of certain lines of business.⁸⁶ Because of their closer contacts with the government authorities, they liked to distance themselves from secret societies in order to maintain respectability in the eyes of the government. This dilemma of the desire of maintaining respectability in the society and the need for secret society service forced them to hide their identity in the underworld. This dilemma seemed to have confronted some very wealthy and powerful Fukienese merchants. Nevertheless, their underworld connections had been detected by British government authorities.⁸⁷

The Fukienese predominated in the Chinese population in early Malacca, but we have no evidence from either Portuguese or Dutch records to suggest the existence of secret societies among them. The earliest date of recording the existence of Chinese secret society activities was 1794, eight years after the founding of Penang. In that year, Francis Light noted the potential threat of Chinese secret societies to government regulations.⁸⁸ The

threat of secret societies to law and order seem to have increased after another five years in 1799 following a revelation that some 500 Chinese had taken oaths of secrecy and fidelity to their leader with the intention of setting up a jurisdiction under a Captain and Magistrates of their own choosing.⁸⁹ No name was given to this Chinese secret society. But from information acquired by the government at a later period, it has been established that the earliest Chinese secret society in the Malay Peninsula was Ghee Hin which came into existence around 1800 in Penang.⁹⁰ It is therefore highly possible that the 500 Chinese secret society members mentioned in 1799 could be the members of the Ghee Hin society.

The Penang government had obviously paid more attention to the potential threat to law and order by the Chinese secret society since 1799, and the police department had collected more information about them. In 1825, the Assistant Superintendent of Police in Penang, R. Caunter, had at least identified two large Chinese secret societies, the Ghee Hin and Hai San, both were dominated by the Macau Chinese (mainly Cantonese).⁹¹ Caunter also claimed that the Chinchoo Chinese (Fukienese) may have become members of these secret societies, and some of them were said to belong to these societies.⁹² From this evidence we can suggest that the majority of the Fukienese in Penang, though they predominated the Chinese population on the island, had no connections with secret societies which were dominated by Cantonese. A very small minority of Fukienese in Penang, most probably through their occupational contacts, joined the Ghee Hin Society as members.⁹³

Records of the existence of Chinese secret societies in Singapore can be traced back to 1824, five years after the founding of the settlement. In that year, Munshi Abdullah bin Kadir, a protégé of Raffles and the teacher of Malay to Dr Milne of Malacca, visited the headquarters of the Triad (the T'ien Ti Hui) in inland Singapore near Tangling Tuah. Disguised as a poor country yokel and with the help of his Chinese friend, Abdullah managed to witness the initiation ceremony for new Triad members, and described his adventure vividly.⁹⁴ Based on secondary information, Abdullah claimed 8,000 Chinese secret society members on the island.⁹⁵ Abdullah did not give us any clues to the dialect composition of the Triad membership, nor did he mention anything about Fukienese Chinese and the Triad. But the existence of Fukienese secret society members has been verified by the account of S. G. Bonham, the Assistant British Resident in Singapore, dated 17 September 1830. Bonham claimed the Thean-ti Hoey (T'ien Ti Hui, the Triad) was the strongest among the three on the island with a total membership of not less than 2,500 to 3,000 and it was most dangerous. He

further claimed that '... Natives of Hokien, Macao, and Malacca being within my personal knowledge combined in the first-mentioned association (The Triad) and even the principal office-bearers of it'.⁹⁶ The natives of Hokien and Malacca were Fukienese, and the natives of Macao seemed to have included both Cantonese and Hakkas. That means secret societies members and office-bearers were commonly found among Chinese of most of the dialect groups, including the Fukienese. This seems to confirm the multi-dialect composition of the Ghee Hin Society (the Triad) in Singapore in the nineteenth century.⁹⁷

It would be interesting to find out in this study the proportion of the Fukienese members or leaders among the Ghee Hin society, in order to throw light on the Fukienese secret society activities in Singapore. According to Lieutenant A. D. C. Newbold and Major-General C. B. Wilson who published an article entitled 'The Chinese Secret Triad Society of the Tien-ti-huih' in 1840, the Ghee Hins were strongly suspected for most of the daring robberies and murders, and they resided among the jungles and fortresses in the interior of the island. They consisted chiefly the emigrants from Canton.⁹⁸ This account can be taken as strong evidence to suggest that Fukienese members in the Ghee Hin Society in Singapore were in a minority. The Fukienese also appeared to have accounted for a very small percentage among the leaders of the Ghee Hin Society in mid-nineteenth century Singapore. Some years ago, a group of ancestral tablets numbering more than 100 deposited in the She Kung temple, Singapore, were discovered by Singapore scholars. They have been identified as tablets of leaders of the Ghee Hin society in Singapore.⁹⁹ Mr David Chng of Singapore's National Archives has further identified 48 out of the 72 extant tablets, and found that only two of them were Fukienese, and the majority belonged to Teochew and Cantonese. These Ghee Hin leaders seemed to be active in 1830s and 1840s in Singapore.¹⁰⁰

Though the Fukienese were in the minority in the Ghee Hin society, a Fukienese dominated secret society named Ghee Hock emerged in Singapore around 1840. Newbold and Wilson were probably the first to notice the emergence of this secret society in Singapore, but they did not use the name 'Ghee Hock', instead they mentioned the 'Fokien Society', and suggested that there was animosity between this newly established society and the Ghee Hin.¹⁰¹ This 'Fokien Society' had been identified as 'Ghee Hock society' by M. L. Wynne who further suggested that the Toh Peh Kong secret society which was dominated by the Fukienese and came into existence in Penang in 1844, was the branch of the Ghee Hok in Singapore.¹⁰²

We know very little about the activities of the Ghee Hok in Singapore.

But as Chinese immigrants to Singapore and Malaya increased rapidly in the mid-nineteenth century as a result of social and political disturbances in Southeast China, both Ghee Hok in Singapore and the Toh Peh Kong in Penang gained their membership among new arrivals. Whatever aims and objectives claimed by these early Fukienese secret societies, they were invariably used by the local Fukienese communities to help defend the community interests.¹⁰³ This together with the animosity developed between the Fukienese secret societies and the secret societies dominated by other dialect groups, led to violent clashes between different dialect groups. The Hokkien-Teochew Riots in Singapore 1854 and the famous Penang Riots of 1867 are two of these examples.¹⁰³

Conclusion

The Fukienese were the earliest Chinese settlers in Singapore and Malaya. They predominated among the Chinese population in Malacca, Penang and Singapore which were later known as the Straits Settlements. The growth of the Fukienese population as a result of the continuous development in trade between the region and China, provided a sound basis for the formation of Fukienese social organizations such as clan and dialect associations, and secret societies. These early Fukienese social organizations, though intended to perpetuate traditional Chinese values and to meet the welfare needs in the new land, were invariably used to mobilize support. Further, they were used to foster the spirit of self-government, to establish commercial networking. As a result, the Fukienese had established their supremacy in trade and business. The early Fukienese had set the patterns of control and monopoly of certain lines of economic activities in the Chinese community in Singapore and Malaya.

Endnotes

- * This article was first published in Pin-tsun Chang and Shih-chi Liu (eds.), *Chung-kuo h'ai-yang fa-chan shih lun-wen chi* (Essays in Chinese Maritime History) Vol. 5 (Sun Yat-sen Institute for Social Sciences and Philosophy, Academic Sinica, Taipei, 1993), pp. 679-740.
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 18. See a study by K.G. Tregonning, *The British in Malaya* (The University of Arizona Press, Tucson, 1965).
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 30. See Wolfgang Franke and Chen Tieh Fan, *op. cit.*, Vol. 2, p. 531.
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 35. See C.B. Buckley, *op. cit.*, p. 79.
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46. See Lim How Seng, *op. cit.*, p. 30.
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63. *Ibid.*
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83. See Yen Ching-hwang, *A Social History*, pp. 42–3.
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88. See Wilfred Blythe, *The Impact of Chinese Secret Societies in Malaya* (Oxford University Press, London, 1969), p. 46.
89. *Ibid.*
90. See M.L. Wynne, *op. cit.*, p. 72.
91. See Caunter's report quoted in Wynne's work, *ibid.*, pp. 73–4.
92. *Ibid.*
93. See for instance, the government informant to R. Caunter was a Fukienese named Choah Shimyep who was a goldsmith by occupation, and was employed by a Cantonese master goldsmith named Cheong Hinneoo. See Caunter's report quoted in M.L. Wynne, *ibid.*, p. 73.
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95. See *Hikayat Abdullah*, p. 181, 'Concerning the Tan Tae Hoey in Singapore', p. 546.

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102. See M.L. Wynne, *op. cit.*, pp. 70-1, 80.
103. See Yen Ching-hwang, *A Social History*, pp. 124-28.
104. For the former, see M.L. Wynne, *op. cit.*, pp. 93-7, Wilfred Blythe, *op. cit.*, pp. 75-83 for an analysis of the background leading the Penang Riots of 1867, See Yen Ching-hwang, *A Social History*, pp. 198-202.

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CHAPTER 4

Early Hakka Dialect Organizations in Singapore and Malaya, 1801–1900*

Early Migration and Settlement of the Hakkas

Chinese immigration to the Malay Peninsula can be traced back as early as the Malacca Sultanate in fifteenth century. The existence of a 'Chinese village' (Campon China) bears witness to the continuous immigration of the Chinese to the region as a result of growing trade between China and the Malacca Sultanate.¹ The early Chinese immigrants in Malacca had been clearly identified by Portuguese records as southern Fukienese from the Changchou prefecture of the Fukien Province, and the majority of them were involved in trade.² There is no evidence to suggest that any Hakka immigrants lived in Malacca during this period. Under the Dutch rule in seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, the Chinese settlement in Malacca expanded substantially. By 1750, the population of the port was estimated at 2,161.³ Whether any Hakka immigrants lived in Malacca in the middle of the eighteenth century is a matter of conjecture. We have no documentary or epigraphical evidence to suggest the existence of a Hakka community in the port, but given the fact that there was a steady flow of Hakka immigrants to the goldfields of Borneo around the middle of the eighteenth century,⁴ it is not unreasonable to suggest that these early Hakka immigrants were aware of the trading opportunities in Malacca, and some of them might have been attracted to that port.

The founding of Penang in 1786 opened a new chapter in the history of early Hakka immigration to Southeast Asia. The construction of a new port from an almost uninhabited island provided employment opportunities

for Chinese artisans and manual labourers; the development of Penang into a free port further attracted more Chinese traders and merchants. Francis Light estimated that there were 3,000 Chinese on the island in January 1794, and observed that the Chinese possessed different trades of carpenters, masons, smiths, traders, shopkeepers and planters.⁵ A precise number of Hakkas among these 3,000 Chinese is difficult to ascertain, but it is reasonable to suggest that there were probably several hundred Hakkas among these early Chinese settlers. This speculation is based on the following indirect evidence. Firstly, two of the four oldest Chinese tombstones unearthed in Penang in 1972 belonged to the Chia-ying Hakkas who died in 1799. One of these two Hakkas was named Kuan Ch'in-feng, and the other was Li Ah-liu.⁶ The discovery of these old tombs suggests that the Hakkas were an important group of the early Chinese settlers in Penang who came from Kwangtung Province and the Tengchow prefecture of Fukien. Secondly, British official records on the Chinese in Penang in 1825 suggested that one of the four Chinese secret societies, the Wah Sang society, was composed of Hakkas.⁷ Thirdly, writing about the Chinese in Penang in 1854, J.D. Vaughan stated that 'The Chinese of Penang may be divided into two classes, the Macao and Chinchew. The former includes Kehs and Ahyas ...'⁸ The term *Kehs* mentioned by Vaughan referred to Hakkas, while *Ahyas* referred to Teochews. The term *Macao* mentioned by Vaughan was popularly equated to Cantonese, but also included Hakkas and Teochews. Vaughan's observation suggests that Hakkas were also a major group of Chinese in Penang who came from the Kwangtung Province.

The early Hakka immigrants in Penang appeared to have consisted mainly of three groups: the Chia-ying Hakkas, the Tengchow (Yung Ting) Hakkas and the Huichew Hakkas. This can be seen from the fact that the founding of their dialect associations in 1801, 1819 and 1822 respectively.⁹ The Chia-ying Hakkas seemed to be the dominant group among the early Hakkas in Penang in terms of numbers and financial strength. They founded the earliest Hakka association on the island which is recognized by scholars as the earliest Chinese dialect association in Singapore and Malaya.¹⁰ We have no precise figure of the number of Chia-ying Hakkas on the island, but what we can ascertain is that they constituted the majority of the Hakka community. This was verified by J.D. Vaughan in 1854 when he stated that 'Keh-langs (Hakkas) and Ahyas (Teochews) come from the province of Quangtung (Kwangtung) and the borders of Fuhkien. Nearly all the former belong to the city of Kiaying (Chia Ying) and its environs ...'¹¹ With ample experience in their immigration and settlement in the island of Borneo since the middle of eighteenth century, the Chia-ying Hakkas had established

effective networks of immigration to Southeast Asia. This included the flow of information about overseas economic opportunities to the home districts in China, the spread and possible transfer of overseas experience, and a network of contacts and supporting system overseas. Thus, Chia-ying Hakka labourers from China were recruited to work in cash crop plantations in Penang, and Chia-ying Hakka artisans also obtained jobs on the island as the development of the new port speeded up. These Chia-ying Hakka artisans probably consisted of carpenters, blacksmiths, shoemakers and tailors as what Vaughan had observed in 1854.¹² Apart from those immigrants coming directly from China, some Chia-ying Hakkas from Borneo re-immigrated to Penang. They were principally traders from Sambas, a port of West Borneo. They saw the new business opportunities arising in Penang and lost no time to migrate or establish stations there. With their wealth and status in the local Hakka community, they founded the 'Yan Woh Kongsi' (Jen Ho Kongsi), the forerunner of the Chia-ying Association of Penang in 1801.¹³ In this sense, the early Chia-ying Hakka settlers in Penang consisted of merchants, traders, artisans and manual labourers. But we have no records to account for the number of various occupational groups among them.

The founding of Singapore as second free port in the Straits of Malacca highlighted British economic penetration into Southeast Asia, and attracted a large number of Chinese traders and immigrants irrespective of their dialect origins. This included those farsighted Hakka traders and well-informed Hakka immigrants from China and abroad. Although the Malaccan Chinese of Fukienese descent seized the opportunity to establish themselves on the island and controlled an important sector of Singapore's early economy,¹⁴ the Chia-ying Hakkas who had established their immigration networks in Southeast Asia, did not lose sight of the great trading opportunity arising from the new port. The founding of the Ying Ho Association in 1822, three years after the opening of the port,¹⁵ suggests that there was a reasonable number of Chia-ying Hakkas congregated on the island at that time. The founding of the Huichew Kongsi (Hui Chou Kongsi) in the same year,¹⁶ can be taken as an indication that certain number of Huichew Hakkas had already settled on the island. Both Chia-ying and Huichew Hakkas appeared to be the two major groups in the early Hakka community in Singapore in 1822.

Apart from the Chia-ying and Huichew Hakkas, there were also minority Hakkas from Ta P'u, Feng Shun, and Yung Ting. These minority groups speaking slightly different Hakka dialect from the Chia-ying and Huichew formed into an informal group and founded the Fu Teh temple of Tanjong Pagar in 1844.¹⁷ This suggests that the minority Hakka groups in

Singapore had already achieved a reasonable number to enable them to form an informal group to protect their minority interests.¹⁸

By 1848, the Hakka population in Singapore was estimated by Siah U Chin (Seah Eu Chin) at 4,000 out of 39,700 Chinese, and the Hakkas were the second smallest dialect group only surpassing the Hainanese (Hailam) who were estimated at 700.¹⁹ Seah Eu Chin who was at that time an acknowledged leader of the Chinese community in Singapore, also provided valuable information on the occupations of various Chinese dialect groups. According to him, the Keh (Hakkas) consisted of 400 tailors and shoemakers, 300 makers of wooden boxes, 500 blacksmiths, 100 goldsmiths, 100 barbers, 800 sawyers and wood cutters, 1,000 builders, 300 petty traders, 300 traders in the country, and 200 persons employed in miscellaneous work.²⁰ Obviously, many of the 1,000 builders were building workers, and many of the 800 sawyers and cutters were manual workers in sawmills, while the majority of those employed in miscellaneous work must have been manual workers. Thus, we can reconstruct an occupational profile of the Hakka community in Singapore in 1848. The majority of the Hakkas were artisans and manual workers. The former were involved in making clothes and shoes, wooden boxes and furnitures, making and repairing household utensils and iron tools, making and repairing gold jewellery, building and repairing houses or shops, and cutting men's hair; while the latter were cutting logs in sawmills, moving sand and earth, and carrying bricks and cement for construction. In addition, there were a few hundred Hakkas who were involved in entrepôt trade, in trading between rural and urban areas on the island, and in shopkeeping and hawking.

The Founding of Early Hakka Dialect Organizations

Professor Imahori's *Overseas Chinese Society in Malaya* has shed light on the study of the early Chinese communities in the Straits Settlements. His interpretation of the Chinese society from a standpoint of commercial guild is debatable.²¹ His chapter on the early Chinese society in Penang was entirely devoted to the study of their commercial guilds and their class relations, nothing was mentioned about the dialect or other types of social organizations.²² The absence of Chinese dialect and clan organizations in Imahori's study does not mean that no such social organizations existed, on the contrary, a Hakka dialect organization and several Fukienese clan organizations came into being in the first half of the nineteenth century.

The Hakka dialect organization which came into being in 1801 was the first Chinese dialect organization on the island, and it has been accepted

by scholars as the first Chinese dialect organization in Singapore and Malaysia.²³ This earliest Hakka dialect organization was founded by Chia-ying Hakkas who came from the five districts of the eastern part of Kwangtung. Since the Chia-ying Hakkas were among the earliest Chinese immigrants settling in Penang,²⁴ and they were predominant among the local Hakka community,²⁵ it is not surprising to see the Chia-ying Hakkas found the first Hakka dialect association on the island.

We know very little about this organization except its forerunner was named 'Yan-woh Kongsì' (or romanized as *Jen Ho Kongsì*), and it had a block of land granted by the government in 1801 in King Street, the present location of the Chia-ying Association.²⁶ The Chia-ying Association has in its possession a title deed of the land granted to the Yan-woh Kongsì dated 2 November 1801. The title was issued by the Lieutenant Governor of Prince of Wales's island to the 'Congress Hinfo' and their heirs forever. The Congress of Hinfo was given full power to sell, assign and dispose of the land when they saw fit, but subject the date hereof to an annual quarter rent of one Spanish dollar.²⁷ What is obvious from this document are the following points:

1. The name Congress of Hinfo was referred to the Yan-woh Kongsì.
2. The land was a crown land granted to the Yan-woh Kongsì by the Lieutenant Governor of Penang, the top British officer on the island, with a nominal rent of four Spanish dollars a year.
3. The Yan-woh Kongsì was entitled to sell, assign and dispose of the land as it saw fit.

What was not implicit in the document is the fact that the Yan-woh Kongsì was not a secret society, but a dialect organization aimed at improving the welfare of the Chia-ying Hakka people, and its aims were fully approved by the government which granted the piece of land to the Kongsì for the building of a club house.

We do not know about the size of membership of this Yan-woh Kongsì, nor do we know about its structure and leadership. But at the back of its title deed is a note in Chinese stating that the title belonged to the Kongsì and should not be mortgaged as private property. The note also claimed that the leader of the Kongsì was selected on rotation basis, and any unscrupulous leader who dared to mortgage the title for personal gain after seeing this note would face reprimand by the members. It was signed by three persons namely Fu Shang-chang, Huang Wen-t'ien and Li Ts'ai-yu.²⁸ What we can derive from this note is that the Yan-woh Kongsì had a two-tier structure with a

broad membership and an executive committee; the members of the committee carried the title of *T'ou-chia*, while the chief executive who carried the title of *Shou-shih t'ou-chia* was selected on the rotation basis from among the executive members.²⁹ The executive committee was entrusted to run the *Kongsi*, including the custody of the title deed, but because of the transient nature of the leadership, safeguards were built to take care of the ownership of the club house; this was why the Chinese note was written on the title deed on thirteenth day of first moon of the eighth year of Chia-ch'ing reign (February 1803), less than two years after the obtaining of the document.

The Chia-ying Association existed in Penang under the name of Yan-woh *Kongsi* for nearly a century. Following the suppression of Chinese secret societies in the Straits Settlements in 1889, the *Kongsi*, registered with the Registrar of Societies on 3 April 1891 under the name of Ka Aing Koan (Chia-ying kuan or Chia-ying hui-kuan).³⁰ The change of the name from Yan-woh to Ka Aing (Chia Ying) and the title from *Kongsi* to *Koan* (Kuan) signalled the desire of the association to be identified as a dialect organization rather than being confused with those suppressed secret societies bearing the same title of *Kongsi*.

The second Hakka dialect association appeared on the scene was the Huichew Association of Malacca which was founded in 1805 by another group of Hakkas who came from the ten districts of the Hui Chou (Huichew) prefecture in the southeast part of Kwangtung Province. The Huichew spoke a slightly different Hakka dialect which was intelligible to the Chia-ying and other Hakkas. A small altruistic and community-spirited group which was concerned with the welfare of local Huichew community was credited to have founded the association. It was led by Li Chen-fa who was probably a leader of the community, but whose deed is little known.³¹ The association is mystified by having possessed a same name, Hai Shan *Kongsi* with a powerful Chinese secret society in the nineteenth century Singapore and Malaya, but we have no evidence to suggest any connection between them.³²

The association came of age after almost four decades in existence. It purchased a new and more respectable club house under the leadership of Li Ah-fa (or known as Lee Ahwat). The change of the association's name from Hai Shan *Kongsi* to Ngo Ch'eng Kuan (Ngo Ch'eng Association or known as Ngo Sang Association) perhaps not just to mark the turning of a new chapter in its history, but also indicated its desire of identifying itself as a dialect organization,³³ and of not being confused with the powerful secret society. The association appeared to have grown steadily in numbers and financial strength after that year. In 1848, the association was financially

strong enough to undertake an urgent task of providing proper burial for its unfortunate members who died overseas in poverty, when it acquired a block of land at the famous San Pao Mount (or known as Bukit China) which was developed into the cemetery of the association. Another need of the local Huichew community of educating the young was further met by the association in 1871 when a school named Hui Min was founded under the leadership of Yueh Shui and Chung Chiao.³⁴

The decade of 1820 saw the emergence of four other Hakka dialect associations: the Ying Ho Association of Malacca in 1821, the Huichew Association of Penang in 1822, the Ying Ho Association of Singapore in 1823, and the Ch'a Yang Association of Malacca in 1820s. This crop of Hakka dialect organizations was probably due to the new economic opportunity and political stability as a result of the opening of Singapore in 1819, the transfer of power over Malacca from the Dutch to British in 1824, and the formation of the Straits Settlements as the Fourth Presidency of India in 1826. The opening of Singapore as a second new port on the coast of Malacca and its *laissez-faire* policy enhanced British reputation as a forward-looking and benevolent power in comparison with the Dutch and the Portuguese; the administrative amalgamation of the three British settlements in the Strait of Malacca provided stability and stimulated general economic growth.³⁵ This had greatly attracted Chinese immigrants to come to trade and settle, that included those Hakka-speaking immigrants. The increase of Hakka immigrants resulted in the founding of their dialect organizations in the Straits Settlements.

Taking the lead among these Hakka dialect organizations was the Ying Ho Association of Malacca which was founded in 1821 by a small group of enthusiastic Chia Ying Hakkas. The increase in number of Chia-ying Hakkas at the first two decades in the nineteenth century for no obvious reasons made the founding of this dialect organization possible. Like its sister organization, the Huichew Association of Malacca, it was to meet the need of providing a meeting place and taking care of funeral and burial of fellow Chia-ying Hakkas who unfortunately died overseas without any relatives.³⁶ What made it different from its sister organization seemed to be the fact that there were quite a few wealthy and generous Chia-ying Hakkas in their midst. This resulted in the success in raising a large sum of money which enabled the association to purchase three shop houses as its club house. The association obtained its legal recognition by registering with the Dutch authority in Malacca under the name of 'Moy Tjoe Tjong Gie Kongsee' (romanized as Mei Chou Tsung Chi Kongsí).³⁷ The names that appeared on the title deed of the association, Tjoe Atjin (or romanized as Chu Ah-hsin),

Tjang Tay Sion (or romanized as Cheng Tai-sung), Tio Apiang (or romanized as Chao Ah-pin), and Lie Pian Kwaan (or romanized as Li Ping-kuan), were obviously the founders of the association, and they were probably wealthy traders or artisans in the local Chinese community.

To care for the dead of the unfortunate fellow Chia-ying Hakkas seemed to have received the top priority in the tasks that the association wished to accomplish in its early stage. In 1824, three years after its inception, adequate funds had been raised to acquire a piece of land on the eastern side of Bukit China as association's cemetery. This event was coupled with the change of association's name from 'Moy Tjoe Tjong Gie Kongsee' to 'Chia-ying Chou Kongsí'.³⁸

The change of name does not seem to have special significance. It had not dropped a potentially confused title of *Kongsí*, but just change the *Moy Tjoe Tjong Gie*, an old name of the Chia-ying prefecture, to a proper name of *Chia-ying*. Perhaps, the change had expressed the desire of the association to project a proper rather than an archaic image in the community. The name was changed again in 1852 to *Ying Ho Kongsí*. *Ying* was the short form for *Chia Ying*, while the word *Ho* meant harmony or unity. The new name thus symbolized the harmony and unity of the Chia-ying people. This may suggest that the association had serious internal strife before 1852 and badly needed for piece and solidarity. The change to a new name also coincided with the expansion of the association at that time. Under the leadership of Yeh Ho-h'e, the association undertook a large-scale fund-raising campaign, and succeeded in purchasing a new club house in Kampong Melayu. The association was numerically strong, and it must be close to have a membership of 500, for there were 480 donors to the fund-raising campaign.³⁹

The founding of the Huichew Association of Penang on 23 July 1822 enhanced the organizational strength of the Hakka community on the island. The Chia-ying Association of Penang which came into being more than two decades earlier did not seem to have taken in any Hakkas other than people of Chia-ying origins although they spoke a slightly different dialect. The Huichew Hakkas on the island must have felt disadvantaged for not having their own organization to advance their common interests. As the Huichew Hakkas grew in number, the need for forming an organization and acquiring a club house became more urgent. To respond to such a need, a wealthy Huichew merchant named Li Hsing bought two shop houses and a block of land for a sum of \$325 (Mexican ?) and donated them to the association which was named Huichew Kongsí.⁴⁰ Li Hsing might not be the wealthiest among the Huichew Hakkas in Penang, but he was undoubtedly

most enthusiastic about the cause and the welfare of his fellow Huichew Hakkas. Li must also be the earliest leader of the association when founded.

The founding of the Chia-ying Association of Singapore in 1823,⁴¹ was a landmark in the history of Hakka communities in Singapore and Malaya. It was not only an early major Chinese dialect organization on the island, it also provided a focal point and an organizational base on which the Chia-ying Hakkas became dominant in the Hakka community in Singapore.⁴² What accounted for the founding of this association is difficult to ascertain. Was it mainly due to the increase of number of Hakkas immigrants in early Singapore and their need for a dialect organization? Or was it mainly due to the external influence of other Chia-ying Hakka associations in Penang and Malacca? Both could be the major factors and both could be of equally importance. The actual circumstances under which the Ying Ho Association of Singapore was founded is extremely difficult to reconstruct because of the lack of information. What we do know from scanty historical records is that a leader named Liu Lun-teh stood out as the founder of the association. He, together with some other enthusiastic Chia-ying Hakkas, compelled by the need for mutual help and religious worship among fellow Chia-ying Hakkas, founded the association.⁴³ The spirit of cooperation and mutual assistance was very much needed in this early stage and was expressed clearly in the name chosen for the association, Ying-ho kuan. *Ying-ho* literally meant unity and harmony of the Chia-ying people.⁴⁴

The Hakkas were most active in organizing dialect associations in the first quarter of the nineteenth century. Their associations in Penang, Malacca and Singapore ranked among the earliest Chinese dialect organizations in the region. What made the Hakkas most active in this aspect is perhaps the result of the combination of several factors such as minority insecurity, the nature of the Chinese Kapitan system, group cohesion and the organizational experience in Borneo. The Hakkas were obviously in a minority in terms of number. We have no clear dialect breakdown of Chinese population of Penang, Malacca and Singapore in the first quarter of the nineteenth century. But according to a figure compiled by a Chinese community leader, Seah Eu Chin (Siah U Chin) in 1848 on the Chinese population in Singapore, the Hakkas was estimated to have 4,000 out of the Chinese population of 39,700, about 10 per cent of the total.⁴⁵ The Chinese community in Singapore at that time was numerically dominated by the Teochews (estimated at 19,000) and Southern Fukienese (including the Hokien and Malacca Chinese estimated at 10,000).⁴⁶ The Hakkas were also in a minority in Penang and Malacca where the Chinese communities were dominated by Southern Fukienese.⁴⁷ Any new Hakka

immigrants would have been well aware of the fact that they belonged to a minority group because the dominant dialects spoken in these cities were either Southern Fukienese or Teochew. Sometimes they would have encountered derision or hostility when they spoke their Hakka dialect. This realization gave rise to a minority psychology and attitude which were based on insecurity and fear.

This minority insecurity was exacerbated by the nature of the Chinese Kapitan system in early Singapore and Malaya. The British colonial authorities in the Straits Settlements and later the Malay rulers on the Peninsula Malaya tended to appoint the leader of the major dialect group to the position of Chinese Kapitan,⁴⁸ who was given the power to control the security and welfare of the Chinese community.⁴⁹ Given rigid linguistic segregation of the time, the Chinese Kapitan tended to look after the interests of his own dialect group on which part of his power was based. Further, most likely he did not speak the dialects of other minority groups, and he had difficulty in knowing their problems and grievances even if he was impartial. Thus, the minority dialect groups felt insecure and they could not count on him in times of need, or to expect full justice meted out to them.

The Hakkas were the latecomers on the scene of South China. Like many other Southern Chinese, they moved from North China to the South through several waves of migration. They migrated from the North down to the border of Kiangsi and Fukien Provinces, especially a place named Ning Hua of the Fukien Province, and then to Kwangtung.⁵⁰ Being newcomers, they were discriminated against by earlier Chinese settlers such as Cantonese (or known as Puntai) who occupied the province of Kwangtung earlier. The Hakkas had to unite among themselves to defend their group interests, and had to develop strong group consciousness and cohesion. This helped and facilitated their founding of early dialect associations.

The unique organizational experience of the Hakkas in their migration and settlement in Borneo also contributed partly to their active organization of dialect associations. Unlike early Fukienese who came to Southeast Asia primarily for trade,⁵¹ the early Hakkas immigrants in Borneo were predominantly miners and mining workers. The need to protect their interests against rival mining groups in an hostile alien environment led them to organize themselves into various forms of organization such as mining unions, *Hui* and *Kongsi*.⁵² The most elaborate and sophisticated form of organization, the *Kongsi*, was a combined economic, social and political entity.⁵³ The best known Hakka *Kongsi* founded in West Borneo, the Nan Fang *Kongsi* of Pontianak, acted as the protector of all Chia-ying Hakkas on

the island.⁵⁴ The founding of the Lan Fang Kongsì stimulated the migration of Chia-ying Hakkas not only to West Borneo, but also to other parts of Southeast Asia, including Penang, Malacca and Singapore. The Chia-ying Hakkas who gained organizational experience under the rule of the brotherhood government of the Lan Fang Kongsì in West Borneo, transmitted some of their experience to the Hakka communities in the Straits Settlements because of the existence of immigration between Hakkas in West Borneo and the Straits.⁵⁵ The result of which was active organization of the Hakkas in dialect associations.

The Functions of the Early Hakka Dialect Organizations

Historians are baffled by the shortage of reliable information on the structure and functions of the early Chinese dialect organizations in Singapore and Malaya. A distorted picture of the overseas Chinese community as full of gamblers, opium-smokers and gangsters misguided foreign and Chinese writers alike to focus on the gambling, opium-smoking and secret societies activities. Early Chinese dialect organizations left the least reliable records which had to survive against the onslaught of Japanese occupation of Singapore and Malaya during the 1940s. Fortunately two reliable records extant are the records of the Ying Ho Association of Malacca and the Kwang Chao Association of Kuala Lumpur. The records of the former, which we designate as the 'Ying Ho Records', are the best source materials for the study of the structure and functions of the early Hakka dialect associations in Singapore and Malaya.

The 'Ying Ho Records' consists of 'Chia Ying Cemetery Records', 'Records of Donations of the Ying Ho Kongsì', 'General Records of the Ying Ho Association for the year of 1864 (Third year of T'ung-chih reign)', 'General Records of the Ying Ho Association of 1874 and After (after 13th year of T'ung-chih reign)', 'Lists of Office Bearers of the Ying Ho Association from 1821 to 1935 (from 1st year of the Tao-kuang reign to 24th year of the Chinese Republic)', and 'List of Membership of the Ying Ho Association before 1851 to 1950 (before the reign of Hsien-feng till the 39th year of the Chinese Republic)'.⁵⁶ It covers most of the period under study, but has left many gaps in relation to functions and leadership. A reasonable profile of the early Hakka dialect associations can be reconstructed on the basis of this information together with patchy records of other early Hakka dialect associations.

The prime role of the early Hakka dialect associations was welfare. The welfare of the fellow dialect speakers was expressed in the spirit of mutual

assistance. This concept was extremely attractive. Living as a minority group in an alien environment without the protection of a clan, early Hakka immigrants felt very insecure. The needs of the rich and the poor, and of the old and the new immigrants might be varied, but all would have benefited greatly from the idea of mutual assistance. Most of the early Hakka dialect associations had not been slow to spell out this idea loud and clear. This sometimes was reflected in the adoption of the name of 'Ying Ho' which suggested a real concern for harmony and unity among the members. The lack of solidarity among the Hakkas would have weakened the already weakened strength of a minority. Thus, the prime role of the early Hakka dialect associations was to provide assistance to those needy fellow dialect speakers: the old and deprived immigrants who had shattered their hopes of becoming wealthy, and had failed to provide themselves with a passage to go back to China; and the new immigrants who had neither relatives nor financial means to look after themselves.

Writing in 1854, J. D. Vaughan, a British observer, claimed that several large Chinese dialect associations in Penang had their club house rooms for the sick and indigent who were lodged and fed, and when died were buried at the expense of the Kongsì (the dialect associations). These associations included two identifiable Hakka-speaking: the Chen Sang (Tseng Ch'eng) and Ku Yin Chew (Chia-ying Association).⁵⁷ The care for the sick and the poor fellow dialect speakers was confirmed as an important function which had existed among early Hakka dialect associations in Singapore and Malaya. In Chinese tradition, dying without close relatives at the sickbed was deemed to be undesirable and unfortunate, thus dying overseas without a proper burial was much to be feared. The burial of the poor and unfortunate fellow dialect speakers was given top priority by the early Hakka dialect organizations. This was clearly reflected in the founding of various Hakka cemeteries in the region. The founding of the Chia Ying Cemetery in the Bukit China in Malacca in 1824, three years after the inception of the Ying Ho Association of Malacca, indicates where the priority of the association lay.⁵⁸ In Singapore, the Ying Ho Association founded a cemetery at the Double Dragon Hill (in Holland Road) in 1887 (13th year of the Kuang-hsu reign) for the burial of the dead of the Chia-ying Hakkas on the island.⁵⁹ Although the cemetery was founded by the association 65 years after its inception, it nevertheless was a major project of the association in its early history.

The care for the sick and the indigent and the burial of the paupers were not the unique function of the early Hakka dialect associations, but what appears to be unique was the founding of 'Recuperation Centre' (Hui Ch'un Kuan) by some early Ta P'u Hakka associations in the region. The Ta P'u

Hakkas belonged to a minority group in the Hakka-speaking communities in Singapore and Malaya, and they came from the Ta P'u district of Kwangtung Province. During the Ch'ing dynasty, Ta P'u was one of the nine districts constituted the Ch'ao Chou prefecture which was predominantly Teochew-speaking, a dialect distinctively different from the Hakka. The Ta P'u Hakkas were treated by the Teochews in China and abroad as outcasts from their prefecture. This nurtured strong cohesion among the Ta P'u Hakkas. A small yet powerful Ta P'u Hakka community appeared to have existed in nineteenth-century Penang.⁶⁰

The earliest Ta P'u association came into existence in Singapore in 1857, while the second Ta P'u dialect association was founded in Kuala Lumpur in 1878 under the name of The Selangor Ch'a Yang Kongsi.⁶¹ The 'Recuperation Centre' occupied so prominent a place in the functions of the early Ta P'u Hakka associations that 'The Selangor Ch'a Yang Recuperation Centre' was founded in the same year with the Selangor Ch'a Yang Kongsi in 1878.⁶² It was not the only one in the region, another 'Recuperation Centre' was founded by the Singapore Ch'a Yang Association in 1890.⁶³

A 'Recuperation Centre' was a mixture of welfare and medical body. Although both the centres in Kuala Lumpur and Singapore had developed into quasi hospitals, they nevertheless were the important welfare arms of the Ch'a Yang Associations. They provided free medical care as well as residential facilities for the poor Ta P'u Hakkas in both cities. Since many Ta P'u Hakkas in late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries were mining workers and artisans, and since the public Chinese hospitals in both cities lacked residential facilities at that time,⁶⁴ the complete set of free medical care ranging from consultation, medicine and residential facility was crucial in the recovery of health of the Ta P'u Hakka miners and artisans. Their steady recovery put them back into the workforce. The existence of the 'Recuperation Centre' alleviated the fear of new immigrants who could not afford medical cost, and helped facilitate the immigration of Ta P'u Hakkas to Singapore and Malaya.

The welfare programme, though socially desirable and morally good, was of enormous cost to the early Hakka dialect associations. Even financial powerful associations also found it a big drain on their annual budget. One practical way of helping to solve financial problem of the costly welfare programme was the introduction of a funeral co-operative scheme. Members who were worried about a proper burial after death joined in a scheme which collected instalments from the participants. A small sum was collected from them regularly, and by the time of their old age, the money accumulated was probably enough to give them a dignified burial if they died in the new

land. The Ying Ho association of Malacca realized the potential huge cost of maintaining a full welfare programme, and took steps to form an 'Old Folks Society' (Lau Jen Hui), a kind of funeral co-operative scheme, in 1824, 3 years after the founding of the association.⁶⁵ Incomplete records of the society show the scheme had modest success, only 19 members joined the society in a decade from 1852 to 1861.⁶⁶ The small membership of the society can be interpreted either as lack of interest in the scheme or the association had not too many elderly and poor members. There is no evidence to suggest that a similar scheme had been adopted by other early Hakka dialect associations in the region.

Ranked also prominently among the important functions of the early Hakka dialect associations were the religious and social roles. Religious worship in the Chinese dialect associations generally supplemented the major religious worship in the Chinese communities. Being a minority group, the Hakkas were deprived of the privileges of having their preferred god or goddess being worshipped in popular temples.⁶⁷ Part of their religious need was met by the Hakka dialect associations which installed their preferred gods in the club houses. It is clear that most of the early Hakkas worshipped Kuan Ti, a god of war and righteousness. This worship was particularly common among the early Chia Ying and Ta P'u Hakkas.⁶⁸

Popularly known as Kuan Kung or Kuan Yu, Kuan Ti was a historical figure of great stature. His reputed prowess and righteousness added to his greatness. He was deified to become god of war and god of righteousness after his death. His heroic deeds and unflinching dedication to his sworn brothers were popularized by a famous Ming historical novel, *The Romance of the Three Kingdoms* (*San-kuo yen-i*) which made him a household hero among Chinese masses. The worship of Kuan Kung in China became popular in Northern Sung dynasty when two honorific titles were conferred upon him by Emperor Huai-tsung in 1102 and 1108.⁶⁹ State patronage not only enhanced the prestige of Kuan Kung as a popular deity, but also provided him with privilege of being protected and promoted by state religious functionaries.⁷⁰ The cult of Kuan Kung reached its peak in mid Ming dynasty when his status was lifted from *Kung* (Duke) and *Wang* (King) to the status of *Ti* (Emperor). In 1590, his status of *Ti* was officially conferred by Wan Li Emperor, and again he was further honoured with a title of *kuan Ti Sheng Chun* (Kuang Kung, the Holy Emperor).⁷¹ Imperial patronage of the cult of Kuan Kung continued into the Ch'ing dynasty despite the alien nature of the Manchu rule.⁷²

What appealed most to the Chinese masses and the ruling houses alike was the principle of righteousness that Kuan Kung represented. Righteousness, operating outside the kinship system, was a powerful cementing force cutting

across class boundaries. This spirit of righteousness captured the imagination of secret society leaders who badly needed a cementing force to strengthen the organization. Thus, Kuan Kung was invoked to help witness the initiation rites of the Triad society, the most powerful secret society in South China and overseas Chinese communities. The image of Kuan Kung was given an equal important status with the revered Five Ancestors of the Triad in all of its initiation ceremonies. Presumably, Kuan Kung as the god of righteousness together with the spirits of the Five Ancestors were to witness such solemn union of fraternal ties.⁷³

The worship of Kuan Ti among the early Hakka immigrants in Singapore and Malaya may not be unique among the Chinese immigrants in Southeast Asia, it nevertheless pointed to a common religious belief which was most relevant to their needs. Based on geographical ties, the dialect organization was commonly regarded by early Hakka immigrants as an extension of their kinship network. But the organization was relatively weak, for it would be easily weakened by internal strife, and it would be completely ruined by disloyalty and betrayal of its loosely grouped members. Like the Triad society, Kuan Ti was installed by the organization for the blessing of unity and harmony, for the perpetuation of the values of loyalty, righteousness and the enduring fellowship. He was invoked to oversee the execution of this newly-forged relationship among the members, and to punish those who were disloyal and dared to betray.

The worship of Kuan Ti among early Chia Ying Hakkas usually took place in the first half of the lunar calendar. In Malacca, for instance, the Ying Ho Kongsì laid the sacrifice to Kuan Ti on the thirteen day of the fifth moon of lunar calendar each year. The Kongsì mobilized all members for a collective worship of the deity in the Kongsì's premises. Circulars were sent out to members several days before the occasion for donations to cover the expenses. On the day, meat, poultry and fruit which constituted the main sacrificial items were laid before the portrait of Kuan Ti, and in a solemn atmosphere the leader of the Kongsì led the members to perform necessary rituals and recite the sacrificial verses.⁷⁴ The verses were full of praise of Kuan Ti's virtues and the benefits that he had brought to the Han Chinese people. His blessing for good fortune to the Kongsì was invoked.⁷⁵

Religious functions of the early Hakka dialect organizations would not have been complete without its regular observation of the 'Spring Sacrifice' (Ch'un-chi) and 'Autumn Sacrifice' (Ch'iu-chi). Originated in China, these two sacrifices were commonly observed by the Chinese immigrants in Malaysia and Singapore either in clan, dialect or other social organizations.⁷⁶ The Chinese immigrants were so deeply immersed in their tradition by continuing the use of the seasonal terms of spring and autumn to the two

sacrifices, despite the tropical environments of Singapore and Malaya. The two sacrifices therefore took place in the months ranging from March, April and May for spring and August, September and October for autumn. The ancestor worship which had concretely expressed in the collective visit to the cemetery and which was institutionalized in the Ch'ing Ming festival during the spring time, constituted a major part of religious activities of the overseas Chinese clans.⁷⁷ But in the early Hakka dialect organizations, the 'Spring Sacrifice' was mainly dedicated to the dead who were buried in the association's cemetery. Irrespective of their different social standing or positions held in the association, those who were buried in the *Kongsi's* cemetery were equally accorded with a collective visit at the 'Spring Sacrifice' organized by the *Kongsi*. On the eighteenth day of the second moon of lunar calendar each year, the Malacca Ying Ho Association mobilized members to visit the cemetery and to offer sacrifices together with a sacrificial verse. Written on a paper, sacrificial verse was read by the leader of the *Kongsi* who performed a short ritual, and then the paper was burned.⁷⁸ As medium of communication between the dead and the alive, the sacrificial verse had made the re-union of the spirits with the members of the *Kongsi* possible. Through Spring Sacrifice, the spirits of the dead members were fed and comforted, and they would be able to render their power to protect the *Kongsi* from any evil force which might have harmed the *Kongsi* and its members.

All these religious functions were normally accompanied by a feast which involved many of the members. Feasts were also organized for the celebrations of major traditional Chinese festivities such as Chinese new year, Dragon Boat festival and Moon festival. These feasts usually consisted of pork, poultry, noodles and vegetables and were considered to be lavish. Given the fact that rice and vegetables were the main diet for many ordinary people in nineteenth century Singapore and Malaya,⁷⁹ feasts of this kind were considered to be exciting occasions. Not only it satisfied the desire for good food, but also brought members together to socialize. They reminisced about the old days in China, and exchanged work experience or business information. Combining good food, exciting conversation and jokes, these social functions created a strong sense of belonging and togetherness, and strengthened the bond among members.

The Structure and Leadership of the Early Hakka Dialect Organizations

How was the early Hakka dialect association organized? How did the association select its leaders? What qualified a person to become a leader? These are some of the questions which will be explored in this section.

What can be gathered from the scanty material is a two-tier structure of the early Hakka dialect associations in Singapore and Malaya. An executive committee and a broad rank and file membership. The system was democratic. All members participated in electing a leader and several executive members in a democratic manner at a general meeting once a year.⁸⁰ Under this two-tier system, the elected leader who was also a member of the executive committee, would chair most of the meetings while the rest possessed equal status in the committee. The Chinese note on the back of the Yan-woh Kongsì's title deed reveals that the Chia-ying association of Penang (under the name of Yan-woh Kongsì) had this two-tier structure, and the members of the executive committee carried the title of *T'ou-chia* (or *Toukay*, meaning the Boss), while the leader of the committee and the association was given a title of *Shou-shih t'ou-chia* (meaning the Chief Boss).⁸¹ In Malacca, the Ying Ho association's executive committee members were also addressed as *T'ou-chia*, while the leader of the association was given a special title as *Lu-chu* (the owner of the incense-burner) or as *Lu-chu t'ou-chia* (meaning the Boss who owns the incense-burner).⁸² The size of the executive committee was usually small and it normally would not exceed six or seven people. The small size of the committee probably reflected the small size of membership, or it was to facilitate effective functioning of the committee. The Malacca Ying Ho association, for instance, had a few hundred members, but its executive committee had only six people, consisting of one *Lu-chu* and five *T'ou-chias*. This number was maintained unchanged throughout a period of more than 70 years from 1863 to 1935.⁸³

Confucian authoritarianism and status hierarchy which expressed clearly in the structure of the early Chinese clan organizations in China and overseas Chinese communities,⁸⁴ did not seem to have any direct bearing on these early Hakka dialect associations. This was partly due to different principles on which they were organized, and partly because they were the new product of overseas environment to meet the needs of the early immigrants. Although similar geographically-based regional associations existed in major cities in China, there is no evidence to suggest any direct link between them and these early Hakka dialect organizations.

The obvious weakness of the structure was the lack of clear responsibilities for the executive members. Apart from the leader, the executive members had no specific functions. Either they were called upon when help was needed or volunteered to do something, and this lack of specific functions overloaded the leader with a variety of duties. He represented the association at most external functions, and served as the spokesman for the association. He had to take care of religious and ceremonial matters, the welfare of

members, to arbitrate disputes and to look after documents and financial matters.⁸⁵ The overloading of responsibilities on the leader and the lack of division of labour in the executive committee probably accounted for the lack of initiatives and efficiency in the management.

The leader of the early Hakka dialect association carried a title of *Lu-chu*. The use of this title was confirmed by the Ying Ho records of Malacca and the records of the Ying Ho association of Singapore.⁸⁶ The Malacca Ying Ho Association appeared to have continued using this title until 1935.⁸⁷

The name *Lu-chu*, literally means the owner of the incense-burner, clearly implies a strong link with religion. Incense-burner was a major item of equipment in the worship of a deity, without which the ritual could not be carried out. Thus it was taken as the credential or a symbol of authority for a leader to exercise his power in a dialect association. This perhaps could be compared to the seal of a Chinese mandarin without which his authority can not be executed. The selection of the leader was democratic. It was not in a direct majority vote on the principle of one vote one value, rather the leader was chosen by the will of a deity or spirits in the presence of all members. On the selection day, members of the association were convened in the club house, and the names of the candidates were written on papers, which were rolled and put into a box or a brush-holder. A paper was taken out each time, and a pair of *Poeh* (lots) were thrown in the air in front of the deity of the association. If the *poeh* turned out to be one flat and one convex, it was considered to have the blessing of the deity; if it did so three times consecutively, the candidate on the paper was considered to have been chosen by the deity, and his name would be announced on the spot as the new *Lu-chu*.⁸⁸ Some early Hakka dialect associations held the selection ceremony not in the club house, but at the cemetery to coincide with the collective visit at the 'Spring Sacrifice' function. The Ying Ho association of Malacca, for instance, held the selection ceremony on every eighteenth day of the second moon of lunar calendar during the 'Spring Sacrifice' time. Names of prospective leaders or their shops written on papers were put into a bamboo brush-holder, and all the papers were folded. A paper was taken out from the brush-holder after it was shaken for several times. The paper was placed in front of the main tomb tablet of the cemetery, and a pair of *poeh* were thrown. The names receiving consecutive good *poeh* were selected as new executive members, the one who received most of the good *poeh* would be announced as the new *Lu-chu*, while the rest as the new *T'ou-chias*.⁸⁹ In this process of selecting new leadership, the Ying Ho association of Malacca practised a clear preference for prospective leaders who had not held offices before. This was reflected in the entry of names into the brush-

holder. In the first round of selection, only names of those who had not held offices before were put into the brush-holder, while names of the old office-bearers were held back for the second round to fill the unfilled quota. If the quota was filled in the first round, no second round was needed.⁹⁰ This preference in the selection process might be designed to tap broader source of talents, or it might be aimed at preventing leadership being monopolized or manipulated by certain unscrupulous persons for selfish gains. Whatever the motive behind this practice, the system led to frequent change of leadership. The list of *Lu-chus* and *T'ou-chias* of the Malacca Ying Ho association from 1863 to 1935 reveals that no single *Lu-chu* held the same position consecutively for two years, the same pattern appeared to have occurred to the *T'ou-chias* in the same period.⁹¹ Frequent change of leadership meant instability and lack of continuity in the management of the association's affairs. The Ying Ho association of Malacca seemed to have realized the shortcoming of the system they had practised, and to remedy such defects, it adopted a system of direct majority votes to elect leaders for special tasks such as fund-raising, building a new club house or campaigns for recruiting new members.⁹² Presumably all these specific tasks required longer length of time than one year, and needed certain continuity to accomplish those undertakings. Ability and integrity played an important part in the selection for specific purpose leaders.⁹³

No rules and regulations were imposed on those who wished to hold offices, but the actual requirements for the positions of *Lu-chu* and *T'ou-chia* ruled out many people who were financially disadvantaged. As the *Lu-chu* was required to look after the 'incense-burner' for the worship of the deity for a period of 12 months, he must have owned a house or a shop where a proper place could be found to accommodate the religiously-valued 'incense-burner'. At the same time, the *Lu-chu* and *T'ou-chias* were most likely to be asked to donate money at various functions to set examples for other people to follow, the poor and those who had modest income could not measure up to such expectation. Thus these practical requirements effectively excluded people of lower socio-economic background such as manual labourers, shop assistants and lower echelon artisans. In this way, the eligibility of leadership was mainly confined to merchants, traders or well-off artisans. In the case of the Ying Ho association of Malacca, the practice of preparing the prospective leaders effectively excluded a large number of people who did not own a shop or a business. On the eve of the selection, the association conducted a survey of shops and business owned by the Chia-ying Hakkas, and names of the shops or proprietors were then written on papers for the entry for selection. Those without shops or business

thus had no chance at all to be included in the selection process.⁹⁴ In the period of 48 years from 1863 to 1911, 31 out of 48 *Lu-chus* of the Ying Ho association of Malacca were proprietors of shops and companies, another 9 carried the names of shops and companies, and the remaining 8 were the combined names of proprietors and shops.⁹⁵

Wealth and luck appeared to have determined the leadership of the early Hakka dialect associations, while ability and integrity were important attributes in the selection of specific purpose leaders. But what really attracted people to become leaders of these early Hakka dialect organizations? Over-emphasis on the quality of altruism and community spirit for the leadership would be too simplistic and moralistic. The prestige and power, and some unseen material benefits had also appealed to prospective leaders. Coming from poor rural background like other Chinese immigrants, the early Hakkas shared a strong desire to climb up the social ladder. Frequent purchases of imperial titles from Ch'ing court by many of the Chinese leaders in Singapore and Malaya during the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries concretely expressed such psychological need.⁹⁶ To become a leader in a dialect association was a partial fulfilment of one's ambition for upward social mobility, and an enjoyment of the recognition of one's social status and prestige. Although the position of a leader required a great deal of sacrifice in terms of time and money, it nevertheless had some hidden material benefits. Being recognized as the leader of the association, he would have the trust of the members and the Chinese community at large, and this trust could be transferred to his business, and helped to invigorate his commercial activities. Further, under the system of *Lu-chu*, wealthy businessmen or artisans could also be attracted by the privilege of keeping the incense-burner for 12 months to benefit from the special blessing of the deity. In a Chinese society where superstition still reigned, a special favour from a deity was considered to be important for bringing luck and further success in business.

Conclusion

The Hakkas were among the early Chinese immigrants in Singapore and Malaya. Since 1786, they constituted an important minority dialect group in the Chinese communities in Penang, Singapore and Malacca. Most of the early Hakka immigrants were artisans, manual labourers and traders, and the dominant group among them was the Chia-ying Hakkas who came from the eastern part of Kwangtung. Other Hakkas such as Huichew, Ta P'u, Feng Shun, Yung Ting, and Tseng Ch'eng were also found among these early Hakka immigrants.

Minority insecurity, the nature of the Kapitan system, strong group cohesion, and the organizational experience in Borneo propelled early Hakka immigrants to found their dialect organizations to protect group interests, and their organizations were among the earliest dialect associations in the region.

Principal functions of the early Hakka dialect associations were welfare, religious and social, and they were to meet the needs of the Hakka immigrants and to strengthen the new bond among them.

Most early Hakka dialect associations had a two-tier structure, a small number of leaders formed into an executive committee, and a broad rank and file membership. The system was democratic. All executive members, including the leader, were chosen with direct participation of members with the blessing of deity or spirits. The lack of clear responsibilities for the executive members was the main shortcoming of the structure, and it over-burdened the leader, and accounted for the lack of initiatives and slack management.

Religion played an important part in the process of selecting leaders. Possession of wealth was most important qualification for leadership, while luck also had a part to play in determining who would be chosen as leaders. The ability and integrity of a person were also important in the selection of specific purpose leaders.

Apart from altruism and community spirit, the prestige and power, and some of the indirect material benefits also attracted people to become leaders.

Unlike early Chinese clan organizations in Singapore and Malaya, which were to perpetuate descent lines and to maintain close kinship ties with parental bodies in China,⁹⁷ early Hakka dialect associations were organized on entirely different principles: common geographical ties and common dialect. They were not directly borrowed from China, but grew out of the needs of the new environment overseas. There is no evidence to suggest any connections between these dialect organizations and the regional associations found in major cities in China during the Ming and Ch'ing periods.

Endnotes

- * First published in *Asian Culture*, No. 17 (Singapore Society of Asian Studies, 1993), pp. 106-26.
1. For the record of the existence of the 'Campon China' see de Eredia, Emanuel Godinho, translated by J.V. Mills, 'Eredia's Description of Malacca, Meridional India and Cathay', in the *Journal of Malayan Branch of the Royal Asiatic Society*, Vol. 8, Pt. 1 (1930), p. 19.
2. *Ibid.*; Yen Ching-hwang, 'Early Fukienese Migration and Social Organization in

Singapore and Malaya before 1900', a paper presented to the Fifth National Conference on Chinese Maritime History held at Academia Sinica, Taipei, Taiwan, 24-25 February 1992, p. 3.

3. See Kenial Singh Sandhu, 'Chinese Colonization of Malacca', in *The Journal of Tropical Geography*, Vol. 15, p. 6.
4. Study of Hakka immigrants in the goldfields in Borneo was first pioneered by Professor Lo Hsiang-lin, who published a short biography of the legendary leader of these Hakka immigrants, Lo Fang-po, in 1941 entitled *Lo Fang-po so-chien P'o-lo-chou k'un-mien lan-fang ta-tsung-chih k'ao* (*The Establishment of the Lan Fang Presidential System in Borneo by Lo Fang-po*) (Ch'ung king, Shang Wu Press, 1941). This work was later expanded to become an important study entitled *Hsi-P'o-Lo-Chou Lo-Fang-po teng so-chien kung-ho-kuo K'ao* (*A Historical Survey of the Lan-Fang Presidential System in Western Borneo, Established by Lo Fang-pai and other Overseas Chinese*) (Hong Kong, 1961); in 1970, British academic James G. Jackson published his monography entitled *Chinese in the West Borneo Goldfields: A Study in Cultural Geography* (University of Hull Publications, 1970), the work explored into the relationship between early Hakka immigrants and their interaction with environment; Wang Tai Peng, a scholar from Singapore, in his M.A. thesis done for the Australian National University in 1977, developed Lo Hsiang-lin's idea into a full-fledged argument that the Lan-Fang Ta Tsung-chih founded by the early Hakka immigrants in Borneo was in fact a modern form of republic, his thesis was entitled 'The Chinese Republic in West Borneo from the Latter Part of the 18th Century to the Middle of the 19th Century'; the most recent work touching the Hakka immigrants in Borneo is Daniel Chew's book entitled *Chinese Pioneers on the Sarawak Frontier 1841-1941* (Oxford University Press, Singapore, 1900).
5. 'Notices of Pinang', in the *Journal of Indian Archipelago and Eastern Asia*, Vol. 5 (1851), p. 9.
6. The discovery of these four tombstones was made by the Kwangtung and Tengchow Association of Penang at its first cemetery in Mount Erskine, Penang. The first tomb belonged to a Cantonese from Hsiang Shan named Wu Hao who died in 1795, the second was a Chia-ying Hakka Kuan Ch'in-feng, the third another Chia-ying Hakka Li Ah-liu, and the fourth a Cantonese from Shun Teh district named Wu I-jo. Kuan, Li and Wu I-jo all died in 1799 (4th year of Chia-ch'ing reign). See Liang Chin-yao, 'pen hui-shih h'ou-wen' (Appendix to the History of our Association), in Ch'en Chung-min et al. (eds.), *Pin-ch'eng Kwangtung chih Tengchow hui-kuan i-pai ch'i-shih chou-nien chin-nien t'e-k'an* (*Souvenir Magazine of 170th Anniversary Celebration of the Kwangtung and Tengchow Association of Penang*) (Penang, 1973), p. II.
7. See M.L. Wynne, *Triad and Tabut: A Survey of the Origin and Diffusion of Chinese and Mohamedan Secret Societies in the Malay Peninsula, 1800-1935* (Government Printing Office, Singapore, 1941), pp. 76-7.
8. See J.D. Vaughan, 'Notes on the Chinese of Pinang', in the *Journal of Indian Archipelago and Eastern Asia*, Vol. 8 (1854).
9. For the founding of the Penang Chia-ying Hakka Association in 1801, see Liu Kuo-yin, 'Pin-ch'eng Chia-ying hui-kuan tsai Ma-hua li-shih shang te ti-wei' (The Status of the Chia-ying Association of Penang in the History of the Chinese in Malaysia), as an appendix to Imahori Sei'ichi, *Ma-lai-ya Hua-ch'iao she-hui* (*The Overseas Chinese*

- Society in Malaya), translated into Chinese by Liu Kuo-yin, published by Penang Chia-ying Association, Penang, 1972? p. 4.; for the founding of the Tengchow Association of Penang in 1819, see Wu Hua, *Ma-lai-hsi-ya hua-tsu hui-kuan shih-lueh* (A Short History of Chinese Associations in Malaysia) (Tung-nan-ya yen-chiu-so, Singapore, 1980), p.4; for the founding of the Huichew Association of Penang in 1822, see Lo Tao-yun and Hu Kuan-ch'en, 'Pin-ch'eng Hui-chou hui-kuan chien-shih' (A Short History of the Huichew Association of Penang), in Ch'en Ch'ung-min et al. (eds.), *Pin-ch'eng Kwangtung chih Tengchow hui-kuan i-pai ch'i-shih chou-nien chi-nien t'e-k'an*, p. 114; a slightly different article by the same authors under the same title also appears in Lin Tzu-kao (ed.), *Shen-mei-lan Hui-chou hui-kuan pai-nien chi-nien t'e-k'an* (Negri Sembilan's Fui Chiu Association's 100th Anniversary Celebration) (Seremban, 1970), p. 64.
10. See Yen Ching-hwang, *A Social History of the Chinese in Singapore and Malaya, 1800-1911* (Oxford University Press, Singapore, 1986), p. 37, thereafter referred as *A Social History*. Wu, Hua, *Ma-lai-hsi-ya hua-tsu hui-kuan shih-lueh*, pp. 3-4.
 11. See J.D. Vaughan, 'Notes on the Chinese of Pinang', in the *Journal of Indian Archipelago and Eastern Asia*, Vol. 8 (1854), p. 14.
 12. J.D. Vaughan observed that 'The natives of Quang-tung are more robust and hard working than the Fuh-kien or Chin-chew and other tribes. All the carpenters, blacksmiths, shoemakers, and other laborious tradesmen are of the first; a few are goldsmiths, tailors and shopkeepers; they are excellent squatters and may be called pioneers to the Chin-chews ... The plantations which are at present in the hands of Chin-chew shopkeepers, were made by Quantung men ...'. See J.D. Vaughan, 'Notes on the Chinese of Pinang', in the *Journal of Indian Archipelago and Eastern Asia*, Vol. 8 (1854), p. 3. The Quang-tung men referred by Vaughan must have included the Chia-ying Hakkas.
 13. In 1829, the Superintendent of Police of Penang, I. Pattullo, mentioned a 'Yan Woh' Kongsi which was established upwards of 30 years, and composed of 'a certain class of Chinese coming from Kahang Chow (Chia-ying chou), a hilly part of Canton Province. It was originally established by traders from Sambas. No oath is taken by members.' Cited in M.L. Wynne, *Triad and Tabut: A Survey of the Origin and Diffusion of Chinese and Mohamedan Secret Societies in the Malay Peninsula, 1800-1935*, pp. 76-7.
 14. For the rise of a powerful Fukienese group in early Singapore economy and its connection with Malaccan Chinese, see Lim How Seng, 'K'ai-fuo ch'u-ch'i te Hsin-hua she-hui' (Early Chinese Society after the Opening of Singapore as a Port), in Kua Bak Lim and Lim How Seng, *Hsin-hua li-shih yu jen-wu yen-chiu* (A Study of History and Personalities in the Chinese Society in Singapore) (South Seas Society, Singapore, 1986), pp. 28-9.
 15. See Huang Fu-yung, 'Hsin-chia-po Ying-ho hui-kuan shih-lueh' (A Short History of the Yin Foh Association of Singapore), in Lin Chih-kao et al. (eds.), *Hsing-chou Ying-ho hui-kuan i-pai ssu-shih-i chou-nien chi-nien t'e-k'an* (Souvenir Magazine of the 141st Anniversary Celebration of the Yin Foh Association of Singapore), Singapore, 1965, 'kuan-shih' (History of the Association) column, p. 10; Wu Hua, *Hsin-chia-po hua-tsu hui-kuan chih* (Chinese Associations in Singapore), Vol. 1 (South Seas Society, Singapore, 1975), p. 50.
 16. See 'Hsing-chia-po Hui-chou hui-kuan shih-lueh' (A Short History of the Fui Chiu Fui

- Kun, Singapore), in Lin Tzu-kao (ed.), *Shen-mei-lan Hui-chou hui-kuan pai-nien chi-nien t'e-k'an*, p. 78.
17. See Wu Hua, 'Tan-jung pa-ke Fu Teh Ch'ih' (The Fu Teh Temple of Tanjong Pagar), in Lim How Seng et al. (eds.), *Shih-le ku-chi (Historical Relics of Singapore)* (South Seas Society, Singapore, 1975), p. 191.
18. For an interpretation of inter group relations within the Hakka community in early Singapore, see Yen Ching-hwang, *A Social History*, p. 192.
19. See Siah U Chin, 'General Sketch of the Numbers, Tribes, and Avocations of the Chinese in Singapore', in the *Journal of the Indian Archipelago and Eastern Asia*, Vol. 2 (1848), p. 290.
20. *Ibid.*
21. See Imahori Sei'ichi, *Ma-lai-ya Hua-ch'iao she-hui*, translated into Chinese by Liu Kuo-yin, Penang, 1979; see my doubts on his claim about Chinese commercial guilds in Malacca, in Yen Ching-hwang, *A Social History*, pp. 13-4.
22. See Imahori Sei'ichi, *ibid.*, pp. 95-128.
23. See Wu Hua, *Ma-lai-hsi-ya hua-tsu hui-kuan shih-lueh*, p. 3; Yen Ching-hwang, *A Social History*, p. 37.
24. See Ch'en Chung-min et al. (eds.), *Pin-ch'eng Kwangtung chih Tenggchow hui-kuan i-pai ch'i-shih chou-nien chi-nien t'e-k'an*, Vol. 8 (1854), p. 11.
25. See J.D. Vaughan, 'Notes on the Chinese of Pinang', in the *Journal of the Indian Archipelago and Eastern Asia*, Vol. 8 (1854) p. 14; Leong Kok Kee, 'The Chia-ying Hakka in Penang 1786-1941', in *Malaysia in History: Journal of the Malaysian Historical Society*, Kuala Lumpur, No. 24, 1981, p. 40.
26. See Liu Kuo-yin, 'Pin-ch'eng Chia-ying hui-kuan tsai Ma-hua li-shih shang te ti-wei; appendix to Imahori Sei'ichi, *Ma-lai-ya Hua-ch'iao she-hui*, p. 4; see also the same article in Huang Wei-ch'iang et al. (eds.), *Pi-li Chia-ying hui-kuan ch'i-shih chou-nien, hsin-hsia lo-ch'eng k'ai-mu t'e-k'an* (*The Souvenir Magazine of 70th Anniversary of the Perak Ka Yin Association*), (Ipoh, 1975?), pp. 297-301, especially p. 298.
27. See the title deed in English reproduced in Imahori Sei-ichi, *Ma-lai-ya Hua-ch'iao she-hui* pp. 173-74.
28. See the note in Chinese on the title deed, reproduced in Imahori Sei'ichi, *Ma-lai-ya Hua-ch'iao she-hui*, p. 174.
29. The title of T'ou-chia appeared on the Chinese note, *ibid.*
30. See Chee Liew Seong, 'The Hakka Community in Malaya with Special Reference to Their Associations, 1801-1968' (an unpublished M.A. thesis of the University of Malaya, 1971, pp. xxi; see also Leong Kok Kee, 'The Chia-ying Hakka in Penang, 1786-1941' in *Malaysia in History*, No. 24, 1981, p. 40.
31. See Teng Kuo-jui, 'Ma-liu-chia Hui-chou hui-kuan shih-lueh' (A Short History of the Fui Chew Association of Malacca), manuscript given to the author by Mr Teng in Malacca in 1974. This article was also published in Lin Tzu-kao (ed.), *Shen-mei-lan Hui-chou hui-kuan pai-nien chi-nien t'e-k'an* pp. 73-4.
32. *Ibid.*; Yen Ching-hwang, *A Social History*, p. 38.

33. See Teng Kuo-jui, *op. cit.*, p. 73.
34. Teng, Kuo-jui, *op. cit.*, p. 73.
35. See C.M. Turnbull, *The Straits Settlement*, pp. 1-23.
36. See Chung Shih-chieh, 'Ma-liu-chia Ying-ho hui-kuan shih-lueh' (A Short History of the Ying Ho Association of Malacca), in Chung Shih-chieh (ed.), *Ma-liu-chia Ying-ho hui-kuan i-san-i chou-nien chi-nien t'e-k'an* (*Souvenir Magazine of the 131st Anniversary Celebration of the Ying Ho Association of Malacca*), (Malacca, 1952), p. 59.
37. *Ibid.*
38. *Ibid.*
39. *Ibid.*, p. 60.
40. See Lo Tao-yun & Hu Kuan-ch'en, 'Pin-ch'eng Hui-chou hui-kuan chien-shih,' in Ch'en Ch'ung-min et al. (eds.), *Pin-ch'eng Kuangtung chih Tengchow hui-kuan i-pai ch'i-shih chou-nien chi-nien t'e-k'an*, p. 114; see also Lin Tzu-kao (ed.), *Shen-mei-lan Hui-chou hui-kuan pai-nien chi-nien t'e-k'an*, p. 64.
41. See Huang Fu-yung, 'Hsin-chia-po Ying ho hui-kuan shih-lueh' in Lin Chih-kao et al. (eds.), *Hsing-chou Ying-ho hui-kuan i-pai ssu-shih-i chou-nien chi-nien t'e-k'an*, 'Kuan-shih' column, p. 10; Wu Hua, *Hsin-chia-po hua-tsu hui-kuan chih*, Vol. 1, p. 50.
42. See Yen Ching-hwang, *A Social History*, pp. 191-94.
43. Huang Fu-yung, 'Hsin-chia-po Ying-ho hui-kuan shih-lueh', in Lin Chih-kao et al. (eds.), *op. cit.*, p. 10.
44. See Lin Chih-kao, 'Kuan-ming k'ao' (Notes on the Origins of the Name of the Yin Foh Association of Singapore), in Lin Chih-kao et al. (eds.), *op. cit.*, 'Kuan-shih' column, pp. 13-4.
45. See Siah U Chin, 'Notes on the Chinese in the Straits', in the *Journal of the Indian Archipelago and Eastern Asia*, Series 1, No. 9 (Singapore, 1855), p. 116.
46. *Ibid.*
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50. See Lo Hsiang-lin, 'Huang Ch'ao pien-luan yu Ling-hua shih-pi ch'un' (The Rebellion of Huang Ch'ao and the Shin Pi village of Ling Hua), Liu Shan-ch'in, 'K'e-chia-jen yu Ling-hua shih-pi' (The Hakkas and the Shih Pi village of Ling Hua), in Hsueh Tso-chih (ed.), *K'e-chia yuen-yuen (The Origins of the Hakkas)*, (Ts'ung-wen ch'u-pan-she, Singapore, 1991), pp. 119-25, 126-43.
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56. See Chung Shih-chieh (ed.), *Ma-liu-chia Ying-ho hui-kuan i-san-i chou-nien chi-nien t'e-k'an*, pp. 59-71, 99-148.
57. See J.D. Vaughan, 'Notes on Chinese of Pinang', in the *Journal of Indian Archipelago and Eastern Asia*, Vol. 8 (1854), p. 15.
58. See Chung Shih-chieh, 'Ma-liu-chia Ying-ho hui-kuan shih-lueh', in Chung Shih-chieh (ed.), *Ma-liu-chia Ying-go hui-kuan i-san-i chou-nien chi-nien t'e-k'an*, p. 59.
59. See Huang Fu-yung, 'Hsin-chia-po Ying-ho hui-kuan shih-lueh', in Lin Chih-kao et al. (eds.), *Hsing-chou Ying-ho hui-kuan i-pa ssu-shih-i chou-nien chi-nien t'e-k'an*, p. 11.
60. The existence of this small yet powerful Ta P'u Hakka community in Penang can be seen from the fact that some famous Hakka leaders in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, such as Chang Pi-shih and Tai Hsin-jan were Ta P'u Hakkas. For a study of Chang Pi-shih's life, see Michael Godley, *The Mandarin-Capitalists from Nanyang: Overseas Chinese Enterprise and the Modernization of China, 1893-1911* (Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, 1981); for a short biography of Tai Hsin-jan (or known as Tai Ch'un-yung), see K'uang Kuo-hsiang, *Pin-ch'eng san-chi (Anecdotal History of Penang)* (Shih Chieh Book Store, Hong Kong 1958), pp. 94-6.

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62. See 'Hsueh-lan-ngo Ch'a-yang hui-ch'un kuan kuan-shih' (A History of the Selangor Ch'a-yang Recuperation Centre), in *Hsueh-lan-ngo Ch'a-yang hui-kuan, Ch'a-yang hui-ch'un kuan pai-nien ta-ch'ing t'e-k'an*, p. 13.
63. See 'Ch'a-yang hui-ch'un she shih-lueh' (A Short History of the Ch'a Yang Recuperation Centre), in *Hsin-chia-po Ch'a Yang hui-kuan pai-nien chi-nien k'an*, p. 6.
64. See for instances, the largest public Chinese hospital in Singapore, the Thong Chai Medical Institution (T'ung Chi I Yuan) only provided free consultation and medicine, but no residential facility during the period. In Kuala Lumpur, the first Chinese public hospital, the Pui Shin Tong did not come into existence until 1882, four years after the founding of the 'Selangor Ch'a Yang Recuperation Centre'. The hospital only offered free treatment and medicine. See 'T'ung Chi I-yuan pai-nien chin-pu shih' (One Hundred Years' History of the Thong Chai Medical Institution), in Ho Pao-jen et al. (eds.), *T'ung Chi I-yuan i-pai chou-nien chi-nien t'e-k'an* (Souvenir Magazine of the Centenary Celebration of the Thong Chai Medical Institution) (Singapore, 1968? Ping column, p. 2); Yang Piao-tung, 'Pen-yuan shih-lueh' (A Short History of the Tung Shin Institution), in *T'ung Shan I-yuan t'e-k'an* (Souvenir Magazine of the Selangor Tung Shin Hospital) (Kuala Lumpur, n.p. 1962).
65. See Chung Shih-chieh, 'Ma-liu-chia Ying-ho hui-kuan shih-lueh', in Chung Shih-chieh (ed.), *Ma-liu-chia Ying-ho hui-kuan i-san-i chou-nien chi-nien t'e-k'an*, p. 64.
66. *Ibid.*, p. 61.
67. For a discussion of religious worship in the Chinese dialect associations in Singapore and Malaya, see Yen Ching-hwang, *A Social History*, p. 45.
68. The worship of Kuan Ti was found among the early Chia Ying associations in Penang, Malacca, Singapore and Teluk Anson, and also among the early Ta P'u Hakka association in Kuala Lumpur. See Liu Kuo-yin, 'Pin-ch'eng Chia-ying hui-kuan shih' (A Short History of the Chia-ying Association of Penang), in *Ma-lai-hsi-ya Chia-shu lien-ho-hui yin-hsi chi-nien t'e-k'an* (Souvenir Magazine of Silver Jubilee Celebration of the Federation of the Ka Yin Associations of Malaysia) (Kluang, 1976), p. 102; Chung Shih-chieh, 'Ma-liu-chia Ying ho hui-kuan shih-lueh', in Chung Shih-chieh (ed.), *Ma-liu-chia Ying-ho hui-kuan i-san-i chou-nien chi-nien t'e-k'an*, p. 63; Huang Fu-yung, 'Hsin-chia-po Ying-ho hui-kuan shih-lueh', in Lin Chih-kao et al. (eds.), *Hsing-chou Ying-ho hui-kuan i-pai ssu-shih-i chou-nien chi-nien t'e-k'an*, p. 10; 'P'i-li An-shun Ying-ho hui-kuan shih-lueh' (A Short History of the Yin Ho Association of Teluk Anson, Perak), in *Ma-lai-hsi-ya Chia-shu lien-ho-hui yin-hsi chi-nien t'e-k'an*, p. 113; 'Hsueh-lan-ngo Ch'a-yang hui-kuan kuan-shih' (A History of the Ch'a Yang Association of

Selangor), in *Hsueh-lan-ngo Ch'a-yang hui-kuan, Ch'a-yang hui-ch'un kuan pai-nien ta-ch'ing t'e-k'an*, p. 8.

69. In 1102, Kuan Kung was conferred an honorific title, Chung-hui Kung and six years later he was further conferred another title, Wu-an Wang. See Nan Hu, 'Sung Yuan Ming Ch'ing ssu-ch'ao tui Kuan-kung te ch'ung-chi' (The Worship of Kuan Kung during the Sung, Yuan, Ming and Ch'ing Dynasties), in *Ma-lai-hsi-ya, Hsin-chia-po Liu Kuan Chang Chao t'ao-t'ang kung-so chi-nien k'an* (*Souvenir Magazine of the Liu, Kuan, Chang and Chao Four Surnames' Association in Malaysia and Singapore, 1968*) (K'ang Hua Printing Co., Penang, 1969), p. 86.
70. For a discussion of advantages of government approved cult in China, see C.K. Yang, *Religion in Chinese Society* (University of California Press, Berkeley & Los Angeles, 1967), p. 146.
71. See Nan Hu, 'Sung Yuan Ming Ch'ing ssu-ch'ao tui Kuan-kung te ch'ung-chi', *op. cit.*, p. 87; see also Mao I-po, 'Hsien-hua Kuan-kung' (Anecdotes of Kuan Kung), in *Ma-lai-hsi-ya, Hsin-chia-po Liu Kuan Chang Chao t'ao-t'ang kung-so chi-nien k'an*, p. 106.
72. Nan Hu, *op. cit.* pp. 87-8.
73. See C.K. Yang, *Religion in Chinese Society*, p. 62; Hsiao I-shan, *Chin-tai mi-mi she-hui shih-liao* (*Historical Materials of Chinese Secret Societies in Modern Time*) (Ta Fang Cultural Enterprises Co., Taipei, n.d.) p. 307; Fei-ling Davis, *Primitive Revolutionaries of China: A Study of Secret Societies of the Late Nineteenth Century* (Routledge & Kegan Paul, London, 1977), pp. 131-33.
74. See Chung Shih-chieh, 'Ma-liu-chia Ying-ho hui-kuan shih-lueh', in Chung Shih-chieh (ed.), *Ma-liu-chia Ying-ho hui-kuan i-san-i chou-nien chi-nien t'e-k'an*, p. 62.
75. *Ibid.*, p. 63.
76. For the observations in the early clan organizations in Singapore and Malaya, see Yen Ching-hwang, *A Social History*, p. 86.
77. See Yen Ching-hwang, 'Early Chinese Clan Organizations in Singapore and Malaya, 1819-1911' in *Journal of Southeast Asian Studies*, Vol. 12, No. 1 (March 1981), a Special Issue on Ethnic Chinese in Southeast Asia (edited by C.F. Yong), p. 78; see also the same article reproduced in Lee Lai To (ed.), *Early Chinese Immigrant Societies: Case Studies from North America and British Southeast Asia* (Heinemann Asia, Singapore, 1988) pp. 208-09.
78. One of the sacrificial verses of the Ying Ho Kongsí of the Hsien Feng period (1851-1861) praised the dead for their courage to come to Malacca to seek a livelihood, but unfortunately they died overseas. The Kongsí created a cemetery to shelter the spirits irrespective of their different surnames and kinship relations. On this Spring festival day, the Kongsí offered food for them to enjoy. See 'Chi i-ch'ung chu-wen' (Sacrificial Verse for the Cemetery of the Ying Ho Kongsí), in Chung Shih-chieh (ed.), *op. cit.*, p. 62.
79. For a discussion of food and housing of the Chinese in nineteenth century Singapore, see Leung Yuen Sang, 'The Economic Life of the Chinese in Late Nineteen-century

- Singapore', in Lee Lai To (ed.), *Early Chinese Immigrant Societies: Case Studies from North America and British Southeast Asia*, p. 137.
80. For a more detailed description of election of leaders, see later part of this section.
 81. See the Chinese note on the title deed, reproduced in Imahori Sei'ichi, *Ma-lai-ya Hua-ch'iao she-hui*, p. 174; see also the later section of this article.
 82. See Chung Shih-chieh, 'Ma-liu-chia Ying-ho hui-kuan shih-lueh', in Chung Shih-chieh (ed.), *Ma-liu-chia Ying-ho hui-kuan i-san-i chou-nien chi-nien t'e-k'an*, p. 65.
 83. See 'Tung-chih erh-nien ch'i chih Min-kuo nien-ssu-nien chih li-chieh chih-yuan i-lan piao' (A List of Office Bearers from the 2nd Year of Tung Chih Reign to the 24th year of the Republic), in Chung Shih-chieh (ed.), *ibid.*, pp. 99-103.
 84. For a more rigid clan structure in China, see, Hsien Chin Hu, *The Common Descent Group in China and Its Function* (Johnson Reprint, New York, 1968), pp. 18-22; for early overseas Chinese clan structure in Singapore and Malaya, see Yen Ching-hwang, 'Early Chinese Clan Organizations in Singapore and Malaya, 1819-1911', in *Journal of Southeast Asian Studies*, Vol. 12, No. 1 (March, 1981), pp. 69-73.
 85. See Chung Shih-chieh (ed.), *op. cit.*, p. 65.
 86. See the Ying Ho records, in Chung Shih-chieh (ed.) *op. cit.*, pp. 99-103; Huang Fu-yung, 'Hsin-chia-po Ying-ho hui-kuan shih-lueh', in Lin Chih-kao et al. (eds.), *Hsing-chou Ying-ho hui-kuan i-pai ssu-shih-i chou-nien chi-nien t'e-k'an*, p. 11.
 87. Chung Shih-chieh (ed.), *op. cit.*, p. 103.
 88. See J.D. Vaughan, 'Notes on Chinese of Pinang', in the *Journal of the Indian Archipelago and Eastern Asia*, Vol. 8, (1854), p. 15.; see also Yen Ching-hwang, *A Social History*, p. 53.
 89. See Chung Shih-chieh (ed.), *op. cit.*, pp. 66-7.
 90. *Ibid.*, p. 67.
 91. See 'Tung-chih erh-nien ch'i chih Min-kuo nien-ssu nien chih li-chieh chih-yuan i-lan piao', in Chung Shih-chieh (ed.), *op. cit.*, pp. 99-103.
 92. Chung Shih-chieh (ed.), *op. cit.*, p. 66.
 93. *Ibid.*
 94. *Ibid.*
 95. 'Tung-chih erh-nien ch'i chih Min-kuo nien-ssu nien chih li-chieh chih-yuan i-lan piao', in Chung Shih-chieh (ed.), pp. 99-102.
 96. For a discussion of social and psychological need of the overseas Chinese for Ch'ing honours, see Yen Ching-hwang, 'Ch'ing's Sale of Honours and the Chinese Leadership in Singapore and Malaya, 1877-1911', in the *Journal of Southeast Asian Studies*, Vol. 1, No. 2, pp. 20-32.
 97. For a discussion of this issue, see Yen Ching-hwang, 'Early Chinese Clan Organizations in Singapore and Malaya, 1819-1911', in *Journal of Southeast Asian Studies*, Vol. 12, No. 1 (March 1981), pp. 62-92.

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CHAPTER 5

Gambling in the Chinese Community in Singapore and Malaya, 1792–1911*

Gambling was a principal vice in the Chinese community in Singapore and Malaya. Although it was prohibited in 1829 in the Straits Settlements,¹ it continued to plague the Straits communities throughout the years 1792–1911. In the Malay states, gambling spread widely and flourished without the government's interference. Why were the Chinese so fond of gambling? How did gambling affect the Chinese community? And why did the government of the Straits Settlements fail to suppress gambling? This article attempts to answer these questions.

Causes for the Prevalence of Gambling

The passion of the Chinese in Singapore and Malaya for gambling in the period under study was well-known, and it puzzled some British colonial officials who had direct dealings with the Chinese. These officials asserted that gambling was a way of life among the Chinese and was something ingrained in the Chinese race.² Remarks of this kind were misleading and insulting to Chinese people as a whole. Although gambling was found in China, it was not as widespread as in overseas Chinese communities. Traditionally, gambling was condemned as a social evil,³ and children were frequently warned by parents not to indulge in gambling because it could ruin individuals as well as the family. Customarily, children were allowed to gamble only in the first 15 days of the Chinese New Year under the pretext that gambling was a form of entertainment which added to the excitement of this important Chinese festival. Writing at the end of the nineteenth

century, A. H. Smith claimed that during the New Year period in Chinese villages, all men and women were absorbed in gambling; cards and dominoes were most common. Although people recognized that gambling was wrong and not to be indulged in, they found the excuse by saying that it was the New Year time and everybody did it, and 'it is only for amusement' and 'there is nothing else to do'.⁴

New Year gambling seems to have been tolerated. However, this fact cannot be taken as evidence to support the statement that gambling was a national habit of the Chinese. In fact, the overseas Chinese love for gambling had its roots in socio-economic and environmental conditions.

The nature of the immigrant community and the overseas environment developed the passion of the overseas Chinese for gambling. The main features of the immigrant community such as a predominant male population,⁵ a sojourner's mentality and job insecurity combined to give rise to frustration, misery and psychological instability. This conditioned Chinese immigrants to take up gambling. At the same time most immigrants were young when they first arrived in Singapore and Malaya, and because of the absence of parental control or social pressure, they tended to indulge in the vice.

The absence of healthy entertainment made gambling the most attractive form of recreation for Chinese immigrants.⁶ It was exciting and sometimes rewarding. For a few hours, the frustrated immigrants engrossed themselves in the game and forgot all their hardships and worries. There was always a hope of winning and with it the dream of returning to China with a fortune. Gambling was not just to meet a social need, it was also presented to new immigrants as part of their lives in the new land. In the mining centres and plantation estates, gambling booths together with opium dens, *arrack* (spirit) shops and brothels formed an essential part of Chinese settlements. The new immigrants were therefore conditioned to gamble whenever they had free time; they gambled with their hard-earned cash, or even borrowed heavily from employers in order to continue the self-destructive habit. When they fell deeply into debt, they invariably mortgaged their lives to the employer for whom they had to continue work to pay off their debts.

One important psychological aspect of the Chinese immigrants which deserves our attention is their desire for quick money. Many Chinese coolie immigrants in the nineteenth century were led by crimps to believe that there was quick money to be made overseas, and that, with few years' hard work, they could return to China with a lot of money.⁸ Although their unrealistic expectations were soon shattered after their arrival overseas, they still possessed a desire for quick money and gambling seemed the way to obtain it. It thus met the psychological needs of the coolie immigrants.

However, other factors lay behind the spread of gambling too. There were governments, gambling farmers and gambling house owners who had a vested interest in the vice. Gambling as a rich source of income was quickly discovered by the British colonial governments in Penang and Singapore. Within six years of its establishment in 1792, the Penang government introduced the first gambling farm,⁹ and the farming system continued to exist in the island until 1812.¹⁰ In Singapore, despite strong objection from Sir Stamford Raffles,¹¹ the gambling farm was introduced in 1820 by the Resident, Lieutenant-Colonel Farquhar, who saw the financial potential of the gambling farm. The Singapore farm continued to exist until 1829 when gambling was suppressed throughout the Straits Settlements.¹² The gambling farm was one of the main sources of revenue for the governments. In Penang, when it was first introduced in 1792, it scooped a handsome amount of \$14,673 which represented about 60 per cent of the total revenue of the island.¹³ This figure grew steadily and reached its height in 1811, a year before the abolition of the farm, when it yielded \$40,580, second only to the opium farm yield of \$49,736.¹⁴ In Singapore, when the gambling farm was first introduced in 1820, it collected only \$1,140 a year (\$95 per month),¹⁵ but this figure grew phenomenally to \$71,283 in 1827.¹⁶ Of course the governments were not the only beneficiaries of the gambling farm system; the farmers stood to gain a great deal too. The arrangement between governments and farmers was similar to opium farming: public auctioning, heavy deposits, and restrictions on the numbers and trading hours of gambling houses.¹⁷

Like the opium farmer, the gambling farmer was concerned first with making sufficient money to cover the cost of the farm, and then with making as much profit as possible. His profit margin depended upon his ability to get the maximum number of people interested in gambling; the more people involved in the vice, the better his chances of making a fortune. He thus promoted gambling by issuing licences to professional gamblers who wished to organize special sessions in a *kongsi* house in a mine or plantation,¹⁸ in order to reach most of the potential gamblers.

The precise relationship between the gambling farmer and gambling house owners is unknown. The farmer may have been the owner of the public gambling houses employing people to run these establishments; or he may have sub-let the farm to gambling house owners and collected rent from them sufficient to cover both his cost and profit. If the gambling house owners had to pay a great deal for the right to run the establishments, they likewise had to make sufficient money to cover cost as well as profit. Whatever the relationship between the farmer and gambling house owners, the system of farming induced more and more people to indulge in this vice.

Types of Games

There were many games found in Singapore and Malaya during the period under study. In 1877, there were at least ten games in Singapore. They were *Waiseng* lottery (Wei Hsing 围姓), *Whaway* lottery (Hua Hui 花会), *Fan-Tan* (翻摊), *Poh* (Pao tzu 宝字), *Dominoes* (P'ai-chiu 牌九), *Pai Ke P'iao* (白鸽票), *Chap Ji Ki* (Shih Erh Chih 十二支), *Hung H'e P'ai* (Red and Black cards 红黑牌), die throwing and Chinese cards.¹⁹ A common game found in the Straits Settlements in the middle of the nineteenth century was *Poh*. According to Vaughan, this game was played with a die placed in a brass box and kept from moving by a smaller box which fitted into the first. At the bottom of the inner box was an iron pin, the end of which rested on the die and kept them from turning. The keeper of the gambling house held the *Poh* and put it into a red bag, placed the die in it and slid the inner box on it. The six sides of the die were equally divided and painted red and white. A mat marked with a diagonal cross was placed on the floor, and the keeper of the *Poh* sat on the upper part of the mat and span the *Poh* in the centre of the mat; the players sat round and laid their bets when the *Poh* stopped spinning, the outer box was taken off and those who had stacked their money on the side opposite the red part of the die won.²⁰

The *Poh* was said to be a fair game, large sums of money were staked.²¹ Three other popular games in the Straits Settlements were *Whaway*, *Waiseng* and *Chap Ji Ki*. All these three were lotteries. *Whaway* promoters issued a list of 36 animals which could be bet on; many of these animals were familiar such as a cock, cat, tortoise, snake, pig, duck, bee, tiger, buffalo, rat, horse etc.,²² and they were easily identifiable. The idea of using common animals instead of Chinese characters was to make it easier for prospective gamblers; even illiterates could play without any difficulties. This reveals the intention of the promoters to penetrate all social classes and to reach as many people as possible. The winner of the game received 30 times the amount of his or her stake.²³ The *Waiseng* game was another lottery in which the public were invited to bet on the surnames of the candidates in the periodic examinations in China.²⁴ Before the result of each examination was announced, the names of the candidates were grouped according to their different surnames. Information about the number of these surnames and the literary background of each candidate was provided to the gamblers, and the odds were determined by the size and potential of each surname. After the result of the examination was announced, the surnames of the first three successful candidates were the winners.²⁵ The *Chap Ji Ki* which literally means 12 cards, involved betting on two sets of 6 cards with the 6 red 'men' and 6 black 'men' used in the Chinese chess. The red cards consisted of *Sway*

(field Marshall) 帥, *Soo* (Prime Minister) 仕, *Siong* (Minister) 相, *Koo* (Chariot) 车, *Beh* (Horse) 马, *Pow* (Cannon) 炮 and the black cards were made up of *Cheong* (General) 将, *Soo* (Scholar) 士, *Chieonh* (Elephant) 象, *Koo* (Chariot) 车, *Beh* (Horse) 马 and *Pow* (Cannon) 炮. The range of the cards was widened to 144 combinations, and the players would win by striking the right combinations.²⁶

Both *Whaway* and *Waiseng* were introduced from China. *Whaway*, which was popularly known later in Singapore and Malaya as *Chee Fah* (Chih Hua) 字花,²⁷ originated in Chekiang Province during the reign of the Emperor Tao-kuang (1821-1850), and it became popular among the Chinese in the coastal provinces of Chekiang, Fukien and Kwangtung as well as the British settlement of Hong Kong.²⁸ There is no record about when *Weiseng* first came into being, but it is certain that the game became popular in Kwangtung during the T'ung-chih reign (1862-1874),²⁹ and that it was also popular among the Chinese in Hong Kong. The romanization of these two games, *Whaway* and *Waiseng*, suggests a Cantonese origin, and this also suggests that both games were introduced from Canton via Hong Kong. It is likewise that some *Whaway* and *Waiseng* companies which operated in Singapore and Malaya during this period could well have been branches of those rich and powerful organizations in Hong Kong.

The *Chap Ji Ki* game was a local invention. Its romanization suggests a Southern Fukienese origin. It could have derived from Chinese cards which were popular among the Chinese in Southern Fukien province. Whatever its origin, *Chap Ji Ki* was most popularly played among the Southern Fukienese immigrants and the Straits Chinese, especially among the Nonyas.³⁰

All these lottery games possessed the same characteristics: they were easy to play, yielded quick money from small bets with high return, and they required little direct participation.³¹ Because of these advantages, these lotteries appealed to all classes and dominated the gambling scene of the Straits Settlements in the second half of the nineteenth century. In June 1870, the *Whaway* lottery plagued Singapore to a fearful extent. Hong Kong Street, a short street in the heart of the city, increasingly became the centre of the vice. It was swamped with gamblers from all walks of life, many of whom were Chinese women, children and servants who were 'mad after the lottery'.³² Gambling, though illegal in Singapore, seemed to have spread in spite of police knowledge, for there were at least ten gambling houses operating publicly in Hong Kong Street without fear of police prosecution.³³ This gambling spree did not escape the notice of Vaughan who wrote in the same year that *Whaway* lottery indulged by all classes of Chinese in

Singapore with the daily result known at 3.00 pm.³⁴ The threat of *Whaway* to the well-being of the Chinese in Singapore cut across the dialect and class lines, and prompted the Chinese leaders to petition the government for its suppression.³⁵ In 1898, *Whaway* devastated Penang with its sophisticated operation. Results were made known twice daily.³⁶

Social Impact

The profound impact of gambling was obvious. Both individuals and families were ruined. Most gamblers took the attitude that with some luck they could make quick money and profit handsomely, but most of their hopes were dashed after they became addicted to the vice. They were the losers while the gambling promoters and the system were the winners. The result was the loss of personal savings and strain on the family. For those single male immigrants, the loss of personal savings meant the failure to meet regular remittance to their families in China;³⁷ and for those who had families overseas, the loss of savings gave rise to severe frictions within the families. But worse still was the fact that many of those who failed to pay off their gambling debts ended up in tragedy: they either committed suicide or sold their wives and children to pay off the debts.³⁸

The deep involvement of Chinese women in lotteries was a sign of the profound impact of gambling on domestic life. Lotteries such as *Waiseng*, *Whaway* and *Chap Ji Ki* claimed a high toll among them in the late nineteenth century.³⁹ Traditionally Chinese women were submissive to men, spending most of their time at home bringing up children. They were barred by tradition from visiting gambling houses and participating in public gambling. But their desire for quick money was as strong as their husbands', and lotteries which reached them indirectly through agents met both their desire and social requirement. The agents could be men or women who frequented neighbourhoods searching for clients, providing information about the lotteries and helping clients to stake their money; they acted as collectors of stakes as well as guarantors of prize money. Those who won would be quickly paid out by the agents.⁴⁰ Central to the success of the lottery system was secrecy. The gamblers did not have to go to gambling houses to get satisfaction, nor did they need to claim back their prizes directly from the bankers. This concealed their habit from members of their families, relatives and friends, and they could continue gambling without much interference.⁴¹ But the psychological effect on the victim was the same if not worse; the stakes raised high expectations and increased excitement, and players tended to spend more time in expecting and guessing than those

who directly participated in games. This of course affected many women in their home duties: meals were not cooked and children were not properly cared for. But the most devastating effect on domestic life was the draining away of family wealth. Some rich women pawned their jewellery in order to support their habit.⁴² Poorer women resorted to prostitution to pay off gambling debts,⁴³ or took their own lives as a solution to their problems.⁴⁴

The evil of gambling cannot be fully understood without a further investigation into its wider social impact. It was the root of many other evils such as theft, robbery and gang fights. Those who lost heavily in gambling tended to become involved in embezzlement, burglary and murder. As gambling was a lucrative source of income, it attracted many secret societies to run gambling houses. Disputes over the control of gambling houses led to constant unrest and threatened the peace and order of the community.⁴⁵ As pointed out by W. A. Pickering, the veteran Protector of Chinese of the Straits Settlements, that '... gambling, as it now exists in Singapore, is a danger to the peace ... Nothing is more likely to create quarrels and jealousy between the Secret Societies than the emulation which is aroused to share in the great profits accruing from the establishment of gaming houses in the various districts of the Settlement'.⁴⁶ Moreover, it greatly affected the normal functioning of a commercial society like the Chinese community in Singapore and Malaya. Embezzlement by shop accountants and assistants involved in gambling threatened the survival of some businesses; the draining of cash into the hands of gambling promoters caused shortage of money supply in the market.⁴⁷

The Attempts to Control Gambling

The attitude of the British colonial governments in Penang and Singapore towards gambling before 1829 had been ambivalent. This ambivalence arose from two contradictory stands: gambling was socially and morally evil, but gambling could well be an important source of revenue. In the initial period, revenue considerations seem to have outweighed social and moral issues, and a farming system was adopted both in Penang and Singapore. The dilemma of the British colonial government towards gambling was best reflected in the opposing policies taken by the early administrators in Singapore. In 1819, Raffles strictly prohibited gambling in the new settlement following his bad experience of legalized gambling in Java and Bencoolen.⁴⁸ But his policy was very quickly countered by his Resident Lieutenant-Colonel Farquhar, who let out the first gambling farm in 1820. This decision was then reversed by Raffles in 1823, who laid down severe punishment for the

offenders.⁴⁹ Again Raffles' policy was reversed by another Resident, John Crawfurd, who restored the gambling farm three months later.⁵⁰ As the British colonial government became more aware of the social evils of gambling, the vice was suppressed in 1829 throughout the Straits Settlements.⁵¹

The government's clamp-down in 1829 drove gambling underground. But, ironically, this did not produce the desired results; instead, it showed signs of growth. In 1832, many gambling houses existed in Singapore, at least 20 concentrated in Church Street alone.⁵² In 1841, reports estimated that there were about 100 gambling establishments in Singapore city itself, with many more in the country districts.⁵³ The figure seems to have been maintained to the end of the nineteenth century. William Pickering, the first Chinese Protector in Singapore, reported that over 100 gambling houses had been established in the island since 1882.⁵⁴ The growth of gambling houses meant the deepening of social crisis: more family tragedies, increases in theft, violence and crime.⁵⁵ The growth of gambling and its associated social problems presented the government of the Straits Settlements with a serious challenge. The usual step taken by the government to suppress gambling was raid. When police received information about gambling activities, they raided the premises and detained gamblers as well as gambling den keepers. The detainees were prosecuted in accordance with the existing ordinance. Those who were found guilty were fined or jailed for a short period. As gambling was not a criminal act, offenders were sometimes treated leniently.⁵⁶ This leniency was viewed as a sign of weakness, and was taken advantage by the undesirable elements who had totally disregarded the law, and started more gambling dens. The Police Act introduced in 1856 ironically provided a new stimulus for gambling. The Act transferred gambling prosecutions from the Recorder's court to the police magistrates' courts; the former used to sentence the offenders with hard labour, while the latter only imposed a fine with maximum penalty of Rs. 100. Besides, the new Act did not provide the police with power to prosecute off-shore gambling, so that many boats on the rivers and in the harbours became notorious gambling dens.⁵⁷ The result of the leniency of the law was the growth rather than decline of this notorious vice.

The growth of gambling reveals not only the deficiency of the law, but also the ineffectiveness of the police force. The fact that the Straits Settlements had only a small force meant that it had difficulty in coping with the growing problems;⁵⁸ presumably catching gamblers was not their top priority. However, what seriously undermined police efficiency was not the small size of the force but its corruption. Corruption was rooted in poor wages. Some European constables who had contacts in the underworld were

alleged to be on the payroll of some gambling establishments, receiving \$20 monthly.⁵⁹ When European constables were corrupted, the native policemen who were at the bottom of the police hierarchy had no reason to be honest for the sake of the reputation of the force. Further, as most gambling houses were guarded by thugs who were prepared to use violence to resist arrest,⁶⁰ few policemen would be prepared to risk their lives in carrying out their duties. The low efficiency of the force apparently worried the Police Department which found it necessary to use material incentives to boost the morale of the force. In 1846, the Department promised half of whatever money was found on the gambling tables during the raids as rewards.⁶¹

Underlying the failure of the government's repeated attempts to suppress gambling lay a group of unscrupulous gambling promoters with a well-organized system of communication. The precise origins of these people are unknown. They consisted of both men and women, and many of them seem to have good business backgrounds;⁶² many of them also seem to have obtained British citizenship as a protection against possible deportation by the government of the Straits Settlements.⁶³ Merchants' involvement in gambling is not surprising. Their acquisitive nature led them to view gambling as a most profitable enterprise. With the introduction of lotteries, gambling was no longer restricted to the gambling houses, but was easily accessible to the general public. The turnover was great, and so was the profit. In the last decade of the nineteenth century, the *Waiseng* lotteries were alleged to have a turnover of at least S\$100,000 per month.⁶⁴ In 1898, the three popular *Chap Ji Ki* lottery companies in Singapore were estimated to have netted about S\$9,000 to S\$15,000 per month.⁶⁵

Because of the huge profits involved, those merchants who had no morals quickly seized the opportunity to become promoters. They developed an effective system of communication with gamblers in an attempt to beat the police. A system of agents (known also as collectors) was adopted. Agents were appointed by the managers (promoters or their representatives) from among friends or those introduced by friends, and they were trustworthy and well-paid.⁶⁶ At the same time, agents had to obtain the confidence of their clients and charged commissions (usually of ten per cent) on successful stakes.⁶⁷ The post of agent provided a steady income, and was much coveted.⁶⁸ It could be a full-time occupation or part-time job.⁶⁹ The agents sometimes were allowed to have sub-agents who again received commissions and were under the control of agents. To avoid prosecution, the agents seldom carried with them cards or Chinese characters of the lotteries which could be used as evidence against them when caught. They instead used written symbols, strings of beads, numerals or fancy hieroglyphics. The stakes

of clients were usually put together with various symbols.⁷⁰ After having collected all stakes, the agents assembled at a certain place secretly nominated by the manager in advance. The lottery was then drawn, and the agents quickly sorted out the winning lots, and returned to their clients with money.⁷¹

As the venue for the draw of the lottery was a target for police raids, it was carefully selected. As a rule, the lottery was never drawn twice in the same place.⁷² Frequent shifting of the venue was to prevent the police from acquiring accurate information about the draw. The places selected were usually houses with some means of escape through a back door or over the roofs of other houses into adjoining streets, and the houses were usually fortified.⁷³ The manager also employed informants who were to detect police movements, and to give out warnings in advance before police arrival.⁷⁴

Even the most effective system of precaution offered no absolute guarantee against arrest. The best way was to shift the operation centre out of the Straits Settlements to the neighbouring states where gambling was legal, and at the same time to retain an effective system of communication and control over clients. At the end of the nineteenth century, many *Whaway* and *Waiseng* lottery companies moved their centres of activity to Johore and Rhio islands, while their counterparts in Penang had theirs shifted to Kedah.⁷⁵ All of them still retained effective control over the agents and clients. In 1898 when five principal agents for the *Waiseng* lotteries in Rhio were arrested and banished from Singapore, another group of agents quickly took their places to continue operation.⁷⁶

Conclusion

The prevalence of gambling in the Chinese community in Singapore and Malaya during this period was not due to the innate nature of the Chinese for gambling. It was due to the nature of the immigrant community, the social and psychological needs of the immigrants, the gambling farm system, and the vested interests of gambling farmers and promoters. Gambling had a profound social impact on the Chinese community. It ruined many Chinese families, and caused many personal miseries and tragedies, and contributed to social disorder. It became a principal cause for secret society quarrels and gang wars. The failure of the Straits Settlements governments in suppressing the gambling was the result of an ineffective police force, corruption, and the well-organized gambling operations.

Endnotes

- * First published in *Asian Culture*, No. 14 (Singapore Society of Asian Studies, 1990), pp. 47–56.
- 1. See C.M. Turnbull, *The Straits Settlements 1826–67* (London, 1972), p. 201.
- 2. Some British officials in early Penang believed that gambling among the Chinese was quite ineradicable, and gambling was a necessity of life for Chinese, any attempt to suppress it would deter these people from coming to the island. See T. Braddell, 'Gambling and Opium Smoking in the Straits of Malacca', in *Journal of the Indian Archipelago and Eastern Asia*, Series 2, No. 1 (1856), pp. 66–7. L.A. Mills asserted that gambling was one of the two characteristics of the Chinese, and a love for gambling seemed to be ingrained in the race. See L.A. Mills, *British Malaya 1824–6* (originally published in 1925, reissued in 1960), in *JMBRAS*, Vol. 33, Pt. 3 (1960), p. 239. In 1882, the British Resident Councillor in Penang asserted that the worst cases of gang robbery in Province Wellesley were due to the vice of gambling inherent amongst the Chinese. See 'Administration Report, Penang, 1882', in *Straits Settlements Legislative Council Proceedings* 1883, Appendix No. 44. In debating the issue of gambling farms in the Straits Settlements in July 1883, the Acting Colonial Secretary asserted that the love of gambling was inherent in Chinese people. He claimed that 'A Chinaman is a gambler from his birth ...' See 'Short-hand Report of the Proceedings of the Legislative Council, the Straits Settlements dated 6th July, 1883', in *Straits Settlements Legislative Council Proceedings*, 1883, p. 50.
- 3. See D.H. Kulp, *Country Life in South China: The Sociology of Socialism*, Vol. 1, *Phoenix Village, Kuangtung* (Reprint, Taipei, 1966), p. 325.
- 4. See A.H. Smith, *Village Life in China: A Study in Sociology* (Edinburgh and London, 1900), pp. 202–3.
- 5. See for instance, there were 87,376 Chinese males against 4,687 Chinese females in Perak in 1891. See 'Perak Census Report, 5 April 1891', in *The Perak Government Gazette*, 1891, No. 4, Vol. 25, p. 723.
- 6. There were no modern movies in the second half of the nineteenth century in Singapore and Malaya: Chinese operas were staged only during festivals organized by clan or dialect organizations. See J.D. Vaughan, 'Notes on Chinese of Pinang', in *Journal of the Indian Archipelago and Eastern Asia*, Vol. 8 (1854), p. 15; *Chong Shing Yit Pao*, 19 June 1909, p. 1, 24 June 1909, p. 3; *Lat Pau*, 8 June 1910, p. 2.
- 7. See Emily Sadka, *The Protected Malay States, 1874–1895* (Kuala Lumpur, 1968), p. 23.
- 8. See interviews with the coolie immigrants who worked in Sumatra, in the first decade of twentieth century, in Liu Yu-tsun et al. (ed.), *Chu-tsai hua-kang fang-wen lu* (*Records of the Interviews with Chinese Coolie Labourers*) (Canton, 1979), pp. 61, 64, 68, 73. Some coolies who were decoyed to Cuba in 1850s and 1860s also testified to false information about overseas conditions given by the crimps. See *Chinese Emigration: Report of the Commission Sent by China to Ascertain the Condition of Chinese Coolies in Cuba* (Shanghai, 1876, Reprint, Taipei, 1970), p. 7.
- 9. See C.M. Turnbull, *The Straits Settlement 1826–67*, p. 196; Wong Lin Ken, 'The Revenue Farms of Prince Wales Island 1805–1830', in *Journal of the South Seas Society*, Vol. 19, Pts. 1 & 2 (Singapore, 1965), p. 59.

10. See Wong Lin Ken, *ibid.*, Appendix 1, Tables 2 & 3.
11. For Raffles' objection to gambling, see T. Braddell, 'Gambling and Opium Smoking', in *Journal of the Indian Archipelago and Eastern Asia*, Series 2, No. 1. (1856), pp. 72-5; Song Ong Siang, *One Hundred Years' History of the Chinese in Singapore* (Reprint, Singapore, 1967), pp. 10, 16-7.
12. See C.M. Turnbull, *op. cit.*, p. 201.
13. In the same year, the Penang government collected only \$3,600 from its opium farm, while the liquor farm made a profit of \$6,200. See Wong Lin Ken, *op. cit.*, Appendix 1, Table 1, 'The Trade, Population, Revenue and Expenditure of Prince of Wales Island: 1788-1800'.
14. During 1810-1811, the Penang government collected a total revenue of \$148,271, and the rents from the opium and gambling farms constituted the major part of it. *Ibid.*, Appendix, Table 3, 'The Population and Revenue of Prince of Wales Island: 1805-1825'.
15. See Song Ong Siang, *op. cit.*, p. 10.
16. See T. Braddell, 'Gambling and Opium Smoking', in *Journal of the Indian Archipelago and Eastern Asia*, Series 2, No. 1 (1856), p. 77.
17. As in opium farming, the successful purchaser of the farm was required within three days after the sale to deposit two months' rent in advance, and was required to pay his rent monthly, or quarterly with a security of four months' rent in advance. In Penang, only one public gambling house was allowed, and the house was required to close for gambling at 9 pm and to open again in the morning. See 'Regulation for George Town Gaming House Farm: 1810-1811', in Wong Lin Ken, *op. cit.*, pp. 108-10. In Perak, public gambling was disallowed between 10 pm and 6 am, see 'Regulations on Gambling Farm, Perak', in *The Perak Government Gazette*, 1891, Vol. 4, No. 24, pp. 672-73. In Selangor, public gambling was permitted only between 2 pm and 10 pm in 1904. See Rules made under 'The Revenue Farms Enactment 1904' (Gambling Farm) for the State of Selangor', in 'High Commissioner's Office (F.M.S.) Files', 1359/1904.
18. See 'Short-hand Report of the Proceedings of the Legislative Council, Straits Settlements, dated 6th July, 1883', in *Straits Settlements Legislative Council Proceedings*, 1883, p. 52. For the right of the farmer to issue licences to private gamblers, see 'Regulations of the Perak Gambling Farm', in *The Perak Government Gazette*, 1891, Vol. 4, No. 24, p. 673.
19. Some romanizations of the names of the games such as Waiseng, Whaway and Chap Ji Ki were frequently used in government documents, and they are preserved here. See *Lat Pau*, 27 November 1887, p. 1; CO 273/257, p. 625; 'Annual Report of the Chinese Protectorate, for the year 1898', in *Straits Settlements Annual Departmental Reports* 1898, pp. 112-13; 'Annual Report of the Chinese Protectorate for the year 1899', in *Straits Settlements Annual Departmental Reports* 1899, pp. 299-300.
20. See J.D. Vaughan, *The Manners and Customs of the Chinese of the Straits Settlements* (Reprint, Singapore, 1971), pp. 61-3, see also J.D. Vaughan, 'Notes on the Chinese of Pinang', in *Journal of the Indian Archipelago and Eastern Asia*, Vol. 8. (1854), p. 26.
21. *Ibid.*, p. 61.
22. *Ibid.*, p. 64.
23. See 'Administration Report, Penang, 1885', in *Straits Settlements Legislative Council Proceedings*, 1886, Appendix No. 32, p. c.524.

24. See W. Blythe, *The Impact of Chinese Secret Societies in Malaya* (London, 1969), p. 244.
25. For an explanation of the playing of this game, see Nu Yen, *Hsiang-kang tu-po shih* (*A History of Gambling in Hong Kong*) (Hong Kong, 1978), pp. 32-4.
26. See C.T. Dobree, *Gambling Games in Malaya* (Kuala Lumpur, 1955?), pp. 42-3.
27. *Ibid.*, p. 14.
28. See Nu Yen, *op. cit.*, pp. 84-7.
29. See *Tung-kuan hsien-chih* (*The Tung-kuan Gazetteer*), Vol. 35.
30. See Lew See Fah, 'A Victim of Chap-Ji-Ki', in *The Straits Chinese Magazine*, Vol. 2, No. 6 (June 1898), pp. 71-2.
31. In 1898, Whauway (Hua Hui) lottery was rife in Penang, and it operated twice daily; see W. Blythe, *The Impact of Chinese Secret Societies in Malaya*, p. 245. Vaughan also recorded in 1870s that Whauway lottery operated daily; the results were known at 3.00 pm; and the money was paid punctually. See J.D. Vaughan, *The Manners and Customs of the Chinese of the Straits Settlements*, p. 61.
32. See the statement of W.H. Read, a member of the Legislative Council of the Straits Settlements in Singapore. 'Short-hand Report of the Proceedings of the Legislative Council of the Straits Settlements dated 14th June, 1870', in *Straits Settlements Legislative Council Proceedings 1870*, p. 17.
33. These ten gambling houses consisted of four Whauway houses, five houses for cash gambling and one for Poh gambling. *Ibid.*
34. See J.D. Vaughan, *The Manners and Customs of the Chinese of the Straits Settlements*, p. 61.
35. The petition was signed by Tan Kim Ching, Hoh Ah Kay, Siah Eu Chin, Tan Beng Swee and 76 other Chinese merchants. Both Tan Kim Ching and Tan Beng Swee were the leaders of Hokkien Pang, Hoh Ah Kay, the leader of Cantonese Pang, and Siah Eu Chin, the leader of Teochew Pang. Their involvement in the petition shows the concern of the whole Chinese community in Singapore. See 'Petition from Certain Merchants and Other Inhabitants of Singapore, Praying for the Suppression of the Wha Whehs', in *Straits Settlements Legislative Council Proceedings, 1870*, Appendix No. 27.
36. See W. Blythe, *The Impact of Chinese Secret Societies in Malaya*, p. 245.
37. See 'A Proclamation Issued by the Protector of Chinese of the Straits Settlements against Wai Seng Lotteries', in G.T. Hare (ed.), *A Text Book of Documentary Chinese for the Straits Settlements and the Protected Native States* (Singapore, 1894), Pt. 1, Vol. 1, Chapters 1 & 2, p. 150.
38. See 'Fan Ch'i chu-tzu' (Selling Wife and Children), *ibid.*, Pt. 1, Vol. 2, Chapters 3 & 4, p. 75.
39. See *Lat Pau*, 25 May 1889, p. 1, 5 December 1889, p. 2, 28 February 1890, p. 5, 13 March 1890, p. 5, 8 April 1890, p. 5, 28 July 1890, p. 2, 22 August 1890, p. 5, 22 October 1891, p. 5; *Sing Po*, 28 August 1890, p. 5, 8 November 1890, p. 8; *Thien Nan Shin Pao*, 21 March 1899, p. 1.

40. See 'Remarks on the Harm and Wrong done by Hoe-He (Whaway) Lotteries', in G.T. Hare (ed.), *op. cit.*, Pt. 1, Vol. 2, Chapters 3 & 4, p. 74.
41. *Ibid.*
42. In 1909, the wife of a wealthy Chinese in Singapore lost about \$50,000 in Chap Ji Ki; she pawned all her jewellery and replaced them with cheap imitations. See Song Ong Siang, *One Hundred Years' History of the Chinese in Singapore*, p. 440.
43. See G.T. Hare (ed.), *op. cit.*, Pt. 1, Vol. 2, Chapters 3 & 4, p. 74.
44. In 1887, *Lat Pau* reported an attempted suicide of a woman who lost heavily in Whaway lottery. The wife of a Cantonese carpenter named Tan was hooked on Whaway; she continued to support her habit by pawning her valuables without her husband's knowledge, and she also neglected her five-year-old son. After a continuing loss in the lottery, she attempted to hang herself but was rescued. See *Lat Pau*, 25 October 1887, p. 2.
45. See T. Braddell, 'Gambling and Opium Smoking', in *Journal of the Indian Archipelago and Eastern Asia*, Series 2, No. 1 (1856), p. 68; Leon Comber, *Chinese Secret Societies in Malaya: A Survey of the Triad Society from 1800 to 1900* (Singapore, 1959), p. 249.
46. See 'Annual Report of the Chinese Protectorate, for the Year ending 31st December, 1885', in *Straits Settlements Legislative Council Proceedings 1886*, Appendix No. 7, p. C.82.
47. It was claimed by the government that \$50,000 was spent every month at the end of the nineteenth century by the Chinese in Singapore on Waiseng lotteries, the drain seriously affecting the supply of money in the market. See 'A Proclamation issued by the Protector of Chinese against Wai Seng Lotteries', in G.T. Hare (ed.), *A Text Book of Documentary Chinese for the Straits Settlements and the Protected Native States*, Pt. 1, Vol. 1, Chapters 1 & 2, p. 150.
48. See T. Braddell, 'Gambling and Opium Smoking', in *Journal of the Indian Archipelago and Eastern Asia*, Series 2, No. 1 (1856), pp. 72-5; Song Ong Siang, *One Hundred Years' History of the Chinese in Singapore*, p. 16.
49. See T. Braddell, 'Notices of Singapore', in *Journal of the Indian Archipelago and Eastern Asia*, Vol. 8 (1854), pp. 329-30; Song Ong Siang, *ibid.*
50. T. Braddell, *ibid.*, pp. 336-7.
51. See C.M. Turnbull, *The Straits Settlements 1826-27*, p. 201.
52. See *Singapore Chronicle*, 28 June 1832.
53. See C. Buckley, *An Anecdotal History of Old Times in Singapore 1819-1867* (Reprint, Kuala Lumpur, 1965) p. 366.
54. See 'Annual Report of the Chinese Protectorate for the Year 1885', in *Straits Settlements Annual Departmental Reports*, 1885.
55. See *Singapore Chronicle*, 15 November 1832; *Singapore Free Press and Mercantile Advertiser*, 21 September 1849.
56. The *Singapore Free Press* published an article complaining about gambling in Singapore claiming the court had been very lenient with the offenders, some gambling house keepers were fined only \$50 instead of \$500 as required by Act of Parliament. See *Singapore Free Press and Mercantile Advertiser*, 6 May 1847.

57. See C.M. Turnbull, *The Straits Settlements 1826-67*, p. 94.
58. In 1841, the police force in Singapore consisted of a Superintendent, 3 European Constables and an Assistant Native Constable, 14 officers and 110 policemen. See C.B. Buckley, *An Anecdotal History of Old Times in Singapore*, p. 366.
59. *Ibid.*, p. 447.
60. See *Lat Pau*, 10 November 1887, p. 2, 11 November 1887, p. 2.
61. *Ibid.*
62. See W. Blythe, *The Impact of Chinese Secret Societies in Malaya*, p. 245.
63. See 'Annual Report of the Chinese Protectorate for the year 1898', in *Straits Settlements Annual Departmental Reports*, 1898, p. 113.
64. See W. Blythe, *op. cit.*, p. 245.
65. See G.T. Hare, *op. cit.*, p. 70.
66. According to Hare, the manager usually had to make a present of \$5 or more to agents in proportion to the amount of stakes collected. Their transport costs and other expenses would also be paid. See G.T. Hare, *op. cit.*, p. 70.
67. *Ibid.*
68. *Ibid.*
69. See 'A Proclamation Issued by the Protector of Chinese against Wai Seng Lotteries', in G.T. Hare (ed.), *A Text Book of Documentary Chinese for the Straits Settlements and the Protected Native States*, Pt. 1, Vol. 1, Chapters 1 & 2, p. 150.
70. See G.T. Hare, 'The Game of Chap Ji Ki', in *Journal of the Straits Branch of the Royal Asiatic Society* (July 1898), p. 67.
71. *Ibid.*, p. 68.
72. *Ibid.*, p. 69.
73. In 1870, W.H. Read, a member of the Legislative Council of the Straits Settlements, visited some Chinese gambling houses in Hong Kong Street, Singapore, with the police. When they arrived, pieces of wood were dropped to prevent the police from entering the premises, and all the gamblers fled over roofs into the next street. All the gambling houses in Hong Kong Street were fortified. See 'Shorthand Report of the Proceedings of the Legislative Council, Straits Settlements, dated 14th June, 1870', in *Straits Settlements Legislative Council Proceedings, 1870*, p. 17.
74. See G.T. Hare, *op. cit.*, p. 69.
75. See J.D. Vaughan, *The Manners and Customs of the Chinese of the Straits Settlements*, p. 61, 'Annual Report of the Chinese Protectorate for the year 1899', in *Straits Settlements Annual Departmental Reports*, 1899, pp. 299-300; W. Blythe, *The Impact of Chinese Secret Societies in Malaya*, p. 245.
76. On 8 May 1898, officers of the Chinese Protectorate arrested five of eight principal agents in Singapore. See 'Annual Report of the Chinese Protectorate for the year 1898', in *Straits Settlements Annual Departmental Reports*, 1898, pp. 112-13.

CHAPTER 6

Opium-smoking in the Chinese Community in Singapore and Malaya, 1848–1911*

Opium-Smoking and Its Social Impact

China did not need the Opium War to gain a bad image as a nation of opium smokers. Its overseas subjects would have done equal damage to the image of Chinese had the war not occurred. Throughout the nineteenth century, opium-smoking was closely associated with Chinese immigrants and it became the stigma of overseas Chinese communities. This article is to examine the widespread use of opium in the Chinese community in Singapore and Malaya and its social impact. It also seeks to explain why and how opium-smoking was perpetuated in the Chinese community.

Opium-smoking was widespread in the Chinese community in nineteenth and early twentieth century Singapore and Malaya. In 1848, Singapore was believed to have 15,000 addicts, which represented about one-third of the adult Chinese population in the island.¹ This figure outstripped the number of opium addicts in proportion to the population in China.² In 1881, a government source claimed that 20 per cent of the 15,000 Chinese in Malacca were opium smokers. Deducting children from this figure, the opium smokers probably represented about one-third of the adult Chinese population in Malacca.³

Opium-smoking was widespread not just in terms of number; it also permeated all classes in the Chinese community, and it found most of its victims among members of the artisan and labouring classes. Dr Robert Little, who conducted a survey of opium-smoking in Singapore in 1848, claimed that opium smokers were principally found among carpenters, box

makers, blacksmiths, barbers, hustlers, coolies, boatmen, gambier planters and gardeners.⁴ He also asserted that 85 per cent of the members of these trades were opium addicts.⁵

Being the earliest crusader against opium-smoking in the Straits Settlements in the mid-nineteenth century, Dr Little might have exaggerated the percentage of opium smokers among the artisans and coolies, but his observation of the prevalence of the opium habit among the members of the artisan and labouring classes is generally correct. This can be supported by the evidence given to the Opium Commission in 1907. A figure of 30 to 60 per cent can be reasonably accepted as the number of Chinese coolies affected by opium-smoking in the second half of the nineteenth and the first decade of the twentieth centuries.⁶ The vice was relatively less widespread among the rich in Singapore. Dr Little noticed only a few wealthy Chinese who were opium addicts.⁷ In 1907, an estimate of 20 per cent of smokers among the rich Chinese in Singapore was given by Ho Siak Kuan, the Chief Interpreter of the Chinese Protectorate, who had been living in Singapore for more than 23 years.⁸ Surprisingly, opium also found its way to Chinese women. Traditionally, women had an inferior social status to men and were despised if they indulged in the same activities as men did, but the fact that women were found among opium addicts was indicative of a serious social problem faced by the Chinese community. Most of the female addicts were wives of opium smokers,⁹ their addiction probably being the result of their husbands' influence.

Why did the overseas Chinese smoke opium? Why did this vice spread so widely in the Chinese community in Singapore and Malaya during this period? A convenient explanation is that it was a vice commonly found in South China, and was brought to overseas communities by Chinese immigrants.¹⁰ This explanation is unsatisfactory on two grounds: it fails to prove that many immigrants were opium addicts before they left China and it also fails to explain why some opium smokers were found overseas before opium-smoking becoming widespread in South China. In fact, most Chinese emigrants were unlikely to be opium addicts, for if they were not young and healthy, they would not have been trapped, and sold by coolie brokers to work in mines and plantations overseas.¹¹ Thus, the reasons for the widespread use of opium in Singapore and Malaya must be sought in the nature of the overseas Chinese community and the social conditions of the immigrants.

At this time, the Chinese community in Singapore and Malaya was predominantly male. Thomas Braddell pointed out in the middle of the nineteenth century that there was a large imbalance in the sex ratio of the

Chinese in the Straits Settlements. He noticed that the ratio of Chinese males to females was 14.4 to 1 in Singapore in 1860.¹² The unbalanced sex ratio meant there was a great shortage in females in the immigrant community; men lacked female company and felt frustrated. At the same time, many immigrants came as coolies; they underwent many hardships before reaching Singapore and Malaya.¹³ After reaching their destinations, they were again sold to mines or plantations to do hard work. It was only through hard work that they had a chance to redeem themselves and fulfil their cherished hope of returning to China with wealth. But sometimes their toils could break their will, and make them succumb to drugs. Frustration and misery led many immigrants to find pleasure and escape from reality in opium.

Apart from the nature of the immigrant community, the social conditions under which the immigrants were driven to smoke opium must be examined. At that time, the Chinese community lacked healthy entertainment. There was no modern cinema or music, and operas were shown only during festivals organized by the clan or dialect organizations.¹⁴ The lack of healthy entertainment induced many immigrants to indulge in opium-smoking, gambling and prostitution. More importantly, opium-smoking was well integrated into the social system of the Chinese community. It was accepted as a medium of normal social intercourse, and was treated like tea to be served to visitors.¹⁵ At the same time, the facilities for smoking-opium were readily available to anyone who would like to try. This was reflected in an alarming increase of opium shops in the second half of the nineteenth century in Singapore. Dr Little reported that there was 45 licensed opium shops in Singapore in 1848,¹⁶ but this number increased to 500 in 1897 and 550 in 1900.¹⁷ In addition to these licensed shops, there were many illegal opium dens which added to the strength of opium abuse in Singapore.¹⁸

The widespread abuse of opium had a profound and lasting social impact on the Chinese community. On an individual level, opium drained away the immigrant's income and ruined his health. When an immigrant was hooked on the drug, it was as if he had fallen into a bottomless pit which he sank deeper and deeper into until his life was completely ruined. At first he took a small quantity of opium which claimed a portion of his income. But the small quantity soon lost its effect and his craving for more caused him to go on increasing the consumption of the drug. This naturally reduced his income even further until he could not maintain a minimum living standard. All of the 31 opium addicts interviewed by Dr Little in Singapore in 1848 spent close to 75 per cent of their income on opium.¹⁹ This figure was confirmed by a government report in 1881 that many Chinese coolies in

Malacca spent two-thirds of their wages on the drug.²⁰ In 1905, opium smokers among Chinese plantation coolies in Sepang and Selangor, spent about two-thirds of their income to maintain their habits.²¹

The drain on personal income was probably not the worst effect of opium on individuals; it was the destruction of their mental and physical health that condemned them to a slow death. Opium-smoking attacked the nervous system, disturbed sleep and caused headaches. It greatly undermined bodily functions, and impaired the digestive system. The result was a loss of appetite and weight. After several years of abuse, a healthy young immigrant would become a thin and weak creature with an emaciated appearance.²² The effect on his mental outlook and family life was devastating. He saw the world in a grey and gloomy light, and he lost interest in life except for his craving for the opium pipe. For those who had families in China, he failed to remit money regularly to feed his wife and children, or to support his elderly parents; for those who had families overseas, he lost interest in family life, and became indifferent to his wife and children. Indeed, he was torn between guilt and craving. He felt immensely guilty because he failed to discharge his responsibility towards his family, and above all, his duty of being a filial son; but he was unable to overcome the craving for opium because the habit was already built into his system. One opium addict who had smoked for 30 years confessed to Dr Little that 'I was, ere I gave way to this accursed vice, stout, strong, and able for anything but the pipe, my passions are gone, and if I am railed at and abused like a dog, I return not any angry word'.²³

Among the opium smokers, those who used opium moderately still had the chance of continuing to work though their physical and mental conditions deteriorated. Those who severely abused the drug faced two possibilities: beggary or suicide. The excessive use of opium for a few years completely destroyed the physical and mental health of a person, and rendered him unfit for any active employment;²⁴ and those who failed to satisfy the demand for opium and dared not face the prospect of becoming a beggar committed suicide.²⁵

The social impact of the opium-smoking was profound. The Chinese community in Singapore and Malaya in general lost its vitality and spirit, coolies and artisans failed to do their work satisfactorily,²⁶ and merchants failed to keep their appointments and contracts.²⁷ Regular business was affected by the slow pace of economic activities. Another serious impact was its direct link with crime. Since most opium smokers had to increase their consumption of the drug in order to maintain the same level of satisfaction, they found that their wages were increasingly not sufficient to pay for the

expensive habit. As most of them intended to continue their habit at all costs, they were naturally inclined to commit crime. A clear link between opium-smoking and larceny was established by Dr Little in 1848 and the Opium Commission in 1908.²⁸

Opium Farming System and Its Social Impact

What perpetuated this evil practice in the Chinese community in Singapore and Malaya during this period was the 'Opium Farming' system under which the colonial government and some wealthy Chinese merchants benefited from greatly. This system was established because the British colonial governments in the Straits Settlements and later in the Federated Malay States needed to maintain their establishments. Under this system, the colonial governments monopolized the supply of raw opium, but leased the right of preparing and distributing the cooked opium (*Chandu*) to some wealthy Chinese.²⁹ The system was satisfactory to both sides. For the governments, the rent collected from opium farmers became a main source of revenue,³⁰ while the opium farmers acquired the sole right of preparation and distribution, and made a handsome profit out of retailing the drug.

The government was particularly satisfied with the arrangement on two counts: it received a regular income from opium farmers, which helped it work out its annual budget; and it did not have to expand its establishment and thus its expenditure to retail the opium. After the expiry of the agreement, new bidding for opium started again. The government would put a reserve price based on the consumption and estimated profit of the farmers of the previous year, the result of which was an increase in rent.³¹ In short, it was in the interest of the government and opium farmers to push for more sales of the drug, and this helps to explain why opium consumption in Singapore and Malaya increased rather than decreased over the years.

An examination of the opium distribution system gives us some insight into how the profits of the opium farmers were extracted and how the distribution system affected the Chinese community as a whole. After successful bidding a wealthy Chinese merchant or a syndicate of wealthy Chinese merchants was selected as an opium farmer,³² and an agreement was signed between the farmer and the government. The farmer agreed to pay the government a fixed amount of rent each month,³³ and to purchase from the government the required quantity of opium at a fixed rate. In return, the farmer received the exclusive right to prepare and distribute the opium for a period of one to three years. The government was obliged to ensure that the farmer's monopoly was not infringed. To this end, the government

passed laws to prohibit any import and private sale of opium and imposed heavy penalties on those who violated the law.³⁴ After the successful bidding, the opium farmer within three days had to deposit two months' rent in advance as a token of good faith in the contract, failure to pay the deposit resulted in the resale of the opium farm, and he was liable for any costs incurred.³⁵ The farmer had to keep an establishment where opium was prepared and distributed. He employed several clerks, labourers and a cook for that purpose.³⁶ For a bigger operation, the farmer set up large opium manufacturing plants, and employed more people.³⁷ After four stages of operation, raw opium was turned into *Chandu* (cooked opium), and was ready for sale to opium shops where opium smokers consumed the drug.³⁸ There is no evidence to suggest that the farmer had complete control over opium shops; only a small number of shops were owned by him or his partners selling *Chandu* directly.³⁹ His relationship with opium shop owners was more or less businesslike, and it was essentially a relationship between wholesaler and retailer. As *Chandu* was a monopoly commodity, the shop owners had to get their supply from the farmer at a fixed rate,⁴⁰ and the farmer had to distribute the drug through them.

The profit made by the farmer was enormous.⁴¹ But opium farming was essentially a big business which required huge capital. The capital to pay for the deposit and the monthly rent together with the payment for the cost of raw opium amounted to tens of thousands of dollars a year.⁴² In addition, he had to pay his employees' salaries and expenses incurred in preparing and distributing the opium. According to one estimate, the typical opium farmer in 1847 in Singapore had a capital outlay of S\$21,800 per month, but collected S\$24,640 from the sale of 20 chests of opium per month, which left him a clear profit of S\$2,840 which amounted to S\$34,080 a year.⁴³ The same estimate shows that if the opium farmer only sold 16 chests of opium instead of 20 chests per month, his profit would be reduced to S\$312 per month or S\$3,744 a year.⁴⁴ Obviously the opium farmer had to sell at least 16 chests a month in order to cover the cost and to reap a small profit. But after selling more than 16 chests, profits increased dramatically. This stimulated him to sell more, and the more he sold, the greater the profit he reaped from the farm. In 1885, 455 chests of opium were consumed in Penang and an estimated gross profit of S\$257,000 was made by the farmer.⁴⁵

The same principle of making profits applied to the opium shop owners. The owner did not make very much from retailing the opium, but the regulations allowed him to charge a little above the price at which he purchased from the farmer. This profit could not cover his operation costs.⁴⁶ His main income derived from the by-products of the opium.⁴⁷ The processed

opium he received from the farmer was called *Chandu*. *Chandu*, when consumed left a refuse called *Tinco* which was smoked and swallowed by poorer addicts who only paid half the price of *Chandu*. When consumed, *Tinco* left a further by-product called *Samshing* which again was swallowed by even poorer addicts at the lowest price. If an opium shop owner sold 3 tahils of *Chandu*, he would receive about 1 and a half tahils of *Tinco* and about seven-tenths of a tahlil of *Samshing*. If the *Chandu* was sold for \$6 per 3 tahils, the profit he received from *Tinco* and *Samshing* would be about \$3.⁴⁸ The owner had to sell at least 1 tahlil of *Chandu* a day in order to cover his operation costs and 1 and a half tahils to realize a small profit; but after selling more than 1 and a half tahils, his profit margin rose dramatically. The system of distribution of opium therefore contained a mechanism which impelled the farmer and opium shop owners to sell more opium in order to realize greater profits.

In the mining centres and plantation estates, the opium distribution system differed from that discussed above, but the principle of extracting profits was similar. In the tin districts, the Opium Duty Farm system was adopted. It gave the farmer the right to collect opium duty on behalf of the government, but not the right to prepare and distribute the opium.⁴⁹ The lack of a monopoly on the retailing resulted in lower prices for opium and an ever-increasing volume of consumption in the tin districts.⁵⁰ The opium duty farmers were usually the principal advancers who financed the mining enterprises in the tin districts. Of course they extracted handsome profits from the right of collecting the duty on opium imports together with the profits from mining.

More importantly, opium was used as a means to control the labour force. A successful mining enterprise required a stable, and constant supply of labour. The advancers supplied opium to their workers at truck price on credit. This induced the workers to consume more opium than they needed and put them in debt. To pay off the debt, the workers were compelled to work for the advancers continuously until they became unfit to work.⁵¹

In the plantation estates, the right to distribute opium was in the hands of the estate owner who normally controlled a strip of land along a river.⁵² He was known as *Kangchu* (the lord of the river).⁵³ The *Kangchu* had a monopoly over the supply of opium in the settlement (plantation estate or estates) under his jurisdiction.⁵⁴ Although he had a monopoly in his settlement, he had to obtain his supply from the opium farmer who bought the privilege of distribution in the state. The *Kangchu's* relation to the opium farmer was more than that of a retailer to a wholesaler; it was more like that of a second wholesaler, for there were thousands of

opium smokers in his settlement, and he distributed the drug to opium stores within the settlement.⁵⁵

In some estates, planters were granted special privileges by the British Resident to import and prepare opium exclusively for the consumption of their coolies.⁵⁶ This was done with the understanding that the privilege granted would not in anyway undermine the position of the opium farmer in the state. It was a concession to those planters who pioneered the planting of certain cash crops in remote areas where opium was not easily obtainable.⁵⁷ The profit from this source was handsome,⁵⁸ and it was much coveted by planters.

The amount of profit extracted from opium by a *Kangchu* is unknown. What we do know is that opium profit represented an important proportion of the overall profits of a plantation enterprise. Prospective planters (*Kangchu*) would not be attracted to develop a settlement unless the right of distributing opium in the settlement was ensured.⁵⁹ Obviously more revenue would be collected if the sale of opium could be increased in the settlement. One way of increasing opium consumption was to build it into the system of wage payment.⁶⁰ Many new coolies (*sinkheh*) recruited to work in the settlement were induced to smoke,⁶¹ and then paid in large proportion with food, clothes and opium.⁶² This meant that the system ensured an increased number of opium consumers in the settlement. Like the tin miner, the *Kangchu* also used opium as a means of controlling his labour force; those coolies who were hooked on the drug and were heavily in debt had to work continuously for him until they were unfit for work and were ready to be disposed of.

This extremely lucrative opium farming thus created new social problems and became a main source of social conflict. A major problem was opium smuggling. As a result of the government's pursuit of high rental income from the Opium Farm,⁶³ the price of opium sold to consumers in the Straits Settlements continued to rise,⁶⁴ and this gave rise to opium smuggling.⁶⁵ In addition, opium was retailed relatively cheaper in the Malay States, from there it was smuggled into the Straits Settlements. J. D. Vaughan reported in 1854 that there was a large quantity of illicit opium smuggled into Penang from the Malay States and Province Wellesley.⁶⁶ Opium was also smuggled from the Dutch settlements such as Rhio, Bengkalis and Java,⁶⁷ and from Hong Kong, Amoy and Swatow.⁶⁸ The smuggling of substantial quantities of illicit opium into the Straits Settlements⁶⁹ testified to the existence of an organized ring, which controlled the import, preparation, and distribution of the drug. The success of smuggling suggests that the ring must have had close connections with the secret societies which possessed the network of

contacts the smugglers needed. The precise relationship between the smugglers and local secret societies is unknown. Perhaps the smugglers had the backing of the secret societies in distributing the drug and sharing the profit, or perhaps the smuggling was controlled by the secret societies.

Whatever the relationship between the two, their main aim was to dispose of the illicit opium and reap lucrative profits.⁷⁰ The smugglers were most likely to market their commodity through the unlicensed opium shops. There were scores of them in mid-nineteenth century Singapore,⁷¹ and the government seems to have tolerated their existence. As illicit opium was sold at a cheaper price than in the market, these unlicensed shops were attracted by the higher profit margin to get supplies from the smugglers. But most important was the fact that since these unlicensed shops were illegal, they were more likely to come under the pressure of the underworld to get opium from smugglers; sometimes they were also subjected to extortion.⁷² As the smuggling was highly organized, the government of the Straits Settlements failed to control it. Any cracking down on smuggling required an efficient police force which the government was unable to provide. So the smuggling prospered and severely cut into the profit of the opium farmers. To safeguard their interests, the opium farmers in neighbouring states cooperated or even amalgamated into syndicates. In November 1870, the opium farmers of Singapore, Johore, Malacca and Rhio joined hands to establish a syndicate, and under the leadership of Tan Seng Poh, a Teochew leader, it successfully crushed organized smuggling in the region.⁷³

The lucrative opium farming also became a bone of contention. Intense rivalry and conflict occurred between *pangs* backed by secret societies as a result of fighting for control over opium farms. In theory, the annual public bidding system was fair; the highest bidder got the farm. But in practice, the successful farmer or farming syndicate continued to monopolize the farms for a considerable length of time. In Penang one syndicate monopolized the major tax farms (including opium) from 1830 to 1866,⁷⁴ while in Singapore the opium and spirit farms remained in the hands of a group from 1846 to 1861 when they lost the opium farm to a rival.⁷⁵ The reason for this was probably that the farmer had learnt the tricks of public bidding. Once he got into that position, he established useful contacts in government circles, and was thus able to outbid his opponents. The unsuccessful bidders, who were likely to belong to a different *pang*, bore grudges against the farmer, and worked to undermine his privileges. Backed up by secret societies, they resorted to smuggling or even murder in order to beat the system. In Penang after 1816, for instance, the opium and *arrack* (spirit) farms tended to fall into the hands of Hokkien farmers (*Chinchew*: this term must have referred

to those coming from the Changchou prefecture of southern Fukein Province), and became a Hokkien monopoly after 1822. The opposing farmers who belonged to a Cantonese *Pang* (or known as Macaos) had the backing of the Hysans (*Hai San*) secret society, which was involved in large-scale smuggling of opium into the island from Batu Kawan on the opposite shore.⁷⁶ In 1827, as the result of intense conflict between Hokkien and Cantonese farmers, Che Toah, the principle Hokkien farmer, was murdered by an unknown assailant; his death was most probably the work of the Hysans.⁷⁷

Many of the opium farmers in Singapore and Malaya during the period 1848-1911 were wealthy merchants and *pang* leaders. This implies that there was a close connection between opium farming, wealth and community power. Men with wealth rose to *pang* leadership, and then used community power to help acquire opium farms. The money made from the farms was used to consolidate their power within the Chinese community. In Singapore, Choa Chong Long, the earliest Chinese opium farmer,⁷⁸ was a well-known and rich merchant who staged a glamorous dinner to which he invited all the influential residents of Singapore in June 1831 to celebrate his forty-fourth birthday.⁷⁹ He was also an acknowledged leader of the Hokkien *pang* in Singapore.⁸⁰ Another two leading opium farmers in Singapore were Cheang Sam Teo and his son Cheang Hong Lim. Sam Teo was not only a leading farmer in Singapore, but in 1847 also controlled the opium farm in Johore.⁸¹ After his death, his son Hong Lim continued to hold the opium farm in Singapore for a number of years.⁸² Both Cheang Sam Teo and Cheang Hong Lim were wealthy merchants, and the leaders of a sub-group of the Hokkien *pang* in Singapore.⁸³ One of the leading opium farmers in Perak was Kapitan Chang Keng Kwee (known also Chang Ah Quee, Chung Keng Kwee, and Cheng Ching-kuei). He held the opium farm of Lower Perak in 1888, and the opium farm of Perak in 1891 and 1895.⁸⁴ Chang was a wealthy tin miner and a leader of the Hakka *pang* in Perak and Penang,⁸⁵ and was also a known leader of the *Hai San* secret society in these two states for a long period of time.⁸⁶ In Selangor, wealthy merchants and Cantonese *Pang* leader such as Yap Kwan Seng (Yeh Kuan-sheng), Chow Ah Yeok (Chao I) and Loke Yew (Lu Yu),⁸⁷ controlled the opium farms of various parts of Selangor.⁸⁸

The best known opium farmer was Tan Seng Poh (Ch'en Ch'eng-pao), a Teochew born in Ipoh. Son of the first Chinese Kapitan in Perak,⁸⁹ and brother-in-law of the wealthy and most powerful Teochew in Singapore,⁹⁰ Tan Seng Poh provides the best example of an opium farmer who had successfully combined wealth, influence and community power to run his

lucrative enterprise. After inheriting his father's opium farms in Singapore and Johore,⁹¹ he emerged as the leader of opium farming for many years. His education in English in Singapore enabled him to establish useful contacts in government circles. His friendship with both the colonial government of the Straits Settlements and the Maharaja of Johore ensured his control over the combined opium farm of the two states.⁹² He was the leader of a syndicate which controlled the opium farms in Rhio, Singapore, Johore and Malacca. His two other partners were Cheang Hong Lim and Tan Hiok Nee.⁹³

Tan Seng Poh also held public offices. His appointment as a Municipal Commissioner in 1870, a Justice of Peace in 1871 and an Honorary Magistrate in 1872,⁹⁴ enhanced his influence in government circles. He was undoubtedly a leader of the Teochew *pang* in Singapore. His wealth, influence and prestige qualified him to claim leadership status. His connection with Seah Eu Chin's family which had effectively controlled the Teochew *pang* for many decades,⁹⁵ also helped him to claim that status. His prominent status among the Teochews was further evident from the fact that his Chinese-style mansion in Hill Street, Singapore, was popularly known among Teochews as the first of the four best known mansions owned by their powerful leaders of the time.⁹⁶

The fact that many of the opium farmers were wealthy merchants and powerful *pang* leaders meant that they could use their money and influence in their respective communities to expand continuously the market for opium consumption.⁹⁷ The respect they commanded in the *pangs* helped to make opium-smoking acceptable. Once the stigma on this evil habit was removed, more and more Chinese people became opium addicts.

Anti-opium Movements and the Control of Opium-smoking

The above analysis shows that the opium farming system perpetuated opium-smoking in the region; the vested interests of the governments (British colonial and native) and the opium farmers helped to increase the sale of opium. The system contained no elements of self-constraint, nor did it have any mechanism for social remedy; problems created by the system were left for the whole Chinese community to face. It was in this context that forces for change came not from within the system, but from outside it.

Two forces that had a direct bearing on the control of opium-smoking in the region were the anti-opium movement in the Straits and the international anti-opium movement. Before the twentieth century, anti-opium sentiments were expressed occasionally but there was no anti-opium

movement. The earliest anti-opium sentiment was expressed by Dr Robert Little, government surgeon of the Straits Settlements and a devoted Presbyterian.⁹⁸ Dr Little wrote an article entitled 'On the Habitual Use of Opium in Singapore' establishing the evil impact of opium-smoking on addicts both physically and financially and proposing control over the spread of the smoking.

The gist of his proposal was to raise the price of opium beyond the reach of ordinary people, and to diminish the facilities for obtaining it.⁹⁹ Little's proposal was not to attack the roots of the problem of opium-smoking. Understandably he did not wish to seek confrontation with the government by proposing a ban on opium. His plan was to discourage opium smokers who, for financial reasons, may eventually give up their habit. His proposal appeared to have no effect at all on the government's policy at the time, but his sentiment was later shared by some European missionaries,¹⁰⁰ and by some Chinese journalists who aired their opposition to opium-smoking in local Chinese newspapers.¹⁰¹

The rise of modern overseas Chinese nationalism in the Straits after the turn of the twentieth century stimulated the growth of anti-opium feeling.¹⁰² The shame of being citizens of a country which was stigmatized as 'The Sickman of the East' (Tung Ya Ping Fu) led modern Chinese nationalists to search for the causes of China's decline, and they found opium-smoking to be the main evil responsible for weakening the nation. Their attack on opium was echoed by the overseas Chinese community in the Straits, and for the first time, a leading Chinese newspaper the *Thien Nam Shin Pao*, consistently expressed its objection to the prevalence of this evil habit among the Chinese, and called for the end to it.¹⁰³ With significant media support, the time was ripe for an organized attack on opium-smoking. The men behind this movement were Dr Shut Chuan Yin (Yin Shueh-ch'un) and Dr Lim Boon Keng, two well-known medical practitioners who gained considerable insight into problems of opium-smoking from their profession. They believed that this evil practice had to be abolished before the Chinese community could be strengthened. The founding of the Anti-Opium Society, Chen Wu Shan She (known also as Chin Boo Seang Seah) in the middle of 1906,¹⁰⁴ was to give the anti-opium crusaders a rallying point for action. They quickly organized and mobilized support among the general public. With a membership of more than 500 and a fund of S\$15,000 within months, the Society founded a refuge in Tank Road offering free treatment for opium addicts.¹⁰⁵ The movement quickly spread to Penang where Dr Wu Lien-teh (also known as Gnoh Lean Tuck) led the way. An Anti-Opium Society was founded in November 1906 with Dr Wu as its first president.

The Society found equally enthusiastic support among the Penang Chinese who raised a sum of S\$16,000 within a few months.¹⁰⁶ It also founded an opium refuge providing free treatment for addicts.¹⁰⁷ Two other anti-opium societies were established in Ipoh and Kuala Lumpur, thus carrying the anti-opium movement into the heart of the Malay states.¹⁰⁸

The movement was surprisingly well-organized and well-coordinated. Its main aim was not to seek direct confrontation with the government over the opium issue, but to restrain opium-smoking among the Chinese population. Its main thrust was to apply public pressure on opium addicts and would-be smokers. To apply pressure on addicts, the use of the media was the key to the success. The spread of Chinese newspapers gave the media tremendous influence in the Chinese community.¹⁰⁹ Their constant revelations about the harm of opium both physically and financially served as a serious warning to the addicts who were encouraged to seek help to stop their habits from the anti-opium society.¹¹⁰ To bring the issue further into the public arena, public lectures and conferences were organized. At least three anti-opium conferences were held in Singapore and Malaya before 1911, all of which were well attended and successfully captured public attention.

The first anti-opium conference, held in Ipoh in March 1907,¹¹¹ met the high expectations of the organizers. It was a remarkable success. For the first time all anti-opium crusaders in the region congregated in a major Chinese mining town to launch a head-on attack on opium-smoking. Drawing a crowd of about 3,000 people of both sexes and from various professions, the conference provided a useful forum for participants to exchange their views, to air their indictments of the drug, and to reinforce their commitment to the cause of fighting against this greatest social evil.¹¹² The conference was closed with the adoption of 10 resolutions calling for the abolition of the opium farming system, government control of opium distribution, registration of opium addicts, an increase in charges for opium and opium shop licences, and restrictions on the sale of opium to persons under 21 years of age.¹¹³ Most of these demands were reiterated in the second anti-opium conference held in March 1908 in Penang.¹¹⁴ These public gatherings and their demands brought pressure to bear on the government to take some action against opium-smoking; they also exerted pressure on the addicts to give up their habit. As opium-smoking was publicly denounced as the greatest social evil, it became socially unacceptable, and those who indulged in it were increasingly likely to be embarrassed.

But to the hardcore addicts, embarrassment was not enough to force them to give up their habit. Many still succumbed to the pipe and continued to smoke. To apply further pressure on them, the movement threatened the

addicts with unemployment. The idea of job sanctioning seems to have come from some radical opium crusaders in Penang. On 14 January 1907, they distributed a leaflet in the name of 'All Chinese in Penang' to publicize their uncompromising stand. They set a time limit of six months for all the opium smokers to give up the habit, and the economic sanctions of which job and business sanctions were the two main parts, were suggested as the means of achieving that end.¹¹⁵ This radical proposal was then impracticable because the time limit was too close to allow addicts to overcome the craving, and any drastic sanctions would lead to violence and then government intervention. For these reasons the proposal did not have any obvious impact on the two anti-opium conferences held in Ipoh and Penang.¹¹⁶ But the idea of economic sanctions was not completely lost. A modified form was later accepted by the opium crusaders in Singapore who saw some merit in this measure as a means of bringing the hard-core addicts to their knees. On 3 October, at the public meeting called by the Singapore Anti-Opium Society, a resolution was adopted urging Chinese merchants not to employ opium addicts.¹¹⁷ Door-to-door visits to Chinese shops were organized to implement the resolution under the leadership of Cheng Pin-t'ing; shop proprietors were asked for their signatures or seals as a firm commitment to the measure.¹¹⁸ Many shops and leading Chinese institutions pledged their support.¹¹⁹ The sanction against opium addicts was soon followed by other anti-opium societies and Chinese merchants in the Malay States. In Perak, two leading Chinese merchants, Au Shen Kang and Li Hsing-P'u who were strong supporters of the local anti-opium society, ordered their addicted employees to give up smoking in three days or lose their jobs. In Seremban, some opium addicts were sacked by shop proprietors.¹²⁰

The anti-opium movement achieved reasonable success. The public agitation became a social deterrent against opium-smoking; the agitation also taught people to see the logic of stopping the habit. The rickshaw pullers and mining workers were made to realize that their hard-earned cash should be spent on food and clothes rather than supporting a shameful habit which continuously sapped their health and earning power.¹²¹ The job sanction gave many addicts no alternative but to give up their habit. More importantly, the movement effectively put a brake on those prospective smokers who would otherwise become hooked on the drug.

The main force behind the success of the anti-opium movement was the middle-class leadership. At the forefront were those western-educated professionals such as Dr Shut Chuan Yin,¹²² Dr Lim Boon Keng and Dr Wu Lien-teh.¹²³ All three had studied overseas, and were convinced that opium-smoking was physically, morally and socially bad. Probably influenced by

K'ang Yu-wei's reform ideas, these leaders regarded the control of opium-smoking as an important measure of social reform in the local Chinese communities.¹²⁴ Young and idealistic, they considered it their duty to lead the anti-opium movement regardless of self-interest.¹²⁵

Close allies of this group were the Chinese reformists and revolutionaries who were active politically among the Chinese in Singapore and Malaya during the first decade of the twentieth century.¹²⁶ Both reformists and revolutionaries gave the anti-opium leaders unreserved support through their propaganda networks. The reformist *Nanyang Tsung Hui Pao* and the revolutionary *Chong Shing Yit Pao* not only gave full coverage of the activities of the anti-opium movement, but also supported it through its editorials.¹²⁷ In addition, some reformists and revolutionaries were directly involved in the movement. Tan Boo Liat and Cheng P'in-t'ing, two revolutionary leaders in Singapore, also became leaders of the anti-opium movement in Singapore.¹²⁸

Apart from the reformists and revolutionaries, the movement also gained support from rich Chinese merchants. The support given by the Singapore Chinese Chamber of Commerce was a triumph for the movement,¹²⁹ for the Chamber was regarded as the leading organization in the Chinese community and consisted of many wealthy and influential merchants.¹³⁰ Its attitude towards opium-smoking was crucial in influencing the attitudes of other merchants. Among the rich Chinese merchants who supported the anti-opium movement was Foo Chee Choon, the famous tin mining magnate in Perak.¹³¹ Foo was deeply involved in both the Penang and Perak anti-opium societies, and was active in carrying out anti-opium activities in Perak towns.¹³²

Underlying the efforts of these opium crusaders was burgeoning nationalism. All of them were aware that China was declining in its power and status in the world. Being subjects of an old and weakening empire, the Chinese were no longer respected by foreigners. Being Chinese living under British colonial rule, they suffered from an inferiority complex in relation to foreigners, and some of them had probably experienced humiliating treatment at the hands of Europeans. All of them wished to see a wealthy and powerful China which would make them proud to be Chinese. But there were many obstacles preventing China from attaining wealth and power, one of which was opium-smoking. If China was to be saved from its continuous decline, the Chinese people had to rid themselves of this evil habit. To the reformists and revolutionaries who aspired to make China strong and wealthy, the anti-opium movement was therefore considered to be an obligation which needed to be carried out whole-heartedly.

Together with rising nationalism was the urge to improve the Chinese image. For decades, China had been considered a nation full of opium addicts, the Chinese people were despised as an inferior race, and opium-smoking became the stigma of many overseas Chinese. The image of opium-smoking was closely connected with filth, disease and human degradation. In the United States, opium dens, lewd women, dirt and disease were considered to be the characteristics of Californian Chinatowns.¹³³ In Australia, opium-smoking was to a great extent responsible for the unpopularity of the Chinese in the nineteenth century, and was used against Chinese immigration by supporters of a White Australian policy.¹³⁴ The continuing stigmatization of the Chinese as opium smokers infuriated the opium crusaders and hurt their pride, and they were determined to eliminate this degrading image.

Although the anti-opium movement restrained opium consumption among the Chinese population, the government control of opium-smoking in Singapore and Malaya was due largely to forces at work outside the region. In Britain, the anti-opium movement began much earlier, drawing attention to the vast number of opium victims in Asia. The focus of the movement was the Society for the Suppression of the Opium Trade in 1874. It mobilized strong support among clergymen, intellectuals and liberal politicians. It won its first battle in 1894 when the government appointed the Royal Opium Commission to enquire into the opium habit in India. With the election of the Liberal government in 1906, the movement gained a further victory by gaining the support of one-third of Liberal MPs on the opium issue. The Liberal government expressed its willingness to cooperate with the Chinese government on the control of opium consumption.¹³⁵

The British government was also concerned about opium-smoking in the British colonies. Probably due in part to the effort of Dr Wu Lien-teh who briefed Sir Edward Grey, the Foreign Secretary, on opium-smoking in the Straits Settlements.¹³⁶ The British government on 9 July 1907 appointed an Opium Commission in the Straits Settlements to investigate opium-smoking, and to recommend appropriate action. After about a year's work, the Commission published its findings in a three-volume report. The result of the report was not entirely unexpected: the Commission did not recommend prohibition, but rather control of the sale of opium. The Commission consisted of six members of whom five were European.¹³⁷ More importantly, most of the Commissioners were directly or indirectly connected with the government.¹³⁸ The moderate stand of the Commission was expected, for any prohibition on opium would deprive the government of the Straits Settlements of its main source of revenue. The Commission also

showed its partiality in selecting evidence, for the evidence given by the leaders of the anti-opium movement seems to have gone unheeded.¹³⁹

The most important achievement of the Commission was its recommendation to abolish the opium farming system and replace it by a government agency handling the preparation and sale of opium. Other recommendations such as the prohibition of opium-smoking in brothels had some effect.¹⁴⁰ On the 1 January 1910, the recommendations were implemented in the Straits Settlements, while the same recommendations took effect in Johore, Selangor, Perak and Perlis. This officially ended the long-standing opium farming system. As the result of the local anti-opium movement and the anti-opium forces overseas, the opium-smoking abuse was checked, albeit not eradicated.

Endnotes

- * First published in Lee Lai To and Gwee Yee Hean (eds.), *Nan-yang yu Chung-kuo* (Southeast Asia and China) (South Seas Society, Singapore, 1987), pp. 215-39.
- 1. See R. Little, 'On the Habitual Use of Opium in Singapore', in *Journal of the Indian Archipelago and Eastern Asia*, Vol. 2 (1848), pp. 2, 66.
- 2. *Ibid.*, p. 66.
- 3. See 'Administration Report, Malacca, 1881, by C.J. Irving, Resident Councillor, dated 19th June, 1882', in *Straits Settlements Legislative Council Proceedings, 1882*, Appendix No. 26.
- 4. See R. Little, *op. cit.*, p. 20.
- 5. *Ibid.*
- 6. Giving evidence to the Opium Commission, Dr Lim Boon Keng claimed that 50 per cent of the estimated 20,000 to 25,000 Chinese rickshaw coolies in Singapore were excessive opium smokers. Seah Liang Seah, a famous Teochew planter and financier, claimed that 60 per cent of the coolies employed by him in his gambler and pepper estates in Johore and the Malay States were opium smokers. Tan Kheam Hock, a labour contractor for the Tanjong Pagar Dock, stated that 30 per cent of the 600 Chinese cargo coolies and 60 per cent of the 1,400 coal coolies working in the Dock were opium smokers. See 'Evidence given by Dr. Lim Boon Keng on 17th April, 1907', 'Evidence given by Tan Kheam Hock on 24th August, 1907', in *Straits Settlements and Federated Malay States Opium Commission, 1908, Proceedings, (thereafter, S.S. & F.M.S. Opium Commission, 1908)*, Vol. 2 (Singapore, 1908), pp. 41, 44, 60-1, 231.
- 7. See R. Little, *op. cit.*, p. 29.
- 8. See 'Evidence given by Ho Siak Kuan on 28th September, 1907', in *S.S. & F.M.S. Opium Commission, 1908, Proceedings*, Vol. 2, p. 149.
- 9. R. Little, *op. cit.*, p. 24.

10. See C.F. Yong, *The New Gold Mountain: The Chinese in Australia 1901-1921* (Adelaide, 1977), pp. 179-80; Wong Lin Ken, 'The Revenue Farms of Prince Wales Island, 1805-1830', in *Journal of the South Seas Society*, Vol. 19, Pts. 1 & 2 (1965), p. 95.
11. See *Chinese Emigration: Report of the Commission Sent by China to Ascertain the Condition of Chinese Coolies in Cuba 1874* (Shanghai, 1876, Reprint, Taipei, 1970), pp. 6-8; Sing-wu Wang, *The Organization of Chinese Emigration 1848-1888* (San Francisco, 1978), pp. 59-60.
12. See T. Braddell, *Statistics of the British Possessions in the Straits of Malacca*, p. 4.
13. Although there is no evidence to suggest that coolies bound for Singapore and Malaya were lashed or chained during their voyages, they nevertheless underwent hardship. The voyage from South China to the Malay Peninsula was rough, and many of them were seasick. Food was generally bad and the ship was crowded. See *Lat Pau*, 31 December 1888, p. 2, 10 January 1890, p. 1, 4 March 1890, p. 1.
14. See *Chong Shing Yit Pao*, 19 June 1909, p. 1, 24 June 1909, p. 3; *Lat Pau*, 8 June 1910, p. 2; J.D. Vaughan, 'Notes on Chinese of Pinang', in *J.L.A.*, Vol. 8 (1854), p. 15.
15. See 'Evidence given by Yow Ngan Pan, Manager of Chop Loh Kee Seng on 21st September, 1907', in *S.S. & F.M.S. Opium Commission, 1908, Proceedings*, Vol. 2.
16. See R. Little, *op. cit.*, p. 20.
17. 'Evidence given by C.J. Saunders, Acting Secretary for Chinese Affairs, Singapore, on 8 September, 1907', in *S.S. & F.M.S. Opium Commission, 1908, Proceedings*, Vol. 2.
18. Dr Little observed in 1848 that '... wherever there are a dozen Chinese squatted, there you have an opium shop', See R. Little, *op. cit.*, p. 20.
19. The average income of these opium addicts was \$4.70 per month, but their expenses on opium-smoking were \$3.60 per month, *ibid.*, p. 26.
20. The report claimed that about 20 per cent of 15,000 Chinese (3,000) were opium smokers, and each smoker spent \$80 annually out of his \$120 wages on opium. A coolie earned about \$10 per month, he could live on \$3 or \$4 and spent the rest on the drug. See 'Administration Report, Malacca, 1881', in *Straits Settlements Legislative Council Proceedings, 1882, Appendix, No. 26*.
21. In a pepper and gambier plantation at Sepang in the district of Kuala Langat, Selangor, each of the 150 smokers consumed 4 tahils of opium which amounted to \$6.80. This figure is derived from the figure that 150 smokers consumed 600 tahils per month valued at \$1,020. If we accept that the average wages for a plantation coolie was about \$10 per month, \$6.80 represents two-thirds of his income. See 'Petition of Lee Seng Nam to the High Commissioner of the Federated Malay States dated 24th May, 1905' in 'High Commissioner's Office (F.M.S.) Files', 816/1905.
22. R. Little, *op. cit.*, pp. 26-9.
23. *Ibid.*, p. 25.
24. William Kennedy, Works Superintendent of Howarth Erskine Ltd., alleged in 1907 that two first-class Chinese labourers, who worked in New Harbour Dock, were ruined by excessive use of opium. Both were sacked after they were found unfit for their work. See 'Evidence given by William Kennedy on 24th August, 1907', in *S.S. & F.M.S.*

- Opium Commission, 1908, *Proceedings*, Vol. 2, p. 56; J.D. Vaughan, *The Managers and Customs of the Chinese of the Straits Settlements*, p. 60.
25. Dr Little recorded two cases which occurred in 1849 in Singapore. In February, a young Chinese named Oh Chin Sing committed suicide because he could not pay for the drug he needed. He was sick for 24 days, and killed himself with a razor. Another Chinese named Cho Ah Keow killed himself with a chopping knife because he could not bear the pain and had no opium. See R. Little, 'Opium Smoking', in *J.I.A.*, Vol. 3 (1849), p. 455.
 26. In 1881, the British Resident Councillor of Malacca, C.J. Irving, reported that opium-smoking had reduced the working power of local Chinese coolies. Once the habit had been acquired, the coolies became useless as labourers if they failed to get their accustomed supply. See 'Administration Report, Malacca, 1881', in *Straits Settlements Legislative Council Proceedings*, 1882, Appendix No. 26; Dr Lim Boon Keng, a prominent Chinese leader and a medical practitioner, also observed in 1907 that a coolie spent about three hours a day smoking opium. Once the craving was established, no work could be done without opium being supplied. See 'Evidence given by Dr. Lim Boon Keng to the Commission on 17th April, 1907', in *S.S. & F.M.S. Opium Commission 1908, Proceedings*, Vol. 2, p. 44.
 27. Heng Pang Kiat, a merchant and the Vice-President of the Anti-Opium Society in Singapore, testified that opium smokers in his firm did not attend to the firm's business punctually and carefully. See 'Evidence given by Heng Pang Kiat on 31 October, 1907', in *S.S. & F.M.S. Opium Commission, 1908, Proceedings*, Vol. 2, p. 276.
 28. Dr Little declared in 1848 that three-fourths of the prisoners he interviewed in Singapore were opium addicts. See R. Little, 'On the Habitual Use of Opium in Singapore', in *J.I.A.*, Vol. 2 (1848), pp. 42-3; 'Evidence given by Dr Lim Boon Keng to the Opium Commission on 17 August, 1907', 'Evidence given by Goh Tat Pang (Gah Siew Tin), Vice President, Chinese Chamber of Commerce, Singapore, on 31 August, 1907' and 'Evidence given by C.J. Saunders, Acting Secretary for Chinese Affairs, Singapore, on 8 September, 1907', in *S.S. & F.M.S. Opium Commission, 1908, Proceedings*, Vol. 2, pp. 53, 88, 97.
 29. See *S.S. & F.M.S. Opium Commission, 1908, Report*, Vol. 1, pp. 4-5.
 30. For instance, the rent collected from the Opium Farm in Penang in 1885 accounted for 48 per cent of the total revenue, and it was followed by Spirit Farm (22 per cent), Stamps (10 per cent) and others. See 'Administration Report, Penang, 1885', in *Straits Settlements Legislative Council Proceedings*, 1886, Appendix No. 32.
 31. For example, the rent of the Opium Farm for Prince of Wales Island increased from \$10,440 (1800-1801) to \$15,840 (1801-1802), \$20,040 (1803-1804) and \$25,200 (1804-1805); in Singapore, the opium rent also increased steadily from \$7,345 (1820-1821) to \$9,420 (1821-1822), \$14,200 (1822-1823), \$22,830 (1823-1824) and \$24,720 (1829-1830). See Wong Lin Ken, 'The Revenue Farms of Prince Wales Island 1805-1830', Appendix 1, Tables 2 and 8, in *Journal of the South Seas Society*, Vol. 19, Pts. 1 & 2 between pp. 100-1. For another example, the Singapore Opium Farm increased from \$30,050 per month for 1870-1873, to \$31,500 in 1874-1876, and to \$33,900 in 1877-1879. The rent of the Farm increased further to \$50,000 per month in 1880-1882 to \$80,000 in 1883-1885. See 'Short-hand Report of the Proceedings of

- the Legislative Council, Straits Settlements, dated 28 February, 1883', in *Straits Settlements Legislative Council Proceedings*, 1883, p. 7.
32. In 1890, the Penang Opium Farm was obtained by a syndicate headed by Chew Sin Yong and Chan Ley Kam. Among members of the syndicate were other wealthy merchants such as Khoo Tian Tek (Khoo Thean Tek), Chang Ah Kwi (Chang Keng Kwee, Capitan China of Larut) and another wealthy merchant named Lee Thye of Taiping. Chew's syndicate was the highest bidder. See 'Short-hand Report of the Proceedings of the Legislative Council, Straits Settlements, dated 24 October, 1890', in *Straits Settlements Legislative Council Proceedings*, 1890, page B. 82.
 33. For instance, the Singapore government held a public auction of the Opium Farm on 16 April 1833, for a period from May 1833 to April 1834. Chong Long (Choa Chong Long) retained his Opium Farm, but agreed to increase his monthly rent from S\$3,440 (1832-1833) to S\$4,000 (1833-1834). See *Singapore Chronicle*, 25 April 1833.
 34. For instance, Section 4 of the opium regulations adopted in Singapore in 1830, stated that anyone found in possession of illegal opium was liable to a fine of Rs.500 (first offence) and Rs.1,000 (every subsequent offence); offenders who failed to make the payment of the fine faced confinement and hard labour in irons for 6 months in the first case, 12 months in the second, and 2 years in all subsequent cases. See the Singapore Opium Regulations of 1830, cited in R. Little, 'On the Habitual Use of Opium in Singapore', in *J.I.A.*, Vol. 2 (1848), p. 9. In 1889, the British Resident of Perak issued notices warning those infringing upon the rights of the opium farmers will be fined not exceeding \$500 or imprisonment not exceeding 6 months. See *The Perak Government Gazette*, 1889, Vol. 2, No. 14, p. 468.
 35. See the articles 1 and 2 of the 'Regulations for George Town Opium Farm 1810-1811', in Appendix IIB, Wong Lin Ken, 'The Revenue Farms of Prince Wales Island 1805-1830', in *Journal of the South Seas Society*, Vol. 19, Pts. 1 & 2, p. 105.
 36. J.D. Vaughan reported in 1854 that the opium farmer for Penang employed five clerks, six labourers, one cook, two water-carriers and eight revenue peons. See J.D. Vaughan, 'Notes on the Chinese of Pinang', in *J.I.A.*, Vol. 8 (1854), p. 25.
 37. Before 1895, the Singapore opium farmer processed raw opium into *Chandu* in two separate buildings in Johore Bahru. Both plants were under separate management, employing 75 and 35 men respectively. See 'Chandu Manufacture in Johore', in *Straits Settlements Legislative Council Proceedings*, 1898, Appendix No. 38, p. C. 443.
 38. Dr Little provided details of the four stages of operation in preparing opium. See R. Little, *op. cit.*, pp. 12-3.
 39. It was estimated that at the turn of the twentieth century, there were over 500 licensed opium shops in Singapore, about 20 of them belonging to the Farm in partnership with other people. See 'Evidence given by Khaw Joo Choe, Managing Director of Opium Farm, Singapore, on 19th October, 1907' in *S.S. & F.M.S. Opium Commission*, 1908, *Proceedings*, Vol. 2, p. 223.
 40. For instance, the opium shop Chop Hin Tai (268 Victoria Street, Singapore) had to get its supply of *Chandu* from the Opium Farm proprietor of a opium shop, on

- 26 October 1907, in S.S. & F.M.S. *Opium Commission, 1908, Proceedings*, Vol. 2, p. 262.
41. The net profit of the Opium Farm in Penang between 1901-1903 was approximately S\$700,000. See 'Gan Nghoh Bee, Opium Farmer of Penang to Colonial Secretariat, Straits Settlements dated 10th October, 1904', in *Straits Settlements Legislative Council Proceedings, 1905, Appendix No. 10*.
 42. For instance, the syndicate which took over the Opium and Spirit Farms of Penang and Province Wellesley had collected a capital of S\$2,000,000. The monthly rent for the Farms was S\$190,000. See 'Translation of an Agreement made between Mr Gan Nghoh Bee & Opium and Spirit Farms for 1904-6', in S.S. & F.M.S. *Opium Commission, 1908, Proceedings*, Vol. 3, p. 127.
 43. According to the estimate, the farmer had to pay a sum of \$9,000 for the rent, S\$800 for expenses, and S\$12,000 for the cost of 20 chests of opium at S\$600 each. This amounted to a total of S\$21,800 per month. See R. Little., *op. cit.*, pp. 63-4.
 44. *Ibid.*, p. 63.
 45. Four hundred and fifty-five chests of opium were estimated to have produced 455,000 tahils of *Chandu* which would yield S\$1,010,000 (at S\$2.20 per tahlil). Deducting the opium farm rent of S\$480,000 and the cost of the opium (455 chests of S\$600 each) at S\$273,000, the gross profit was S\$257,000. See 'Administration Report, Penang, 1885', in *Straits Settlements Legislative Council Proceedings 1886, Appendix No. 32*, pp. C.502, C.517.
 46. According to Dr Little, an opium shop owner in 1847 in Singapore had to rent a shop which cost him between \$10 to \$15 per month, and he had to employ a couple of coolies to help, their salaries amounting to another S\$15. In addition there were other expenses incurred in the opium shop. Thus, the profit made from the sale of *Chandu* was not enough to cover the cost of running the shop. See R. Little, *op. cit.*, p. 18.
 47. For instance, an opium shop named Wu Wi Ki located at No. 26, Sago Street, made only S\$18 per month from sale of *Chandu* in 1907, but it made about S\$100 from dross (by-products) per month. After deducting rent (S\$28), licence fees (S\$36) and wages for two coolies (S\$25), an estimated S\$30 was the profit for the shop per month. See 'Evidence given to the Commissioners on 26th October, 1907', in S.S. & F.M.S. *Opium Commission, 1908, Proceedings*, Vol. 2, pp. 259-61.
 48. R. Little, *op. cit.*, pp. 18-9.
 49. In 1891, the Perak Government called for tenders for the Opium Duty Farm. The successful tenders would have the right to collect a duty of \$7 a ball on all opium imported into the State, exclusive of the districts comprised in The Lower Perak *Chandu* Farm and the Coast Farm, for a period of three years. See *Perak Government Gazette, 1891, Vol. 4, No. 20*, p. 538.
 50. See Wong Lin Ken, *The Malayan Tin Industry to 1914* (Tuscon, 1965), p. 78.
 51. See 'Evidence given by Choo Cheng Khay, Vice-President, Selangor Anti-Opium Society, and Tin Mining Proprietor, Kuala Lumpur, on 23rd November, 1907', in S.S. & F.M.S. *Opium Commission, 1908, Proceedings*, Vol. 2, p. 435.

52. The sale of opium in the country districts of Johore was mainly in the hands of Kangchu. See 'Evidence given by Khaw Joo Choe, Managing Director of the Opium Farm, Singapore on 19th October, 1907', in *S.S. & F.M.S. Opium Commission, 1908, Proceedings*, Vol. 2, p. 207.
53. For a good discussion of the origins of the Kangchu system, see C.A. Trocki, 'The Origins of The Kangchu System 1740-1860', in *JMBRAS*, Vol. 49, Pt. 2 (1976), pp. 132-55.
54. See the Surat Tauliah (Kangchu Letter of Authority) granted by the Sultan of Johore to a Chinese Kangchu, in S.E. Coope, 'The Kangchu System in Johore', in *JMBRAS*, Vol. 14, Pt. 3 (1936), pp. 249-51. Tan Tek Soon, 'Chinese Local Trade', in *The Straits Chinese Magazine*, Vol. 6, No. 23 (September 1902), p. 91.
55. See J.C. Jackson, *Planters and Speculators: Chinese and European Agricultural Enterprise in Malaya 1786-1921* (Kuala Lumpur, 1968), p. 21.
56. On 23 July 1888, an agreement was signed between the British Resident of Negri Sembilan on the one hand, and Loo Tee Seng and Loh Cheng Keng on the other, to the effect that the lease holder of agricultural land was allowed to import and cook opium for the use of the estate. See 'Negri Sembilan Secretariat Files (British Resident's Office)', 3801/1900.
57. In 1905, an application to acquire the right to prepare *Chandu* on his estate by Lee Seng Nam was rejected on the ground that *Chandu* could be obtained at Sepang, four and a half miles from his estate. See 'Letter from the Secretary to the Resident of Selangor to the Federal Secretary for F.M.S. dated 6th June 1905', in 'High Commissioners Office Files (F.M.S.)', 816/1905.
58. In 1905, a pepper and gambier estate employing 450 coolies in Selangor would bring in an extra profit of \$2,760 per annum from preparing *Chandu* for its coolies. See 'The Petition of Lee Seng Nam to the High Commissioner of the Federated Malay States dated 20th March, 1905', *ibid.*
59. J.C. Jackson, *op. cit.*, pp. 36-7.
60. G.T. Hare, the Secretary for Chinese Affairs, F.M.S., reported the existence of the practice of paying the wages of labourers in mines and on plantations partly in opium. See G.T. Hare, 'Report on Paragraph 2 of Despatch No. 26, S. of S. R.G.O. 2160/98', in 'High Commissioner Office (F.M.S.) Files', 563/1898.
61. The Reverend J.A.B. Cook, Minister of the Presbyterian church, who knew Singapore and Johore well, claimed in 1907 that the Kangchus in the gambier and pepper estates in Johore (Johore Bahru) and Muar provided opium free to new recruits, on 12 October 1907, in *S.S. & F.M.S. Opium Commission, 1908, Proceedings*, Vol. 2, p. 173.
62. J.C. Jackson, *op. cit.*, pp. 4, 74.
63. It was alleged by Mr Gulland, a member of the Legislative Council of the Straits Settlements that the rent of the Singapore Opium Farm rose dramatically from S\$30,050 a month (1870-1873) to S\$50,000 (1880-1882) and reached S\$80,000 a month in 1883 (for 1883-1885). See 'Short-hand Report of the Proceedings of the Legislative Council, Straits Settlements, dated 28th February, 1883', in *Straits Settlements Legislative Council Proceedings*, 1883, pp. 7-8.

64. *Ibid.*
65. See 'Report on the Straits Settlements Police Force, and on the State of Crime for the year 1881', by S. Dunlop, Inspector-General of Police, *Straits Settlements Legislative Council Proceedings*, 1882, Appendix No. 11.
66. See J.D. Vaughan, *The Manners and Customs of the Chinese of the Straits Settlements*, p. 60.
67. See 'Evidence given by Gan Ghoh Bee, the Manager of the Penang Opium Farm, on 23rd December, 1907', in S.S. & F.M.S. *Opium Commission*, 1908, *Proceedings*, Vol. 2, p. 526.
68. See *Lat Pau*, 29 October 1889, p. 2; 'Evidence Given by Khaw Joo Choe, Managing-Director of the Opium Farm, Singapore, on 19th October 1907', in S.S. & F.M.S. *Opium Commission*, 1908, *Proceedings*, Vol. 2, pp. 210-11.
69. During the period between 1877-1879, there were 611 cases of opium smuggling in Singapore, whilst in the years between 1880-1881, the cases increased to 864. See 'Report on the Straits Settlements Police Force, and on the State of Crime, for the year 1881, by S. Dunlop, Inspector-General of Police, Straits Settlements, dated 22nd February, 1882', in *Straits Settlements Legislative Council Proceedings*, 1882, Appendix No. 11.
70. It was claimed that opium smugglers reaped a handsome profit. They paid S\$1 a tahl, but sold for S\$2 a tahl. See 'Evidence given by Tan Kheam Hock, Labour Contractor, Tanjong Pagar Dock Board, Singapore, on 24th August, 1907', in S.S. & F.M.S. *Opium Commission*, 1908, *Proceedings*, Vol. 2.
71. According to Dr Little, there were 35 unlicensed opium shops (this figure is obtained by subtracting 45 licensed shops from the total of 80) in town areas; there were still some in the countryside in Singapore. See R. Little, 'On the Habitual Use of Opium in Singapore', in *J.I.A.*, Vol. 2 (1848) p. 20.
72. See the Petition of Yen Ch'un-chung and seven others to the Protector of Chinese in Singapore, in G.T. Hare (ed.), *A Text Book of Documentary Chinese*, Pt. 1, Vol. 1 (1894, Singapore), pp. 19-20.
73. See Song Ong Siang, *One Hundred Years' History of the Chinese in Singapore*, p. 159.
74. See Records of the Government of the Straits Settlements, Series W, 'Miscellaneous Letters to the Governor 1830-66', No. 25, Item 430; Series DD, 'Letters from Resident Councillor of Penang to Governor, 1830-6', No. 33, Item 36.
75. *Ibid.*, Series W, 'Miscellaneous Letters to the Governor 1830-66', No. 45, Item 36.
76. See Wong Lin Ken, 'The Revenue Farms of Prince Wales Island', in *Journal of the South Seas Society*, Vol. 19, Pts. 1 & 2 (1965), p. 124.
77. See 'Records of the Government of the Straits Settlements', Series A, 'Penang, Singapore and Malacca Consultations, 1806-30', No. 48, 31 July 1828.
78. Choa paid \$3,400 and \$4,000 per month of 1832-1833 and 1833-1834 respectively. See *Singapore Chronicle*, 25 April 1833.
79. See *Singapore Chronicle*, 9 June 1831; Song Ong Siang, *op. cit.*, pp. 29-30.
80. See Yong Ching Fatt, 'Chinese Leadership in Nineteenth Century Singapore', in *Hsin-she hseh-pao (Journal of the Island Society)* (Singapore, 1967), Vol. 1, p. 4.

81. See Song Ong Siang, *op. cit.*, p. 168; C.A. Trocki, 'The Origins of the Kangchu System 1740-1860', in JMBRAS, Vol. 49, Pt. 2, (1976), p. 149.
82. Song Ong Siang, *ibid.*
83. See Lin Hsiao-sheng (Lim How Seng), 'Shih-chiu shih-chi Hsing hua she-hui te pang-ch'uan cheng-chih' (The Pang Politics of the Chinese Society in 19th Century Singapore), in Lin Hsiao-sheng (Lim How Seng) et al. (ed.), *Shih-le ku-chi (Historical Relics of Singapore)* (Singapore, 1975), pp. 8-18.
84. See Wong Lin Ken, *The Malayan Tin Industry to 1914: With Special Reference to the States of Perak, Selangor, Negri Sembilan and Pahang* (Tucson, 1965), pp. 270-1, Appendix B.
85. Chang was one of the founders of the Tsen Lung Association (Tsen Lung hui-kuan) of Penang which represented the interests of those who came from Tsen Ch'eng district and Lung Meng district. See Liu T'ieh-shih, 'Pin-ch'eng Tsen-Lung hui-kuan ch'eng-li shih-lueh' (A History of the Ts'en-Lung Association of Penang), in Chang Wei-yung et al. (ed.), *Hsin Ma Tsen Lung hui-kuan lien-ho t'e-k'an (Souvenir Magazine of the Tsen Lung Associations in Singapore and Malaya)* (Penang, N.D.), p. 35.
86. See W. Blythe, *The Impact of Chinese Secret Societies in Malaya*, pp. 120, 174, 176.
87. To establish Yap Kwan Seng, Chow Ah Yeok and Loke Yew as leaders of the Cantonese Pang in Kuala Lumpur, see 'Kwang Chao (Kwong Siew) Records', kept at the Kwang Chao Association of Kuala Lumpur; Liang Chang-ling et al. (ed.), *Chi-lung-po Kwang Chao (Kwong Siew) hui-kuan ch'i-shih chou-nien chi-nien (Souvenir Magazine of 70th Anniversary Celebration of the Kwong Siew Wooi Kun of Kuala Lumpur)* (Kuala Lumpur, 1957), p. 42. Loke Yew was the opium farmer for Selangor from 1896 to 1897, and was also the opium farmer for Pahang in 1900. 'High Commissioner's Office Files (F.M.S.)', 503/1897; 'Selangor Secretariat Files (British Resident's Office)', 888/1900.
88. Yap Kwan Seng and Chow Ah Yeok shared the opium duty farm of Selangor from 1892 to 1894; together with Loke Yew, they also controlled the opium farm of Selangor in the same period. See Wong Lin Ken, *The Malayan Tin Industry*, p. 272.
89. He was the son of Kapitan Tan Ah Hun. See C.S. Wong, *A Gallery of Chinese Kapitanis* (Singapore, 1964), p. 68.
90. He was the brother-in-law of Seah Eu Chin. See Song Ong Siang, *One Hundred Years' History of the Chinese in Singapore*, p. 131.
91. See M.L. Wynne, *Triad and Tabut: A Survey of the Origin and Diffusion of Chinese and Mohamedan Secret Societies in the Malay Peninsula 1800-1935* (Singapore, 1941), p. 350.
92. See Song Ong Siang, *op. cit.*, pp. 131-32; C.S. Wong, *op. cit.*, p. 68.
93. See Song Ong Siang, *op. cit.*, p. 168; Carl A. Trocki, *Prince of Pirates: The Temenggongs and the Development of Johore and Singapore 1784-1885* (Singapore, U.P., 1979), pp. 143-44.
94. *Ibid.*, pp. 131-32.
95. See 'Letter from Mr Yang Chan-wen to the Directors of the Singapore Teo Chew Poit Ip Huay Kuan and the Ngee Ann Kongsi dated 28th October, 1965', in P'an Hsing-nung (ed.), *Souvenir Magazine of 40th Anniversary of the Singapore Teo Chew (Poit Ip) Huay Kuan and the Commemoration of the 150th of the Founding of Singapore*, p. 164.

96. The second mansion was built by Seah Cheo Seah, son of Seah Eu Chin, at the Boat Quay in 1872; the third was the mansion of Wee Ah Hood build in 1878 in Hill Street. (Ah Hood was the most prominent Teochew pepper and gambier merchant in Singapore); the fourth was built by Tan Hiok Nee (Tan Yeok Nee), another powerful Teochew merchant and Kangchu in Singapore and Johore. See Chang Ch'ing-chiang, 'Ch'en Hsu-nien and tzu-cheng ti' (Tan Hiok Nee and His Mansion), in Lin Hsiao-sheng (Lim How Seng) et al. (ed.), *Shih-le ku-chi (Historical Relics of Singapore)*, p. 225; see also Song Ong Siang, *op. cit.*, pp. 102-3, 335-6.
97. It was alleged that Loke Yew, powerful opium farmer and tin miner in Selangor, employed several thousand coolies working in his tin mines, and that he imported opium into Selangor and sold it among his coolies. See 'Evidence given by Yow Ngan Pan, Manager of Chop Low Kee Seng, Singapore, and Loke Yew's Attorney, on 21st September, 1907', in S.S. & F.M.S. *Opium Commission 1908, Proceedings*, Vol. 2, p. 126.
98. See C.B. Buckley, *An Anecdotal History of Old Times in Singapore*, p. 348.
99. See R. Little, 'On the Habitual Use of Opium in Singapore', *J.I.A.*, Vol. 2, (1848), pp. 75-9.
100. See Cheng U Wen, 'Opium in the Straits Settlements, 1867-1910', in *Journal of Southeast Asian History*, Vol. 2, No. 1 (March, 1961), p. 56.
101. See *Lat Pau*, 22 August 1889, p. 1, 20 March 1890, p. 1, 24 May 1890, p. 1, 9 July 1890, p. 1, 10 July 1890, p. 1, 19 July 1890, p. 1, 21 July 1890, p. 1, 25 July 1890, p. 1; *Sing Po*, 27 February 1890, p. 1, 15 March 1890, p. 5, 17 October 1890, p. 1, 13 December 1890, p. 1, 29 August 1891, p. 1, 17 March 1892, p. 1, 20 January 1893, p. 1, 25 December 1893, pp. 1 & 4.
102. For the rise of modern overseas Chinese nationalism in Singapore and Malaya, see Yen Ching-hwang, 'Overseas Chinese Nationalism in Singapore and Malaya, 1877-1912', in *Modern Asian Studies*, Vol. 16, Pt. 3 (July 1982), pp. 397-425.
103. See *Thian Nan Shin Pao*, 30 August 1901, p. 2, 30 November 1901, p. 1, 10 December 1901, p. 1, 21 December 1901, p. 2, 26 December 1901, p. 2, 17 December 1901, pp. 2, 7, 30 December 1901, p. 7, 10 January 1902, p. 7, 24 January 1902, pp. 2, 7, 28 January 1902, p. 7, 25 February 1902, p. 7, 12 April 1902, p. 7, 30 August 1902.
104. See Cheng U Wen, *op. cit.*, p. 57.
105. *Ibid.*
106. See Wu Lien-teh, *Plague Fighter: The Autobiography of a Modern Chinese Physician* (Cambridge, 1959), p. 237.
107. *Ibid.*, Cheng U Wen, *op. cit.*, p. 57.
108. Cheng U Wen, *ibid.*
109. For the influence of Chinese newspapers in the Chinese community in Singapore, see Chen Mong Hock, *The Early Chinese Newspapers of Singapore 1881-1912* (Singapore, 1967), pp. 111-41.
110. See *Lat Pau*, 30 November 1906, p. 1, 10 December 1906, pp. 1, 10, 22 May 1907, p. 10, 9 March 1908, p. 1, 10 March 1908, p. 1, 5 June 1908, pp. 1, 10; *Nanyang Tsung Hui Pao (The Union Times)*, 11 September 1908, p. 1, 19 September 1908, p. 3.

111. Dr Wu Lien-teh in his autobiography mistakenly placed the first anti-opium conference in March 1906; it should be March 1907. See Wu Lien-teh *op. cit.*, p. 237; 'The Anti-Opium Conference', in *The Straits Chinese Magazine*, Vol. 11, No. 1, (1907), pp. 35-6.
112. For the details of the conference, see Wu Lien-teh, *ibid.*
113. See 'Resolutions passed by the Straits Settlements and Federated Malay States Anti-Opium Conference held in Ipoh, Perak, Federated Malay States on the 8th and 9th March, 1907', in Appendix 38, S.S. & F.M.S. *Opium Commission 1908, Proceedings*, Vol. 3, pp. 130-31.
114. See 'Resolutions passed by the Straits Settlements and Federated Malay States Anti-Opium Conference held in Penang, on the 6th, 7th, and 8th March, 1908', in Appendix 39, S.S. & F.M.S. *Opium Commission 1908, Proceedings*, Vol. 3, pp. 131-34.
115. See 'Translation of a Chinese Leaflet published in Penang early in February, 1907' in Appendix 40, S.S. & F.M.S. *Opium Commission 1908, Proceedings*, Vol. 3, pp. 133-34.
116. The idea of economic sanctions was obviously not accepted by the majority of the participants of the two conferences. It was not included in the resolutions adopted by the conferences except in a more moderate form which appeared in Resolution No. 4 of the Ipoh Conference. It reads 'That this meeting calls upon all employers of labour to do everything in their power to discountenance the use of opium among those in their employment'. See 'Resolutions passed by the Straits Settlements and Federated Malay States, on the 8th and 9th March, 1907', in Appendix 38, S.S. & F.M.S. *Opium Commission 1908, Proceedings*, Vol. 3, p. 130.
117. See *Chong Shing Yit Pao*, 6 October 1902, p. 2.
118. *Ibid.*
119. Among the leading Chinese institutions were the Chinese Chamber of Commerce in Singapore, Yang Cheng School, Tao Nan School, Tuan Meng School, Ying Hsin School, Ch'i Fa School, the Nanyang Tsung Hui Pao, the Singapore Reading Club etc. There were 1,002 which Chinese shops pledged not to employ opium addicts as the result of 7 signature-collecting campaigns launched by the Anti-Opium Society of Singapore. See *Chong Shing Yit Pao*, 22 October 1908, 28 October 1908, p. 2, 31 October 1908, p. 2, 7 November 1908, p. 2, 10 November 1908, p. 2, 12 November 1908, p. 2, 21 November 1908, p. 3.
120. See *Nanyang Tsung Hui Pao*, 15 October 1908; p. 1; *Chong Shing Yit Pao* reported that a leading shop in Seremban, Kuang Sheng laid off employees who were opium smokers; this action was followed by Huang Wei-ying, the proprietor of Chop An Tai. See *Chong Shing Yit Pao*, 13 October 1908, p. 1.
121. See Wu Lien-teh, *op. cit.*, p. 241.
122. Dr Shut Chuan Yin was a government interpreter attached to the Police Court. In 1899, he left for America and England to study medicine. In 1904 he returned to Singapore to join Dr Lim Boon Keng in private practice. See A. Wright and H.A. Cartwright, *Twentieth Century Impressions of British Malaya* (Singapore, 1908), p. 160.
123. Both Dr Lim Boon Keng and Dr Wu Lien-teh were Queen Scholars, the former received his medical degree from the University of Edinburgh, while the latter received his medical training in Cambridge. See Khor Eng Hee, 'The Public Life of Lim Boon Keng'

- (B.A. Honours Thesis, University of Singapore, 1958); Wu Lien-teh, *The Plague Fighter*, pp. 155-97; see also Song Ong Siang, *One Hundred Years' History of the Chinese in Singapore*, pp. 235-36.
124. See Khor Eng-hee, 'The Public Life of Dr. Lim Boon Keng', p. 29; *Straits Chinese Magazine*, Vol. 4, No. 13, pp. 25-30, No. 14, pp. 49-57, Vol. 5, No. 17, pp. 58-60.
 125. Dr Wu Lien-teh recalled his involvement in the anti-opium movement as follows: 'Being then only twenty-five years old, and fired with high ideals and unlimited enthusiasm to help in a good cause, I plunged heart and soul into the anti-opium campaign regardless of any possible loss to me and my medical practice and the warnings of my wealthy friends ...'. See Wu Lien-teh, *The Plague Fighter*, pp. 236-37.
 126. For the activities of the reformists and revolutionaries in Singapore and Malaya during this period, see Yen Cheng-hwang, *The Overseas Chinese and the 1911 Revolution: With Special Reference to Singapore and Malaya* (Kuala Lumpur, 1976).
 127. See *Nanyang Tsung Hua Pao*, 30 July 1908, p. 3, 19 September 1908, p. 3, 6 October 1908, p. 2, 15 October 1908, p. 1, 22 October 1908, p. 2; *Chong Shing Yit Pao*, 31 August 1907, p. 3, 11 September 1908, p. 4, 6 October 1908, p. 2, 22 October 1908, p. 2, 28 October 1908, p. 2, 31 October 1908, p. 2, 7 November 1908, p. 2, 10 November 1908, p. 2, 12 November 1908, p. 2, 21 November 1908, p. 3.
 128. To identify Tan Boo Liat and Cheng P'in-t'ing as revolutionary and anti-opium leaders, see Yen Cheng-hwang, *The Overseas Chinese and the 1911 Revolution*, pp. 111, 124, 241, 280. Cheng U Wen, *op. cit.*, p. 57; *Chong Shing Yit Pao*, 6 October 1908, p. 2.
 129. See *Chong Shing Yit Pao*, 31 August 1907, p. 3.
 130. For the leading status of the Chinese Chamber of Commerce of Singapore in the local Chinese community, see 'Hsin-chia-po chung-hua shang-wu tsung-hui teng-chi i-shih-pu' (Minutes of the Chinese Chamber of Commerce of Singapore), Vol. 1; see also 'Hsin-chia-po chung-hua tsung-shang-hui shih-chi' (Historical Records of the Singapore Chinese Chamber of Commerce), in *Hsin-chia-po chung-hua tsung-shang-hui ta-sha lo-ch'eng chi-nien k'an* (*Souvenir of the Opening Ceremony of the Newly Completed Singapore Chinese Chamber of Commerce Building*) (Singapore, 1964).
 131. Foo Chee Choon (or romanized in mandarin as Hu Tzu-ch'un or known as Hu Kuo-lien in official Chinese records) was a Yung Ting Hakka. Born in China in 1859, came to Malaya with his father at the age of 13. He was most successful in tin mining in Perak, and was addressed as the 'King of Tin Mining'. See 'Hu Tzu-ch'un hsien sheng' (Mr Foo Chee Choon), in K'e Chia (*Hakka People*) (Penang, 1951), p. 570. Interview with Mr Foo Yin-fong (Grand nephew of Foo Chee Choon) on 9 October 1966 at his residence in Ipoh.
 132. See Wu Lien-teh, *op. cit.*, p. 238.
 133. See S.C. Miller, *The Unwelcome Immigrant: The American Image of the Chinese, 1785-1882* (Berkeley, 1974), p. 182.
 134. See C.F. Yong, *The New Gold Mountain: The Chinese in Australia 1901-1921* (Adelaide, 1977), p. 179.
 135. See Cheng U Wen, 'Opium in the Straits Settlements, 1867-1910', in *Journal of Southeast Asian History*, Vol. 2, No. 1 (March 1961), p. 62.

136. See Wu Lien-teh, *The Plague Fighter*, p. 246.
137. The five Europeans were John Anderson, Dr D.J. Galloway, Bishop W.F. Oldham, Dr W.R.C. Middleton and E.F.H. Edlin. The only Chinese member was Tan Jiak Kim.
138. Among the Commissioners, Middleton was the Principal Municipal Health Officer, while Tan Jiak Kim, Anderson and Galloway were unofficial members of the Legislative Council. See Cheng U Wen, *op. cit.*, p. 65.
139. *Ibid.*, p. 68.
140. See S.S. & F.M.S. *Opium Commission, 1908*, Vol. 1.

PART II

Culture and Politics in the Chinese Community



THE
 STATE OF MICHIGAN
 DEPARTMENT OF THE TREASURY
 OFFICE OF THE COMPTROLLER
 OF THE PUBLIC ACCOUNTS

CHAPTER 7

Ch'ing's Sale of Honours and the Chinese Leadership in Singapore and Malaya, 1877-1912*

The last decade of the nineteenth century and the turn of the twentieth century saw a flux of Ch'ing official titles among overseas Chinese leaders in Singapore and Malaya. They had formerly been excluded from imperial bureaucracy and holding titles in China; it then became possible to purchase honours without much effort. This represented a substantial change of the Ch'ing's attitude towards its overseas subjects. This article asks why the titles were made available, and why the overseas Chinese leaders were so eager to acquire them.

The Policy of the Ch'ing Government

Although its origin can be traced to the former Han dynasty in the second century B.C.,¹ the sale of honours was principally a Manchu institution.² Before the conquest of China proper in 1644, the Manchu Emperor Ch'ung Teh had already begun the practice in 1635 when a severe famine ravaged Manchuria;³ but the practice was not institutionalized until 1756 when the Emperor Ch'ien-lung issued two tables of prices for various offices and ranks available to Cantonese and Fukien purchasers. The reason for confining the offer to Cantonese and Fukien is uncertain – perhaps Kwangtung and Fukien had, in their rich merchants, most of the potential purchasers.⁴ With the decline of the dynasty, the sale of honours increased its momentum in the nineteenth century. In its first two decades Emperor Chia-ch'ing held 3 sales and raised 25,000 taels.⁵ His successor, Tao-kuang, developed the practice to its full maturity. In 1826, six years after ascending the throne, Tao-Kuang

Emperor had to meet the expenses of the Turkestan War. He held a large sale of civil and military offices and raised 6,000,000 taels. Throughout his reign (1821–1850), many price lists were issued; buyers were offered better and better offices and purchases increased tremendously. According to one estimate, the number of purchasers of the *Chien-sheng* 監生⁶ degree alone in all provinces (except Chihli) during the 30 years of the Tao-kuang reign was about 315,535.⁷ In the Ch'ien-lung period, the offices and ranks for sale to Kwangtung and Fukien were limited to the lower echelon.⁸ The number of officials entering the bureaucracy through purchases were not numerous, the influence on the government administrative machinery was marginal, and the core of bureaucracy remained unaffected. But during the Tao-kuang reign, the sale was gradually opened to all subjects in China, the ranks on sale moved from the seventh to fourth, and the offices on sale reached the circuit level,⁹ which was only a grade lower than provincial governor.¹⁰ The effect on the imperial bureaucracy became serious, as the administrative efficiency suffered from the flood of unqualified officials. The commercialization of offices encouraged and extended corruption in the civil service system,¹¹ and led to much maladministration.¹² From the Tao-kuang reign until the fall of the Manchu regime in 1912, the practice was continued and intensified.

Although the sale of titles was opened to all in 1843, that does not appear to have included the overseas Chinese. The first known grant of a title to a Chinese leader in Singapore came in 1869 when Cheang Hong Lim (Chang Fang-lin 章芳林, a leading merchant in Singapore) was awarded the title of *Tao-yuan* (道员)¹³ in recognition of his generous contribution to the defence funds of Fukien Province.¹⁴ Until then the exclusion of overseas Chinese from the 'imperial grace' was an aspect of the government's hostile attitude towards its overseas subjects who were traditionally considered to be either criminals or deserters of Chinese culture.¹⁵ But late in the century there was a great change in Ch'ing's official policy towards the overseas Chinese. A decree of 1893 withdrew the traditional restrictions and punishments of overseas Chinese and offered protection to those who returned to China.¹⁶ This was the culmination of a slow change of attitude since 1860.¹⁷ The first imperial consulate in Singapore was established in 1877.¹⁸ In 1887 the Governor-General of Hunan and Hupeh, Chang Chih-tung, suggested to the throne that by offering brevet titles and ranks to the overseas Chinese they could be induced to contribute funds to maintain the consulates in Singapore and Luzon as well as to purchase warships for protecting them.¹⁹ In the same year, a new title-selling regulation suggested by Li Hung-chang, the Governor-General of Chihli, was published in the

Lat Pau (叻報) in Singapore to inform readers that purchase of Ch'ing titles had become possible.²⁰ It had become general in Singapore and Malaya by 1889 when a complete price list of Ch'ing honours purchasable by overseas Chinese was published.²¹ From then onwards till the fall of the dynasty in 1912, brevet titles and ranks flooded the overseas market.

Several factors may have accounted for the new policy. The suppression of the Taiping, Nien and Muslim rebellions since 1860, and the Sino-French War in 1885, were expensive for the empire.²² Defeat in the First Sino-Japanese War in 1895 and the Boxer Uprising in 1901 and their burdensome indemnities²³ did further damage to the economy and the imperial finances. There was no margin of resources to meet new needs or natural calamities. So there was a strong need for overseas Chinese financial assistance. At the same time the wealth of the overseas Chinese was gradually made known to the Ch'ing government; at least two high-ranking officials had noticed the economic importance of the overseas subjects in the 1880s.²⁴ Thus, from funds to maintain imperial consulates to relief funds, defence funds, naval funds and national funds, overseas Chinese became one main target for appeal,²⁵ and brevet titles and ranks were the reward of those who responded.²⁶ The sale of honours was also a means of securing allegiance;²⁷ and it was later used as a political weapon to counter reformist and revolutionary influences in the Chinese communities in Singapore and Malaya.²⁸ Furthermore, the sales were a source of profit for some Ch'ing officials who were commissioned to carry out sales overseas.²⁹

During the period under study, two stages of development can be discerned. Until about 1889 the sales were disguised. Payments took the form of donations to relief funds. There was a lack of direct effort on the part of the Ch'ing government; when a calamity occurred in China, the relevant provincial government appealed for help through the Ch'ing Consul-General in Singapore,³⁰ or appointed local Chinese leaders there as agents.³¹ The success or failure of the appeal depended very much on the initiatives of the agents and the Consul-General. Both probably hinted to potential donors what sort of titles or ranks might be attracted by what amounts of donation. After a donation was made, the provincial authority would recommend the court to award appropriate honours to the donors.³² In the second stage (roughly after 1889), donation gave place to open sale. Price lists were widely publicized to attract potential purchasers,³³ and the Ch'ing provincial authorities became active salesmen. Besides maintaining the old channels through the Consul-General and the agents, they sent their own missions to conduct sales. In the last decade of the century, it was estimated

that about 40 officials were sent by the Ch'ing provincial authorities to carry out such tasks in Singapore and Malaya.³⁴

A sale mission varied from one to three persons,³⁵ depending on how serious the calamity was. The missions set up their offices in the shops of their agents.³⁶ With the help of the agents and the Consul-General, their presence was widely publicized. By statements in the local Chinese newspapers they made clear the source of their authority and their aims in coming overseas, and urged local inhabitants to contribute generously to their appeals.³⁷ They also published the price lists and conditions of the honours available.³⁸ These lists served as links between buyers and sellers. Any person who was interested could approach the sellers and their agents. After the money was paid and the donor's name appeared in the local Chinese newspapers, he was later recommended for the appropriate honours. In selecting his commodities, he had a great variety of choice: he could purchase a brevet degree like *Kung-sheng* (貢生) and *Chien-sheng* which would not cost him too much (less than 100 taels); he could purchase more prestigious titles such as *Tao-yuan* and *Chih-fu* (知府) which would cost him more than 1,000 taels, and he could also purchase as many titles and ranks as he could afford as well as titles and ranks for his sons or ancestors.³⁹ The popularity of this mode of purchase was not only because of its easy access to the general public,⁴⁰ but it also provided a convenient disguise for showing charitable spirit. If charitable spirit was an important quality for claiming leadership status in overseas Chinese communities,⁴¹ the identification of purchase with charity was undoubtedly an effective means to attract purchasers.

Although the public advertisement was an effective means to promote sale of honours, it usually had to be reinforced by private negotiations and assurances – the buyers were often wary, either suspecting the agents,⁴² or waiting for the market prices to slide down.⁴³ Some of the officials succeeded by their own initiative,⁴⁴ but they usually did well if they could enlist the help of the Consul-General or prominent Chinese leaders, who, with their reputation and influence in the local communities, could persuade many rich merchants to purchase titles. Of 40 officials sent by the Ch'ing provincial governments in the last decade of the nineteenth century, 6 who did very well in their sales had obtained direct assistance either from the Consul-General Tso Ping-lung or from some well-known leaders like Chang Pi-shih (張弼士 also known as Thio Tiau Siat or Chang Chen-hsun 張振勛). Some missions did well by prolonging their stay overseas broadening the organizational network. More agencies were set up in big cities, and more wealthy merchants were recruited into the

sale operation.⁴⁵ All these methods undoubtedly helped to reach more potential buyers.

An examination of several price lists for Singapore and Malaya during this period reveals two distinctive trends in the Ch'ing's policies. Firstly, the scope of the sale was widened in order to reach more potential purchasers. In the first price list published in 1889, sales were mainly confined to degree or title holders, such as *Kung-sheng*, *Chien-sheng*, *Chun-hsiu* (俊秀) and *Chih-fu*;⁴⁶ only low titles were available to commoners. The restriction put on commoners was probably in line with the practice in China as analysed earlier. But it also reflected the Ch'ing official's unfamiliarity with overseas conditions, for there were few degree and title holders in Singapore and Malaya. In the lists of 1894 and 1900 the restriction on purchasers was removed, and all honours were available to those who could afford to buy. Secondly, there was a simplification of advertising methods. In 1889, 51 different titles, ranks and degrees were listed, but in the 1894 and 1900 lists, the number was cut down to 4 and 3 respectively. More were certainly available – the published lists were not complete catalogues – but the publicity was simplified, and perhaps concentrated on the best-selling honours.

Because the initiative to sell titles overseas came chiefly from the provincial and circuit governments, the system developed some defects. The central government had to approve the sales but did not attempt to coordinate them, so the provincial authorities found themselves competing with one another. This tended to push prices down,⁴⁷ and to create confusion among the potential purchasers. The same lack of central control allowed abuses. Some purchasers were coerced,⁴⁸ some were overcharged and some were cheated.⁴⁹ Such things did the image of the imperial government no good in the eyes of overseas Chinese.⁵⁰

The Purchasers

Who wanted the titles, and for what reasons?

The overwhelming majority of overseas recipients obtained titles, ranks and degrees through purchase; very few got them through normal channels. Of 295 Ch'ing honours holders in Singapore and Malaya in the period from 1877 to 1912, only 5 – less than 2 per cent – got their honours through imperial examinations and military merits.⁵¹ Among the 5 kinds of purchase in the Ch'ing purchase system,⁵² 4 were obviously offered to overseas Chinese with slight modification: the purchase of brevet titles and ranks (*chuan hsu-hsien* 捐虛銜); the purchase of brevet degrees in the recruitment

system (*chuan ch'u-shen* 捐出身),⁵³ the purchase of additional grades (*chuan chia-chi* 捐加级) and the purchase of posthumous titles or ranks for ancestors (*chuan feng-tien* 捐封典). Among 291 purchasers in Singapore and Malaya,⁵⁴ 220 purchased brevet titles and ranks, 63 with brevet degrees, 4 with additional grades, and 47 purchased brevet honours for their ancestors.⁵⁵ There was overlapping – some bought brevet titles and ranks as well as additional grades and brevet ranks for their ancestors. It is notable that all purchases were confined to brevet honours. There was no sale of office, and even the *Kung-sheng* and *Chien-sheng* degrees which were the most commonly sold in China,⁵⁶ had to be changed to mere brevet. Overseas Chinese, though their financial assistance was needed in China, were thus still discriminated against by the Ch'ing government, perhaps from a shortage of offices as well as for traditional reasons.⁵⁷

Only a minority of the purchasers bought higher honours: 50 out of 291 in our sample, about 17.2 per cent. These honours included *Tao-yuan*, *Tao-t'ai* 道台 (*Kuan-ch'a* 观察), *Chih-fu* 知府 (*T'ai-shou* 太守), *Yuan-wai-lang* 员外郎, *Yen-yun-shih* 盐运使 (*Tu-chuan* 都转), *Chung-han* 中翰, *Pu-lang* 部郎, *Lang-chung* 郎中.⁵⁸ Most of these titles appeared to have cost more than 1,000 taels,⁵⁹ which was evidently beyond the capacity of ordinary merchants.⁶⁰ This leads us to conclude that about 17 per cent of the purchasers in Singapore and Malaya during the period under study were wealthy merchants. In fact, 17 of the 50 were exceedingly rich and the acknowledged leaders of the local Chinese communities. Well-known figures such as Chang Pi-shih, Foo Chee Choon (胡子春), Chang I-nan (张煜南), Cheang Hong Lim, Goh Siew Tin (吴寿珍) Hsieh Yung-kuang (谢荣光), Khoo Seok-wan, Lee Cheng Yan (李清渊), Low Kim Pong (刘金榜) and Tan Kim Cheng (陈金钟) belonged to this type. They donated thousands of dollars in order to get higher and higher honours to enhance their prestige. All of them purchased more than one title or rank,⁶¹ some were interested in many kinds of purchase,⁶² and some made many purchases in one kind.⁶³

The 82.8 per cent of the sample who purchased lower honours appeared to be less wealthy merchants. But some like Gan Eng Seng (颜永成), Liang Pi-ju (梁碧如), Li Chun-yuan and Wong Ah Fook (黄亚福) are exceptional. They were exceedingly rich and leading merchants in the communities. This indicates that not all rich merchants had to purchase higher honours to correspond with their social status. Payments varied from \$38 to \$690 (Mexican?). *T'ung-chih* (同知, or *Ssu-ma* 司马) (\$690), *Chou-t'ung* (州同, or *Chou-ssu-ma* 州司马)⁶⁴ (\$100) and *Chien-sheng* (\$38)⁶⁵ together accounted for 61.3 per cent of the lower honours purchased.⁶⁶ The reasons for their special popularity are still unknown.

Value System

Before analysing the purchasers' needs, it is necessary to discuss the value systems prevailing in the overseas Chinese communities. The communities in Singapore and Malaya were made up mainly of Chinese immigrants and their descendants from Kwangtung and Fukien.⁶⁷ They retained many traditional values prevailing in South China with regard to family, kinship, social and national relations. These included filial piety, chastity, reverence of the old, exaltation of office holding and education, and emphasis on reputation and social prestige.⁶⁸ The concepts of 'glorifying a family's name and ancestors' and 'office, wealth and prestige' were deep-rooted in the minds of overseas Chinese.⁶⁹ In their traditional form these fitted the pattern of upward social mobility in China: men sought office and power in order to gain wealth and prestige. But the social ladder was not like that in the overseas Chinese communities. Distance, and China's traditional prejudice against its overseas subjects, left most overseas Chinese no hope of gaining offices through the examination system. So the order of upward mobility was reversed. It was to gain wealth first and then use it to get prestige and power.

It would of course be misleading to over-emphasize the survival of traditional values in the overseas communities. The nature of the new communities made inevitable some adjustment both of values, and of the modes of mobility. Unlike China, where society was well-stratified,⁷⁰ these communities were very mobile.⁷¹ There were no royal family, no nobility, and no imperial bureaucracy. It was the rich who rose to become community leaders, and those who lost wealth descended the social ladder. Thus, the key social values, i.e. wealth, prestige and power, which Skinner's study found in the Chinese community in Bangkok in the 1950s,⁷² were basically the same as those prevailing in the Chinese communities in Singapore and Malaya during the period 1877-1912. In the presence of those general values, individual needs took various particular forms.

Psychology and Tradition

Since the majority of Chinese immigrants came from the lower class,⁷³ and since a large number of Chinese leaders in Singapore and Malaya during the period under study were self-made men,⁷⁴ there was a strong psychological need for titles. Before these leaders had made their fortunes overseas, most of them had cherished hopes or dreams in their humble childhoods. In the villages in South China where they were brought up, they might be impressed by stories or scenes of successful officials displayed in the traditional drama.⁷⁵ In these representations, 'persons rode on high horses,

flanked by a large number of retainers, and were respected and praised by onlookers'.⁷⁶ They might also be impressed when some of their rich relatives in villages or towns managed to enhance their social prestige by purchasing rights to wear official hats and belts.⁷⁷ Children might well dream of achieving high office, and of riding high on horseback surrounded by attendants. But in China, such dreams were shattered by cruel realities: there was no way up the social ladder for most of them. If there was any way at all, it was perhaps by making money overseas then achieving office and honour by purchase.⁷⁸ The few who did achieve this were very probably realizing not only adult ambitions, but also the dreams of childhood.

Whatever the drive for titles owed to such dreams, or to traditional values, it probably owed even more to the rights which titles brought along. An official title from the Ch'ing government entitled the holder to distinguish himself from commoners by wearing distinctive caps and costumes. There was a meticulous gradation of these most visible symbols of prestige. Though all officials from first rank down to ninth had their costumes in purple, their grades were distinguished by particular decorations of cap, robe and girdle.⁷⁹ The holder's parents, wife and children could likewise wear ceremonial robes and other garments indicating his rank.⁸⁰ In other ways, the title would also bring honour to the holder's ancestors, family, clan and his fellow villagers. His name and title would appear on plaques on the family's portals, shrine, clan temple and, in due course, tomb-stone;⁸¹ and his success would for a long time be discussed, admired and praised among his relatives, clansmen and friends. It was an excellent way of 'glorifying a family's name and ancestors'.

Social Prestige

In such fluid and mobile societies as the Chinese communities in Singapore and Malaya, although wealth was most valued, it did not guarantee social prestige. For prestige a man must use his wealth in one or both of two ways: display it, or buy titles with it. Many Chinese merchants in Singapore and Malaya were highly conscious of wealth. They wore expensive silk clothes, travelled in beautiful carriages, built grandiose houses, villas and gardens.⁸² Many of these luxuries were obviously meant for public display rather than private indulgence. Hoo Ah Kay (Whampoa), for example, the well-known Chinese merchant and the first Chinese Consul in Singapore, richly decorated his famous 'Nam Sang' garden (南生園). It was laid out by horticulturists from Canton, and was famous for its miniature rockeries,

artificial ponds, aquariums and curious dwarf bamboos and plants trimmed to resemble animals. It was so well-known that it became a place of resort for all Chinese in Singapore for more than a quarter of a century.⁸³ The women showed off too, wearing luxurious clothes and golden jewels, and setting fashions which many who could not afford such tastes nevertheless tried to imitate.⁸⁴ But all this display, though important to prestige, was not wholly satisfying because it could not be exclusive. Unlike societies in Dutch Java where imitation of the social prestige of the upper class was prohibited by the government,⁸⁵ the rich in the Chinese communities in Singapore and Malaya could not legally monopolize the symbols of prestige. There were occasional attempts at exclusiveness by self-imposed regulation. In 1869, for example, some Chinese merchants issued a circular request to their friends to distinguish the higher classes from the lower classes in the community by wearing stockings. Signatories who broke the rule had to pay a fine of \$30 which was to go to the Tan Tock Seng Hospital.⁸⁶ But these were not effective devices; titles were better.

Titles did not merely impress other title-holders. They were respected by the whole overseas community, and of course by the Ch'ing government. Local respect can be judged by the local Chinese newspapers – titled people were always listed in formal order of rank, and seem to have got special publicity.⁸⁷ There is no reason to doubt the official value attached to the titles. The Chinese Consul-General in Singapore, the official representative of the Ch'ing government in the Straits Settlements, and other visiting officials tended to respect and mix more with those leaders who held titles.⁸⁸ The Ch'ing authorities thus backed their own product and kept its value up. Wealth had to be actually seen to be admired, but titles could attract more official, indirect and widespread notice. All new titles and ranks were usually published in the local Chinese newspapers. Those who bought the higher titles and ranks or received other imperial favours got more than merely their names in the papers. They were often introduced to the readers at some length, and highly praised for their patriotism in contributing funds⁸⁹, or services to the Ch'ing government.⁹⁰ Such publicity for even the most modest honour would certainly invite greetings from relatives and friends.⁹¹ Those who had acquired higher honours would receive more greetings from larger numbers of the community. Some would magnify the occasion further by giving a big feast with band music and Chinese dramas, and inviting government dignitaries, community leaders, relatives, clansmen, fellow-villagers and friends.⁹² The guests would praise the host extravagantly, and talk much about the occasion afterwards.

Leadership

I believe that the purchase of titles had another, less obvious, function: it helped to confirm claims to leadership. Titles could strengthen the claims of rich merchants striving for leadership status, and confirm the position of those who were already *de facto* leaders. This effect could be seen most clearly on Ch'ing official occasions, such as the birthdays of the Emperor and Empress Dowager, New Year celebrations, and visits of Manchu princes and high-ranking officials. On these occasions, most merchants with respectable ranks and titles were likely to be invited to the Consulate.⁹³ Gradation of titles and ranks was fully displayed in elaborate ceremonies such as paying allegiance to the Emperor,⁹⁴ and in audience with princes and officials. Rank determined who should *kotow* first, and be introduced earliest to visiting dignitaries;⁹⁵ it also determined who should read out documents of allegiance.⁹⁶ Thus the local and visiting representatives of the Ch'ing government not only recognized the leadership status of those who purchased rank from them, but emphasized the hierarchic distinctions which encouraged everyone to buy as high as he could afford. The rubber stamp function was particularly important while the British colonial government offered no alternative. Until 1896, very few Chinese leaders in Singapore and Malaya were awarded British honours.⁹⁷ The lack of recognition on the British side had driven some Straits-born as well as many China-born leaders to seek Ch'ing titles and ranks.⁹⁸

De facto leaders, recognized as such by the local authorities, still bought as freely as anyone else. Many Chinese Kapitans in Singapore and Malaya during the period under study bought titles and ranks.⁹⁹ They proudly put on Mandarin robes and hats which can be seen in the photographs kept by their descendants.¹⁰⁰ They bought through much the same channels as other merchants, though they paid higher prices for the higher and more prestigious honours.¹⁰¹ The official recognition of their power and authority by the Malay rulers might seem to others to be a sufficient source of political authority, but their purchases seem to suggest that they themselves considered the Ch'ing government a more valuable source of it. The argument of G. W. Skinner that 'the traditional Chinese symbols of gentlemanly or bureaucratic status were less tempting to the overseas Chinese leader than were those of the larger society in Southeast Asia of which his community formed a part ...'¹⁰² appears to be invalid in the case of Singapore and Malaya, where during this period most overseas Chinese, especially China-born, were still strongly China-oriented.¹⁰³ They may have thought that the indigenous governments of Southeast Asia were inferior to that of China;¹⁰⁴ they may have wanted the only sort of honour that would impress their relatives and clansmen in China and give their descendants something to be proud of.

Apart from Kapitans, other publicly acknowledged leaders such as dialect group leaders and executive members of the Chinese Chambers of Commerce also sought titles and ranks. The well-known leaders of the Fukien community in Singapore at the end of the nineteenth century like Khoo Cheng Tiong (Ch'iu Cheng-chung in Mandarin, 邱正忠, father of Khoo Seok-wan) and Cheang Hong Lim purchased many honours.¹⁰⁵ Both of them also acquired posthumous ranks for their ancestors.¹⁰⁶ Cheang went even further to purchase titles for all of his 11 sons,¹⁰⁷ which appears to have been unprecedented among Chinese in Singapore and Malaya. (Lim Peng Siang, Lin Ping-hsiang, 林秉祥), a leader of Fukien community and one of the ten Vice-Presidents of the Singapore Chinese Chamber of Commerce in 1906, had obtained a Ch'ing title of *Hou-hsuan-tao* with feather after he had been widely recognized as a leader.¹⁰⁸ Beneath all these purchases by the de facto leaders lies not only the need of confirmation of already acquired leadership, but also a desire to transmit status to descendants. Unlike noble leadership in the pre-industrial societies in Europe and China, where transmission of status from one generation to another was guaranteed by blood descent, the leadership based on wealth in overseas Chinese communities could not guarantee its own continuity. This lack of security was acute for the many whose wealth was based on speculative business,¹⁰⁹ and more on personal shrewdness and thrift than on durable organization.¹¹⁰ Maurice Freedman observed that this particular insecurity drove many rich merchants in nineteenth century Singapore to seek Ch'ing titles and ranks.¹¹¹

Did the titles increase power, as well as celebrating and securing it? There are indications that some merchants who purchased titles and ranks after holding a Ch'ing Vice-Consulship in Penang might have used them to consolidate their official positions.¹¹² But generally there does not appear to have been much direct relation between the purchase of title and increase of power. Personal satisfaction, social prestige and the confirmation of powers already acquired seem usually to have been more important.

Conclusion

Several concluding remarks can be drawn from the above study. Owing to the financial needs of China, the Ch'ing government extended its sale of honours to the overseas Chinese. Such sales were partly aimed at helping to relieve natural calamities in China, and partly designed to induce overseas subjects to look to China, to preserve Chinese identity and to cultivate their political allegiance. The extension of the 'imperial grace' was welcomed by

the Chinese in Singapore and Malaya who were traditionally discriminated against by the imperial government. Most title purchase was by donation to certain relief funds which were sponsored by various provincial authorities. Agents and missions were appointed to carry out the sales. The success and failure depended very much on the cooperation of local Chinese leaders and the Ch'ing Consul-General, and on personal efforts. Four kinds of honours were offered: brevet titles and ranks; brevet degrees; additional grades and posthumous titles and ranks for ancestors; but no substantive offices or degrees were sold, so the overseas Chinese were still excluded from the imperial bureaucracy in China despite the change of the traditional policy towards overseas subjects in 1893. The exclusion was partly based on consideration of overcrowding of expectants to the limited official posts, and partly the legacy of the policy. Only about 17 per cent of all purchasers whom we can trace during this period were wealthy merchants. They could afford to pay more than 1,000 taels for each title; some of them were extremely wealthy and had purchased many honours. The majority of the remaining 83 per cent of the purchasers were less wealthy merchants who paid less than \$700 (Mexican?) for each title, and most of them had only one title or rank.

On the part of the overseas Chinese, there was a strong psychological need for the purchase of Ch'ing honours. This need arose partly from traditional values of glorifying the family's name and ancestors, and was partly connected with the social prestige that the honours brought along. But most important was the fact that Ch'ing honours served to recognize and confirm leadership status in the communities.

Endnotes

- * This article was first published in *Journal of Southeast Asian Studies*, Vol. 1, No. 2 (McGraw-Hill Far Eastern Publishers, Singapore, 1970), pp. 20-32.
- 1. The first recorded case took place in 115 B.C. during the reign of Emperor Wu Ti, when a flood occurred in South of the Yangtze. With winter approaching and a dearth of food, edicts were issued to invite contributions of grains with reward of office. See Hsieh, P.C., *The Government of China 1644-1911* (New York, 1966), pp. 105-06.
- 2. *Ibid.*
- 3. The Emperor adopted a suggestion by the Censor-General Tso Ko Fah that offices be the reward for those who contributed grains. *Ibid.*, p. 107.
- 4. Kwangtung and Fukien were the two coastal provinces which had extensive international trade in the mid-eighteenth century. According to one modern study, most purchasers of the Chien-sheng degree during the Tao-kuang reign came from Kwangtung, Kiangsu and Kiangsi Provinces where international trade had been developed. See Chung-li

- Chang, *The Chinese Gentry: Studies on Their Role in 19th Century Chinese Society* (Seattle, 1955), p. 105.
5. Gutzlaff, C., *China Opened* (London, 1838), Vol. 2, p. 356.
 6. Studentship of the Imperial Academy.
 7. See Chung-li Chang, *op. cit.*, p. 105.
 8. Ranks on sale were from ninth (the lowest) to seventh; offices on sale were *Li Mu* (吏目 Secretary), *Chu Pu* (主簿 Registrar) and *Hsien Cheng* (县丞 Assistant Magistrate) which were comparatively unimportant in the Ch'ing bureaucratic hierarchy. See the two price lists for sale of offices issued in 1756 reproduced by Hsieh, P.C., *The Government of China 1644-1911*, p. 108.
 9. In the price list issued in 1838, an ordinary subject could only purchase offices of ninth and eighth ranks at county level. But the price list in 1843 opened all sales to ordinary subjects up to fourth rank at the circuit level. An ordinary person could contribute 200 taels or more to buy a ninth rank, he could also contribute 30,000 taels or more to purchase a fourth rank and a circuit intendentship. *Ibid.*, p. 109.
 10. In the local government under the Ch'ing, a province was sub-divided into circuit (*Tao* 道), prefecture (*Fu* 府) and county or district (*Hsien* 县). Therefore, a circuit intendent ranked quite high in the provincial official hierarchy.
 11. Hsieh, P.C., *op. cit.*, pp. 112-3.
 12. See 'The Sale of Official Rank, Adopted by the Government of China for Increasing its Revenue', in *The Chinese Repository*, Vol. 18 (1849), p. 207.
 13. Senior Assistant Chief of Staff of a Division; Arms Inspector of a Regiment; Senior Adjutant of a Brigade; Commissioner Officer of a Regiment.
 14. See *Sing Po*, 20 April 1893, p. 5. Apart from Cheang Hong Lim, another leader who got an earlier title from the Ch'ing government was Hoo Ah Kay (Whampoa, or known as Hu Hsuan-tse 胡旋泽). When Hoo was appointed as the first Consul in Singapore by the Ch'ing Minister to Britain, Kuo Sung-t'ao (郭嵩焘), his name was mentioned with a title of *Tao-yuan* in the Kuo's memorial to the throne. Obviously, Hoo must have got his title earlier than 1877. See 'Memorial of Kuo Sung-t'ao to the throne for the Establishment of Singapore Consulate dated 3rd October 1877', in *Ch'ing-chi wai-chiao shih-liao* (Documents of Ch'ing Foreign Affairs), Vol. 11, pp. 13-5.
 15. See Ta Ch'en, *Emigrant Communities in South China*, p. 51.
 16. See Kuang-hsu-ch'ao t'ung-hua lu (Official Documents of the Kuang-hsu Reign), Vol. 3, pp. 3243-44.
 17. In the ratification of the Treaty of Tientsin reached in October 1860, the British government secured legal right to import Chinese coolies (labourers) into its colonies and dependencies. Thus, the official restrictions put on Chinese immigrants were partly removed. See Hertslet, G.E.P., *Treaties Between Britain and China, and Between China and Foreign Powers*, Vol. 1, No. 8, p. 48.
 18. With regard to the causes leading to the establishment and the role played by the Imperial Ch'ing Consulate in the local Chinese communities, there is a detailed and

- useful study by Wen Chung-chi in his 'The Nineteenth Century Imperial Chinese Consulate in the Straits Settlements' (Unpublished M.A. thesis, University of Singapore, 1964).
19. See Wang Chin-ch'ing (ed.), *Chang Wen-hsiang Kung ch'uan-chi* (Collected Works of Chang Chih-tung), Vol. 1, pp. 473-75.
 20. *Lat Pau*, 24 October 1887, p. 5.
 21. There were 47 kinds of titles on sale, ranging from 38.40 tael (for a Pa-tsung 把總) to 1679.36 tael (for a Tao-yuan). See *Lat Pau*, 17 October 1889, p. 6.
 22. See Cammann, S., 'The Development of the Mandarin Square', in *Harvard Journal of Asiatic Studies*, Vol. 8 (1944-1945), p. 88.
 23. The indemnities resulting from the Sino-Japanese War and the Boxer Uprising were estimated at 650 million taels, while the total revenue of the Ch'ing central government in the 1890s was estimated at 80 to 90 million taels. See Chi-ming Hao, *Foreign Investment and Economic Development in China 1840-1937* (Massachusetts, 1965), pp. 24-5, 131-32.
 24. In 1886, Chang Chih-tung, the Governor-General of Hunan and Hupeh, emphasized the importance of annual remittances by overseas Chinese to their families in China. He estimated that such a remittance might amount to 20,000,000 dollars (Mexican ?). Hsueh Fu-ch'eng (薛福成), the Chinese Minister to Britain, France, Italy and Belgium, also estimated in 1890 that the annual remittances by Chinese in America alone amount to 8,000,000 taels. See Wang Chin-ch'ing (ed.), *op. cit.*, Vol. 1, pp. 333-34; Hsueh Fu-ch'eng, *Hsueh Fu-ch'eng ch'uan-chi* (Collected Works of Hsueh Fu-ch'eng), *hai-wai wen-pien*, Vol. 1 p. 7.
 25. See *Ta-ch'ing teh-tsung ching-huang-ti shih-lu* (Veritable Records of the Emperor Kuang Hsu), Vol. 506, p. 13a; *The Union Times*, 10 May 1909, p. 1, 2 June 1909, p. 1.
 26. See *Cheng-chih kuan-pao* (The Ch'ing Government Gazette), No. 15 (1908), pp. 147-48; *Lat Pau*, 2 July 1906, p. 3; *Sing Po*, 20 April 1893, p. 5.
 27. See Wen Chung-chi, *op. cit.*, pp. 267-73; 'Report by Mr. G.T. Hare, Assistant Protector of Chinese, Singapore dated 30th September 1896', enclosed in Gov. to Sec. State, 6 October 1896, CO. 273/218 (hereafter referred to as 'Hare's Report').
 28. From 1900 to 1911, both Chinese reformist and revolutionary leaders had strongly appealed to the Chinese in Singapore and Malaya for financial and political support. Details can be referred to in my thesis entitled 'The Chinese Revolutionary Movement in Malaya 1900-1911' (an unpublished Ph.D. thesis of the Australian National University in Canberra).
 29. According to G.T. Hare, honours sold to overseas Chinese in the Straits Settlements by the Ch'ing officials were at a higher rate than that required by the Board of Offices at Peking. See 'Hare's Report', p. 53.
 30. In December 1888, a letter was sent by the Circuit Intendent of Shanghai, Kung Chao-yuan (龔昭璣) to the Ch'ing Consul-General in Singapore, Tso Ping-lung (左秉隆), urging him to help to raise money for the Anhwei drought. See *Lat Pau*, 2 January 1889, p. 2.
 31. After a flood had devastated the Cheng Chou prefecture in Honan in 1887, a Chinese leader in Singapore, Li Ch'iu-p'ing (李秋坪), was appointed by the Honan provincial

- government to raise money for flood relief. Li published a notice in the *Lat Pau* (the only Chinese newspaper in Singapore during that time) urging donations. See *Lat Pau*, 4 January 1888, p. 2.
32. In a donation of \$5,000 (Mexican ?) to the Waichow Flood Relief Funds in Kwangtung in 1888, the Kapitan China of Kuala Lumpur, Yeh Chih-ying (叶致英, or Po-hsiung 伯雄) was recommended by the Governor of Kwangtung for the award of a votive tablet. See *Lat Pau*, 1 September 1888, p. 2.
 33. See *Lat Pau*, 17 October 1889, p. 6; *Sing Po*, 5 March 1894, p. 6; *Thien Nan Shin Pao*, 3 December 1900, p. 1; *Chung Shing Yit Pao*, 25 & 26 September 1907, p. 5.
 34. This estimate was made by G.T. Hare. Since keeping himself informed of what was going on in the local Chinese communities was one of his important functions. Hare's estimate may be very close to the actual number of Chinese officials sent to Singapore and Malaya in the few years before 1896. See 'Hare's Report', pp. 56-8.
 35. The mission sent by a circuit government of Fukien at the beginning of 1891 to help to raise funds for the Hopei Flood Relief Funds consisted of three officials: Wang K'uan (王寬), Ch'iu Hung-yu (邱鴻玉), and Chuang Sung-ling (庄嵩齡). In many other cases, only one official was sent. See *Lat Pau*, 4 December 1890, p. 2, 5 January 1891, p. 6; Khoo Seok-wan, *Wu-pai shih-tung-t'ien hui-ch'en*, Vol. 3, p. 25; *Cheng-chih kuan-pao* (*The Ch'ing Government Gazette*), No. 27 (1909), p. 257.
 36. Ho Long Kan, a Northerner, lived in the Chop 'Kwong Sang Lung' in South Bridge Road, Singapore; Li Chi-Thin (李芝田 Li Chih-t'ien), a Cantonese, lived in the Chop 'Chu Kwong Lan' in Market Street, Singapore. Che Pan Mun, a Hupeh native, lived in Bun Hin & Co. in Malacca Street and then moved to Chop An Ho in Teluk Ayer Street, Singapore. See 'Hare's Report', p. 53.
 37. *Lat Pau*, 5 January 1890, p. 6.
 38. *Lat Pau*, 17 October 1889, p. 6; *Sing Po*, 5 March 1894, p. 6; *Thien Nan Shin Pao*, 3 December 1900, p. 1.
 39. In the period from 1881 to 1903, there were at least 47 Chinese in Singapore and Malaya purchasing brevet ranks for their ancestors. Ranks purchased ranged from first to ninth. See an unpublished list compiled by the author from *Lat Pau*, *Sing Po* and *Thien Nan Shin Pao* of this period.
 40. From 1888 till the downfall of the Ch'ing dynasty in 1912, almost every year a relief fund was available in Singapore and Malaya. The Honan Flood Relief Funds in 1888, the Shantung Flood Relief Funds in 1889, the Kiangsu and Chekiang Relief Funds in 1890, the Hopei Flood Relief Funds in 1891, the Hupeh Relief Funds in 1892 and 1894, and the Foochow Flood Relief Funds in 1900 are only the major ones known in this period. See *Lat Pau*, 4 January 1888, p. 2, 2 January 1889, p. 2, 9 February 1889, p. 5, 17 October 1889, p. 6, 12 March 1890, p. 6, 5 January 1891, p. 6; *Thien Nan Shin Pao*, 3 December 1900, p. 1; Khoo Seok-wan, *op. cit.*, Vol. 3, p. 25.
 41. See Yong Ching Fatt, 'Chinese Leadership in Nineteenth Century Singapore', in *Hsin-she Hsueh-pao* (*Journal of the Island Society*), Vol. 1, December 1967, p. 7 (independent pages).
 42. According to G.T. Hare, many buyers, particularly those who bought from Wan Fai Shan and Ho Lung Kan had not received their honours from the Board of Offices. Certainly this would affect confidence of potential buyers. See 'Hare's Report', p. 54.

43. There was a downward trend of price after 1890. This might have affected the attitude of some potential buyers. See *Lat Pau*, 4 December 1890, p. 2.
44. For instance, Che Pan Mun, a Hupeh native, did a good deal of business during his five-year stay in Singapore. He toured widely throughout Malay Peninsula, Indo-China and Dutch East Indies. He contacted potential purchasers, and set up three agencies in Singapore and one in Perak. See 'Hare's Report', p. 53.
45. The best example was the case of the mission which arrived in Singapore in 1889 for the purpose of raising funds for the Shantung flood relief. The mission set up its office in Singapore, with the help of two local leaders, Wu Chin-ch'ing (吴进卿) and Wu K'uei-fu (吴俊甫). It started a sales drive. Evidently it was not very successful after three years' stay. A statement was published in the *Lat Pau* in 1892 that the mission would extend its stay for another year, and another two agencies were opened in Kuala Lumpur and Penang. Well-known leaders like Kapitan China of Kuala Lumpur, Yap Kuan-seng (叶观盛) and Lim Hua Chiam (林花结) of Penang were recruited. See *Lat Pau*, 24 May 1892, p. 6.
46. K'ing-sheng, Imperial studentship or Senior Licentiate; *Chun-hsiu*, a person before competing for the right to term himself *T'ung-sheng* (童生 student) is designated in complimentary parlance, *Chun-hsiu* which means 'man of promise'; *Chih-fu*, Prefect.
47. In the 1900 price list, it was stated that buyers would get big discount for purchases of brevet degrees, titles and honours for their ancestors. See *Thien Nan Shin Pao*, 3 December 1900, p. 1. It was also reported in the *Lat Pau* that one buyer who purchased a brevet *Chien-sheng* degree, a *Tung-chih* title with feather and one grade plus fourth rank for his ancestors, had paid about 800 taels less in the donation to the Hopei Flood Relief Funds in 1890 than the same honours cost in the Shantung Flood Relief Funds in 1889. See *Lat Pau*, 4 December 1890, p. 2.
48. See 'Hare's Report', p. 46.
49. *Ibid.*, pp. 54-5.
50. In September 1909, a satire was published in the *Lat Pau* entitled 'Suggestion for Running Lottery of Honours Reward' in which the author ridiculed Ch'ing sale of titles. See *Lat Pau*, 17 September 1909, p. 9.
51. They were Lin Kuo-jui (林国瑞, Fukien) with military *Chin-shih* degree. Khoo Seok-wan (邱毅园, Fukien) with a *Chu-jen* degree, Chang K'o-ch'eng (张克诚, Hakka) with a *Chu-jen* degree, Cheng Hung-liang (郑鸿樑, Fukien) with a fifth rank by military merit, and Han Hsu (韩旭, Cantonese) with a fifth rank by military merit. See *Sing Po*, 8 April 1896, p. 4, 13 April 1897, p. 5; *Thien Nan Shin Pao*, 28 September 1901, p. 2; *Lat Pau*, 5 July 1906, p. 7.
52. The five kinds were the purchase of brevet ranks and titles, purchase of degrees in the recruitment system, purchase of substantive posts (*shih-kuan* 实官, known as purchase of office), purchase of additional grades and purchase of posthumous titles. See Marsh, R.M., 'The Venality of Provincial Office in China and in Comparative Perspective', in *Comparative Studies in Society and History*, Vol. 4, p. 456.
53. This purchase of brevet degrees is evidently derived and modified slightly from the purchase of degrees in China. The brevet degrees did not entitle the holders to take part in any further examinations, or hold any official posts.

54. Five from 295 should leave 290. But Khoo Seok-wan, one of the five who got his *Chiu-jen* degree through examinations, also purchased titles from the Ch'ing government.
55. These figures are compiled from the *Thien Nan Shin Pao* (1898-1903); *Sing Po* (1892-1897); *Lat Pau* (1887-1896) (1906-1909); *Jit Shin Pau* 1900; *Chung Shing Yit Pao* 1907; *Ta-ch'ing teh-tsung ching-huang-ti shih-lu* (Veritable Records of the Emperor Kuang Hsu); *Ta-ch'ing hsuian-tung cheng-chi* (Veritable Records of the Emperor Hsuan Tung); *Cheng-chih kuan-pao* (The Ch'ing Government Gazette); *Kuang-hsu-ch'ao tung-hua lu* (Official Documents of the Kuang Hsu Reign) and the Tsungli Yamen Archives (unpublished, kept in Taipei, Taiwan).
56. Chung-li Chang, *The Chinese Gentry: Studies on Their Role on Nineteenth Century Chinese Society*, pp. 19-20, 104-07.
57. Popular sale of office in China created a serious problem for the bureaucracy which obviously could not absorb all purchasers. The result was that a number of expectants, either through examination or purchase, had to wait for many years before they could be filled. In 1828, the Governor of Szechwan memorialized the Emperor Tao-kuang to enjoin the Board of Offices not to send him any more supernumeraries to wait for vacancies, because he had already as many expectants as would last him for several years. See Gutzlaff, C., *China Opened* (London, 1838), Vol. 2, pp. 356-58.
58. *Tao-t'ai*, Intendent of circuit; *Yuan-wai-lang*, Second-class Secretary of a Board; *Yen-yun-shih*, Salt Comptroller; *Chung-han*, Secretary of the Grand Secretariat; *Pu-lang*, Departmental Directors of Boards; *Lang-chung*, Senior Secretary of a Board.
59. For a *Kung-sheng* or *Chien-sheng* to purchase a title of *Tao-yuan*, he had to pay 1,679 taels; if he wanted the title of *Chih-fu*, 1,391 taels; that of *lang-chung* 1,228 and that of *Yuan-wai-lang*, 1,024 taels. See *Lat Pau*, 17 October 1889, p. 6; One tael was slightly bigger than one Mexican dollar.
60. According to Tan Chor-nam, (陈楚楠), a Chinese revolutionary leader and a rich merchant in Singapore during that time, about 1,000 to 2,000 Straits dollars could finance an ordinary shop in Singapore. Thus, it was impossible for an ordinary merchant to pay 1,000 taels to purchase an honour. Tan Chor-nam, interview on 7 August 1966 at his residence in Singapore.
61. There were at least 31 Chinese merchants who purchased more than one title or rank during the period under study.
62. Perhaps Cheang Hong Lim is the best example. In 1869, he first obtained a *Tao-yuan* title by contributing to the Fukien Defence Funds; in 1881, he purchased three grades and 2nd rank for his three generation ancestors (parents, grandparents and great grandparents) through donation to the famine relief funds for Chihli Province; in 1888, he purchased the right to wear feather through another contribution to the Cheng Chou Flood Relief Funds; in 1889, he further purchased a *Yen-yun-shih* title with three additional grades and 1st rank for his three generation ancestors by another donation of more than \$10,000 (Mexican ?). See *Sing Po*, 20 April 1893, p. 5.
63. The best example is Wu Chin-ch'ing (Wu Hsin-k'o or Wu I-ting). Wu purchased five different titles within eight years (1889-1896). He purchased titles higher and higher from *Tzu-cheng* (賈政) to *Fang-po* (方伯), *Tao-t'ai* to *Yen-yun-shih* with feather in 1896. See *Lat Pau*, 26 March 1889, p. 5, 13 August 1890, p. 2; *Sing Po*, 10 February 1892,

- p. 4, 16 March 1893, p. 5, 4 April 1893, p. 5, 3 March 1894, p. 4, 18 February 1895, p. 5, 8 April 1896, p. 4.
64. *Tung-chih*, Sub-prefect; *Ssu-ma*, epistolary style of *Tung-chih*; *Chou-t'ung*, First-class Assistant Department Magistrate; *Chou-ssu-ma*, epistolary style of *Chou-t'ung*.
 65. See the price list issued by the Bureau raising funds for the flood and drought in Chihli, Shantung and Kiangsu Provinces. *Sing Po*, 5 March 1894, p. 6.
 66. Among 233 lower honours, 54 were *T'ung-chih*, 37 *Chou-t'ung* and 52 *Chien-sheng*.
 67. The 1891 Census of the Straits Settlements gave a total of Chinese population at 227,989 including Cantonese 42,008, Teochew 43,791, Khek (Hakka) 16,736, Hailam (Hainanese) 15,938, Hokkien (Fukien) 74,759 and Straits-born (Babas) 34,757.
 68. See Yen Ching-hwang, 'The Chinese Revolutionary Movement in Malaya, 1900-1911' (Unpublished Ph.D. thesis, Australian National University, Canberra), Vol. 1, pp. 20-3.
 69. See the discussion of these concepts in two editorials in the *Sing Po*, entitled 'Chinese Merchants in Singapore Gradually Realize the Honour of Reputation and Prestige' and 'On Being Officials'. *Sing Po*, 9 August 1892, pp. 1 and 8, 18 April 1893, p. 1.
 70. In nineteenth-century China, there were three social strata: ruling class (nobility and officialdom), ordinary commoners and degraded people. Commoners were sub-divided into *Shih* (scholars), *Nung* (farmers), *Kung* (artisans and craftsmen) and *Shang* (merchants and traders). See Ping-ti Ho, *The Ladder of Success In Imperial China* (New York, 1964), pp. 17-9.
 71. See a useful discussion on the application of the concept of traditional Chinese social class to the overseas Chinese communities in Singapore and Malaya by Professor Wang Gungwu in his 'Traditional Leadership in a New Nation', in G. Wijeyewardene (ed.), *Leadership and Authority: A Symposium* (Singapore, 1968), pp. 210-11.
 72. Skinner, G.W., *Leadership and Power in the Chinese Community of Thailand* (New York, 1967), pp. 80-3.
 73. Statistics compiled by the Government of the Straits Settlements show that an overwhelming majority of newly arrived immigrants became mining and agricultural labourers. See *Annual Departmental Reports of the Straits Settlements for 1904, 1905 and 1908*, pp. 107, 629 and 120 respectively.
 74. See Yong Ching Fatt, 'Chinese Leadership in Nineteenth Century Singapore', in *Hsin-she Hsueh-pao (Journal of the Island Society)*, Vol. 1, December 1967, p. 6 (independent pages).
 75. Even during the 1940s, traditional Chinese drama was still the only entertainment available in many villages in South China. The author recalls his own experience in a village in the Yung-ch'un district in South Fukien, he, like many other village children, was deeply impressed by those scenes of successful officials and generals.
 76. From the vivid description of the image of officials among Chinese as well as overseas Chinese by the *Sing Po*'s editor. See *Sing Po*, 9 August 1892, p. 1.
 77. The practice of purchasing a nominal post of *Tien-li* (clerk in charge of documents) by the propertied class in rural areas seems to have been quite popular throughout China under the Ch'ing. The money derived from this source was used by Magistrates to buy

- stationery. See T'ung-tsu Ch'u, *Local Government in China Under the Ch'ing* (Massachusetts, 1962), p. 39.
78. In an editorial entitled 'On Becoming Officials', the editor of the *Sing Po* stated that many rich merchants were prepared to contribute large sums of money to purchase titles in order to gain honour. See *Sing Po*, 18 April 1893, p. 1.
 79. For example, a fourth rank official wore a pelican embroidered upon his robe, a deep purple-coloured opaque stone button on his cap, and his girdle had four golden squares and a silver button. But an official of third rank had a peacock on his robe, a sapphire button on his cap, and four golden squares and sapphires on his girdle. See Sitt, H.C., *China and the Chinese*, Vol. 2, pp. 378-79.
 80. Conforming to the Manchu custom, the wives of Ch'ing officials or title-holders were required to wear ceremonial robes identical with those of their husbands, and after the use of squares was prescribed in 1652, they were required to wear those of their husbands' rank. Parents and children (except married daughters) had the same rights to wear corresponding costumes. See Cammann, S., 'The Development of the Mandarin Square', in *The Harvard Journal of Asiatic Studies*, Vol. 8 (1944-1945), pp. 84-5.
 81. This practice was very popular throughout China. From Dr Francis L.K. Hsu's observation in the West Town in Yunnan Province from 1941 to 1943, we still can find some traces of such practice. See Hsu, L.K., *Under the Ancestors' Shadow: Chinese Culture and Personality* (London, 1949), pp. 30-55.
 82. Few of many examples can be listed here. Wu I-ting 吳翼鼎 (Wu Chin-ch'ing) and Cheang Hong Lim (Chang Ming-yun 章明云), two wealthy merchants in Singapore had their famous villas and gardens 'Teh Yuan Garden' (德源園) and 'Ming Yun Villa' (明云別墅). Teo Eng-hock (張永福), another rich merchant who later became a well-known revolutionary leader in Singapore, had his famous 'Wan Ch'ing Villa' (晚晴園). This practice became a tradition for some rich Chinese merchants to follow in later periods. One of the famous villas which becomes a popular resort in Singapore today is the 'Ho-pa Villa' (虎豹別墅 Tiger and Leopard). See *Lat Pau*, 5 June 1888, p. 1; *Sing Po*, 3 May 1892, p. 1; Teo Eng-hock, *Nanyang yu chuang-li min-kuo* (*Southeast Asia and the Founding of the Chinese Republic*), pp. 9-10.
 83. Song Ong Siang, *One hundred Year's History of the Chinese in Singapore* (Reprinted edition, Singapore, 1967), pp. 52-3.
 84. In an editorial on 4 November 1890, the editor of the *Lat Pau* said he was appalled by the trend towards luxury in Singapore. A fatalist, he warned those who displayed their richness in material life that they would bear the consequences in the cycle of fortune. In another editorial, he regretted that gold jewellery was considered to be the only ornaments for women, and those who wore silver jewellery would be laughed at. See *Lat Pau*, 10 December 1890, p. 1.
 85. In the social structure of nineteenth-century colonial society in Java, class distinction was identical with colour line. Punitive measures were framed to ensure that the colour line was not overstepped. It was forbidden to dress otherwise than in the manner customary in one's own population group. See Wertheim, W.F., *Indonesian Society in Transition* (The Hague, 1964), p. 138.
 86. Song Ong Siang, *op. cit.*, p. 153.

87. The editor of the *Lat Pau*, Yeh Chi-yuen (a pseudonym of Hsing-ngo-sheng 惺聶生) reported his experience of a feast given by Wu I-ting in Wu's Teh Yuan garden. Among the honourable guests were Tso Ping-lung (左秉隆), Ch'iu Chung-po (邱忠波), Wu Tan-ju (吳談如), Wu K'uei-fu (吳燮甫), Huang Chi-ting (黃吉亭), Tso Shu-nan (左樹南), Mo Han-ch'ing (莫翰卿) and Ch'en Pi-ta (陳必達). Tso's name came first because he was the Ch'ing Consul-General, and the rest were evidently arranged according to the gradation of their titles. See *Lat Pau*, 5 June 1888, p. 1.
88. *Ibid.*
89. One of the many examples was the case of Wu I-ting (Wu Chin-ch'ing) in 1887. Wu contributed a big sum of money to the Fukien Defence Funds through Tan Kim Cheng who acted as agent for the Fukien government. Wu was recommended by the Governor of Fukien to the court for reward. A tablet with inscriptions from the Emperor was the imperial favour. *Lat Pau* gave it wide publicity; eulogy and praise were given to him. See *Lat Pau*, 26 August 1887, p. 2.
90. Another Chinese leader, Ch'en Ta-erh (陳大耳) who helped the Fukien government to raise defence funds in Singapore and Malaya, was also given an imperial tablet. He also received praise and eulogy from the newspaper. See *Lat Pau*, 30 January 1888, p. 2.
91. This practice is still very popular among overseas Chinese in Singapore and Malaysia. Those who obtain titles from Sultans and the Yang Di-pertuan Agong are immediately greeted by their relatives, clansmen, friends and fellow-villagers either through newspapers or presenting inscribed tablets.
92. A typical example was the case of Khoo Seok-wan. Khoo was originally a *Chu-jen* and a reformist leader who strongly supported K'ang Yu-wei's reform movement. A quarrel with K'ang led him to change his loyalty and support the Ch'ing government. He contributed 20,000 taels to the government as a token of repentance for his past mistake. In return, he was awarded a fourth rank and a title of *Chu-shih* in 1901. Khoo was greeted by about 300 relatives, clansmen and friends. A big feast was given in his shop Heng Chun where wine was served, and Malay, Fukien and Cantonese bands played. See *Thien Nan Shin Pao*, 26 October 1901, p. 9.
93. A few days before such official occasions, the Ch'ing Consul-General posted notices on a board outside the Consulate and published them in the local Chinese newspapers. He asked all Chinese to observe them. He also invited those Chinese who were willing to pay homage to the Emperor to attend official receptions in the Consulate. In fact, those welcome to the receptions got invitations. See *Lat Pau*, 27 February 1889, p. 2; *Thien Nan Shin Pao*, 21 November 1898, p. 2.
94. On occasions such as the birthdays of the Emperor and Empress Dowager or the Emperor's wedding day, an official reception was held in the Consulate where dragon tablets symbolizing the authority of the throne were set up. The invited Chinese leaders were to line up in order of rank and title to pay allegiance by performing the most solemn three kneels and nine prostrations ceremony. After the ceremony, one senior member among them was selected to read a written document to pledge the eternal and unalterable loyalty of the Chinese community to the Emperor. See *Lat Pau*, 11 February 1889, p. 2; 7 March 1889, p. 2; *Singapore Free Press*, 4 March 1889, p. 2.
95. In a stopover in Singapore in 1896 on his way to Russia, Li Hung-chang, the most

prominent Ch'ing high-ranking official, was given a warm welcome by the Chinese communities in Singapore. About 30 leaders were invited by the Ch'ing Consul-General to meet him. All of them had titles or ranks, and were introduced in order of their status. Their names and titles also appeared, in hierarchic order, in the local Chinese newspapers. See *Sing Po*, 8 April 1896, p. 4.

96. See *Lat Pau*, 11 February 1889, p. 2, 7 March 1889, p. 2.
97. According to the Assistant Protector of Chinese in Singapore, G.T. Hare, who wrote in 1896, the only Chinese leader with a British honour was Hoo Ah Kay. He was the first Chinese member of the Legislative Council and was made a Companion of the Order of Saint Michael and Saint George. See 'Hare's Report', p. 50.
98. *Ibid.*
99. Tan Kim Cheng (Ch'en Chin-chung in Mandarin), the well-known Chinese Kapitan in Singapore, held a title of *Tao-t'ai*. Chang Keng Kwee (郑景贵 Cheng Ching-kuei in Mandarin, or known as Chung Keng Kwee and Ah Quee), another well-known Kapitan in Perak, was holding a second rank for himself and the same ranks for three generations of his ancestors. The Kapitan China of Kuala Lumpur, Yeh Chih-ying was awarded an inscribed tablet by the Ch'ing court. See *Lat Pau*, 12 August 1889, p. 5, 31 May 1890, p. 2; Wong, C.S., *A Gallery of Chinese Kapitans* (Singapore, 1963), p. 80.
100. From the photographs reproduced in C.S. Wong's *A Gallery of Chinese Kapitans*, we know further that Kapitan Tai Choon-thow (Tai Ch'un-t'ao in Mandarin, 戴春桃) of Kedah, Kapitan Chin Ah Yam (Ch'en Ya-yen in Mandarin, 陈亚炎) of Perak and another Kapitan of Perak Khaw Boo-aun (Hsu Wu-an in Mandarin, 许武安) had possessed Ch'ing honours which entitled them to put on such Mandarin robes and hats. See Wong, C.S., *op. cit.*, plates 2, 8 and 12. G.W. Skinner also mentioned that he was shown pictures of Kapitans decked out in Mandarin robes during his tours to four cities of Java. See Skinner, G.W., 'Overseas Chinese Leadership: Paradigm for a Paradox', note 36, in G. Wijeyewardene (ed.), *Leadership and Authority* (Singapore, 1968), p. 205.
101. The *Tao-t'ai* title held by Tan Kim Ching and the 2nd rank held by Chang Keng Kwee and the inscribed tablet from the Emperor belonged to higher and more prestigious honours.
102. Skinner, G.W., *op. cit.*, in Wijeyewardene, G. (ed.), *Leadership and Authority*, p. 197.
103. China-orientation can be seen clearly from the fact that a number of rich merchants sent their children to China for education and their bodies back for entombment. The bodies of Khoo Cheng Tieng, Cheang Hong Lim and Tan T'ai (Ch'en Tai in Mandarin, 陈泰, father of Tan Chor-nam), three well-known rich merchants in Singapore, were sent back to their home villages in Southern Fukien. See Vaughan, J.D., *The Manners and Customs of the Chinese of the Straits Settlements* (Singapore, 1879), p. 31; Tseng Tsung-yen, 'Epitaph of Khoo Cheng Tieng', in *Sing Po*, 25 November 1896, pp. 5, 8; 'Obituary of Cheang Hong Lim', in *Sing Po*, 20 April 1893, p. 5; Tan Chor-nam, interview on 7 August 1966 at his residence in Singapore.
104. The fact that most of the Kapitans who held Ch'ing honours had their photographs taken in Ch'ing official costume rather than that of Kapitan's indicates such preference.
105. *Sing Po*, 20 April 1893, p. 5, 25 November 1896, pp. 5, 8.

106. Both had acquired first rank for their ancestors up to three generations. *Ibid.*
107. A full list of their names and titles can be found in the 'Obituary of Cheang Hong Lim', in *Sing Po*, 20 April 1893, p. 5.
108. Lin was elected as Vice-President of the Singapore Chinese Chamber of Commerce in April 1906, and obtained his title in July of the same year. See Minutes of the Singapore Chinese Chamber of Commerce (manuscript), Vol. 1, pp. 2-3; *Lat Pau*, 5 July 1906, p. 7.
109. Many rich Chinese merchants in nineteenth century Singapore and Malaya seem to have made their fortunes from speculative business like tin-mining, revenue, opium, liquor and gambling farming. Some exceedingly rich such as Tan Kim Cheng, Foo Chee Choon, Cheang Hong Lim, Chang Keng Kwee, Chin Ah Yam and Chang Pi-shih derived much of their wealth from these businesses. See Wong Lin Ken, *The Malayan Tin Industry to 1914* (Tucson, 1965), pp. 64, 76-81; Wynne, W.L., *Triad and Tabut* (Singapore, 1941), p. 344; K'uang Kuo-hsiang, *Pin-ch'eng Shan-chi* (*Anecdotal History of Penang*, Hong Kong, 1958), pp. 97-117; *Reports on the Federated Malay States for 1905*, in CD. 3186, p. 30, *Reports on the Federated Malay States for 1906*, in CD. 3741, p. 4.
110. This has always been one of the major weaknesses of overseas Chinese enterprises. It can still be observed in the Chinese communities in Singapore and Malaysia today.
111. Maurice Freedman, 'Immigrants and Association: Chinese in Nineteenth-Century Singapore', in *Comparative Studies in Society and History*, Vol. 3 (1960-1961), pp. 28-9.
112. Hsieh Yung-kuang, a Chinese Kapitan in Aceh and a rich merchant in Penang, was appointed as Acting Chinese Vice-Consul in Penang in 1895, and was made Vice-Consul in 1897. He purchased a title of *T'ung-chih* soon after obtaining the post, and purchased a *Chien-sheng* degree in the next year. Another example is the case of Ho Chin-ti (何晉梯). Ho was a merchant who was made a staff official in the Ch'ing Consulate-General in Singapore in 1892. He purchased a *Kung-sheng* degree in the same year; and a title of *Hsien-ch'en* in 1894. See Tsungli Yamen Archives: The Mission of Lo Feng-lu to England in the 28th Year of Kuang Hsu (manuscript), Ch'ing no. 399; The Mission of Chang Teh-i to England in the 30th Year of Kuang Hsu (Manuscript), Ch'ing no. 387.

CHAPTER 8

Overseas Chinese Nationalism in Singapore and Malaya, 1877-1912*

Introduction

Overseas Chinese political links with China have been a subject of interest for many years. Travellers, journalists, officials and scholars have constantly speculated and made assessments and predictions about the political loyalties of overseas Chinese, and their future in their host countries. Although the overseas Chinese share a common historical and cultural background, they live in different economic environments and political climates, and in different stages of transition. Their political loyalty is especially difficult to assess. It is not just moulded by cultural, economic and political environments; it is also affected by other, less predictable factors. The rise of nationalism in the overseas Chinese communities at the end of the nineteenth and beginning of the twentieth centuries was a major factor in shaping the political life of the overseas Chinese. Using Singapore and Malaya as case studies, this article seeks to explain how and why overseas Chinese nationalism arose during this period.

The Origins of Overseas Chinese Nationalism

From the time when overseas Chinese donated tens of thousands of dollars to relief funds for China at the end of the nineteenth century, through the time of their active participation in the 1911 revolutionary movement, and on to the strong support given to the anti-Japanese resistance movement in the 1930s and 1940s, they have demonstrated deep emotional attachment

to China's destiny. This keen concern for China's fate is the main characteristic of the overseas Chinese nationalism. The majority of the overseas Chinese nationalists did not intend to create a separate political entity outside China, nor did they take much interest in the political future of their host societies. In other words, overseas Chinese nationalism was not a component part of the indigenous nationalist movements, but an extension of modern Chinese nationalism.

The strong emotional attachment of the overseas Chinese to China stemmed partly from race and culture, and partly from social and political conditions. It is natural for emigrants to feel attached to their mother countries, and Chinese emigrants were no exception. What appears to have been exceptional was their utmost devotion to their families in China. Many of them lived a simple and hard life so as to remit the major part of their income to China to feed their family members. From a poor coolie sending a few dollars annually to a rich merchant remitting hundreds of dollars, they all demonstrated this strong attachment.¹ This strong family loyalty constituted the basic element of overseas Chinese nationalism. Besides family ties, the overseas Chinese also retained great regard for their birthplaces in China. They expressed their feelings by contributing to economic, social and educational developments in their home districts. They raised funds for flood and famine relief,² donated large sums of money to establish schools and colleges,³ and invested in railways, mining and industry.⁴

Most of the overseas Chinese during 1877-1912 shared the common feelings mentioned above, and would have liked to see a rich and powerful China which could provide them with prestige depending on where they were. To those in hostile white countries such as Australia, New Zealand, the United States and Canada, and to those who were ill-treated by their host governments such as the Dutch East Indies, French Indo-China and Thailand, a strong China would give them not just prestige but also protection. Thus overseas Chinese nationalism was not merely an expression of the emigrants' compassion for their motherland, but could also be used as a weapon to counter the hostile policies of the host governments.

The Chinese in Singapore and Malaya, who formed a major portion of the population and lived under a more enlightened British government, had fewer grievances than other overseas Chinese. Local hostility was therefore not a major cause of the emergence of nationalist feelings, which arose chiefly from the concern for China's future and social prestige. It has been pointed out that the political loyalty of the Chinese in Singapore and Malaya was divided,⁵ and therefore some risks of generalization are being taken here. Nevertheless, since the expression of nationalism was the most

salient aspect of overseas Chinese political life and since in other respects the overseas Chinese communities seem to have been fairly apolitical during this period, it seems reasonable to assume that the nationalism expressed by the articulate minority probably did reflect the state of mind of the silent majority as well.

Two types of nationalism, cultural and political, co-existed in the Chinese communities in Singapore and Malaya at this time. The former was mainly intended to restore Confucian cultural values in the local communities, while the latter was chiefly motivated by the change of politics in China.

Cultural Nationalism

The Lo Shan She Lecture Movement

Like other immigrants, the overseas Chinese in Singapore and Malaya expressed a strong desire to preserve their cultural identity. This was indicated in their close adherence to the Chinese way of life. They ate Chinese food, wore Chinese costumes and queues,⁶ built Chinese-style houses, observed Chinese customs and traditions,⁷ and exalted Chinese values.⁸ Their Chinese identity was nevertheless threatened by Western and Malay cultures. The spread of Western culture in the Chinese communities came mainly through English education. As more and more Straits-born Chinese children went to English schools, English education transmitted new ideas and values. They came to accept Western values of equality, liberty and materialism.⁹ Western influences also appeared in their behaviour. They tended to behave like Westerners, to abandon their own dialects, and to despise the Chinese way of life.¹⁰ Malay influence on the other hand was the product of social environment rather than formal education. Before the end of the nineteenth century, some Chinese settlers married Malay women and produced a distinctive group known as *Babas*. Culturally and linguistically, the *Babas* were closer to the Malays than to the Chinese.¹¹ Although Sino-Malay intermarriage was arrested at the end of the nineteenth century by an increase of Chinese female immigrants, the Malay influence was filtered through the Straits-born Chinese girls known as *Nyonyas*.¹² Moreover, the Malay language which was the *lingua franca* in the region helped to strengthen Malay cultural influence in the Chinese communities.

Viewed from a broad historical perspective, a certain degree of acculturation in the Chinese communities was the inevitable result of Malayan environment and British rule, and was necessary for the development of a harmonious plural society. But to the Chinese cultural nationalists, the

trends towards Westernization and *Babaization* were undesirable. Unlike China, where members of the scholar-gentry class were the chief guardians of Chinese culture and traditions,¹³ the cultural nationalists in the Chinese communities in Singapore and Malaya were Chinese-educated merchants and intellectuals rather than the 'youthful Westernized Chinese'.¹⁴ The merchants expressed their national feelings by financing cultural activities, while the intellectuals offered leadership, organization and publicity.

One of the important steps taken by the cultural nationalists was to reassert traditional values in the Chinese communities. Fearing the loss of traditional values and probably encouraged by the Chinese Consul, some cultural nationalists got together to found a society named the Lo Shan She (乐善社) in Singapore in 1881.¹⁵ Borrowing the idea of ideological control of the Hsiang-Yueh lecture system in China,¹⁶ the society conducted regular lectures on the 1st and 15th of every month (in the lunar calendar) to expound the Sixteen Sacred Maxims of the Emperor K'ang-hsi.¹⁷ The society collected donations from patrons, engaged full-time and part-time lecturers, and used T'ien Fu Kung (天福宫, the Temple of Heavenly Blessings), the Fukien community centre, as the main venue for lectures. As lectures became more popular, four additional venues were established in Singapore.¹⁸ The lectures attracted audiences, principal among whom were merchants and community leaders. Similar societies were organized in Malacca, Penang and Kuala Lumpur before 1859.¹⁹

Two points must be noted about the Lo Shan She. Firstly the Sixteen Maxims which formed the basic contents of the lectures contained many of the traditional values such as filial piety, loyalty to the clan, propriety and thrift, law-abiding, emphasis on agricultural work, appeasing neighbours and fellow-villagers, rejection of false doctrines and exaltation of the right learning.²⁰ Because the Sixteen Maxims had been compiled for the ideological control of the Chinese in China, some of the Maxims were unsuitable for overseas conditions; but values such as filial piety, loyalty to the clan, and propriety, were relevant anywhere. To the Chinese cultural nationalist in Singapore and Malaya, the Maxim of rejecting false doctrines and exalting the correct learning was of great significance, for it could be used to arrest and reverse the growing trend towards Westernization and *Babaization*. Although they did not pinpoint the false doctrines, they vaguely implied that the culprits were Christianity and Islam. In an article on the Sixteen Maxims published in *Sing Po*, a local Chinese newspaper, in 1892, a cultural nationalist with the pen-name of Ku-shan ta-shih (Lonely mountain and giant rock) said of the Chinese communities in Singapore and Malaya that 'social morality declines, and

various heterodoxies undermine the orthodoxy' (Jen-hsin fang-shih, ch'un-hsieh h'ai cheng) (人心放失群邪害正).²¹

The orthodoxy-heterodoxy antithesis had long been used in Chinese history to define the relationship between Confucianism and non-Confucian doctrines.²² In the context of Singapore and Malaya, the charge of heterodoxy seems rather to have been directed against Christianity and Islam. If the Christian and Muslim influences in the Chinese communities were to be contained, the best way was not to launch any direct attack on them, but to reassert the traditional values of Confucianism.

Secondly, an examination of a list of patrons of the society published in 1897 reveals that the majority of the supporters of the Lo Shan She lecture movement were rich merchants of Chinese-educated background. Among the principal patrons were Wu Chin-ch'ing (吴进卿), Chang Jen-hsien (章壬宪), Yeh Ch'ung-yun (叶从云), Goh Siew Tin (吴寿珍) and Tan Tai (陈泰).²³ It is noticeable that the most of these were also holders of Ch'ing official titles.²⁴ The acquisition of Ch'ing honours by purchase was a clear indication of their interest in the traditional values.²⁵ Besides making donations to the Lo Shan She some of these wealthy merchants set up additional lecture halls in their shops.²⁶ They participated enthusiastically in most of the lectures so as to set an example for other people to follow.²⁷ Another small group of supporters of the Lo Shan She consisted of Chinese-educated intellectuals. Most of them had received traditional Chinese education in China, and it may have been after failing to pass higher imperial examinations to qualify themselves for official positions that they came to overseas Chinese communities and found employment in educational and cultural institutions.²⁸ It was natural for them to be active in the cultural nationalist movement, for it was in their vested interest to spread Chinese culture, to expound Confucian values to promote Chinese literary learning. Among five lecturers employed by the Lo Shan She for the years 1896 and 1897, three had close connections with literary societies and the Confucian revival movement. Lin Shang-chen (林上珍), a full-time lecturer and Liao Chi-san (廖及三), a part-time lecturer, were important members of the Hui Hsien She, a literary society in Singapore founded by the Ch'ing consul, Tso Ping-lung.²⁹ Another full-time lecturer, Wang Hui-yi (王会仪), was one of the founders of the Confucian Revival movement in Singapore and Malaya.³⁰

The Lo Shan She lecture movement was strongly backed by the Ch'ing Consul in Singapore who endorsed the lectures by conducting their opening ceremonies.³¹ The endorsement was important for the movement since many Chinese, particularly the wealthy merchants, would hesitate to give support to any movement which was not officially approved.

Compared with the scholar-gentry in China, the cultural nationalists in Singapore and Malaya were less steeped in, and devoted to Chinese culture. The intellectuals who found jobs overseas appeared to be of inferior quality,³² while the merchants could not spare sufficient time for cultural activities. They desired to uphold Chinese culture, and were aware of the threats of Westernization and *Babaization*, but they lacked perseverance and a well thought-out plan. Moreover, they were far from a cohesive group. Because of the *Pang* System and the divisions and prejudices it caused,³³ the movement failed to cut across dialect lines: few Cantonese or Teochews would be willing to attend lectures sponsored by the Fukien community.³⁴ Cantonese and Teochews organized their own lecturing societies known as *Tung Shan She* (同善社), Society for Doing Common Good,³⁵ set up separate halls, and conducted lectures in their own dialects.³⁶ There was a lack of cooperation and coordination among these different dialect societies, and the disunity greatly weakened the movement. It had some influence in merchant circles, but failed to develop into a large-scale cultural movement for the Chinese as a whole.

The Confucian Revival Movement

Perhaps the most important expression of Chinese cultural nationalism in Singapore and Malaya was the Confucian revival movement which emerged in 1889. Although the movement contained a mixture of cultural, religious, political and social elements, the cultural aspect was perhaps the most important as cultural nationalists strove to revive Confucian values in the overseas Chinese communities. Spurred by the Confucian revival movement in China, the cultural nationalists opened their campaign in Kuala Lumpur. They convened a meeting in September and resolved to observe Confucius' birthday (27th day of 8th moon of the lunar calendar) as a public holiday for all Chinese. Shops had to close for business, there had to be a celebration at home, and people had to pay homage to a portrait of Confucius temporarily installed at the *Tung Shan Hospital*.³⁷ The meeting also resolved that representatives should be elected from various dialect groups in the local community to perform sacrificial ceremonies to Confucius. All Chinese were called upon to adopt the Confucian calendar along with Emperor Kuang-hsu's reigning year.³⁸ The movement quickly spread to Singapore and Malacca. About two weeks after the convention in Kuala Lumpur, the Fukien community leaders in Singapore decided to follow suit by observing Confucius' birthday.³⁹ A similar step was taken by the Chinese in Malacca in December of the same year.⁴⁰ At this early stage of the

movement, it is significant that it concentrated chiefly on the symbols of Confucius' portrait and the Confucian calendar. In the Chinese cultural context, the worship of Confucius' portrait was expected to produce lasting psychological effects on individuals, and to revive and strengthen the Chinese culture which had been weakened by an alien environment. Worship of his portrait would help to re-establish Confucius' authority. Enthusiasm kindled in that way would then be heightened by the celebration of Confucius' birthday and the use of the Confucian calendar. This strategy was substantially different from that of the Lo Shan She lecture movement. The lecture movement attempted to restore some Confucian values by expounding their substance. The Confucian revival movement attempted to revive some Confucian values not so much by explaining the essence of those values, but by establishing the authority of Confucius in the minds of the overseas Chinese. By doing so, the cultural nationalists effectively laid the foundation for a mass movement.

If the cultural nationalists believed that worshipping was a more effective measure than reasoning for reviving Confucian values, it was logical for them to champion the establishment of Confucian temples. Once Confucianism was made a religion, it would exert religious power over its converts. The movement was supported by three Chinese newspapers in Singapore, namely, the *Sing Po* (星报), the *Thien Nan Shin Pao* (天南新报) and *Jit Shin Pau* (日新报). The newspapers gave wide coverage to the activities and published editorials and articles to create a favourable intellectual atmosphere for the movement to develop.⁴¹ At the same time the movement was aided by some visiting Confucian scholar-officials. Although they came to Singapore and Malaya in an official capacity to promote commerce,⁴² they also delivered public lectures and contributed articles to boost the movement. As the movement gathered sufficient momentum, it made a major thrust into the local Chinese communities in 1902. A body which was to spearhead the movement was created early in that year following two important meetings in Singapore. A committee of 195 members was set up; a public notice appealing to all Chinese was published; and regulations for establishing Confucian temples and modern schools were issued.⁴³ The main task of the committee was to raise funds for the construction of the temples and schools. Apart from on-the-spot donations, the committee organized its members to press for house-to-house donations.⁴⁴ But the most effective method was the giving of prestige to big donors. Regulations provided that ancestral tablets of the more generous donors would be placed in the shrine built in or beside the Confucian temple.⁴⁵ As a result of this intensive campaign, more than 200,000 Straits

dollars were raised by mid-1902.⁴⁶ But the movement then abruptly stopped because of its inherent weaknesses and the impact of a sudden change of attitude in Liang Ch'i-ch'ao. As the movement was primarily a cultural one, it lacked religious zeal and a tight-knit organization to implement its programmes. It also lacked dedicated leaders except Dr Lim Boon Keng.⁴⁷ The immediate impact on the movement was the change of Liang Ch'i-ch'ao's attitude towards Confucianism. Demoralized by the defeat of the Reformer's armed uprising in 1900,⁴⁸ Liang was politically unstable in the period between 1901 and 1903,⁴⁹ and his attitude towards Confucianism was also affected. He began to question the wisdom of making Confucianism the state religion of China, and of worshipping Confucius. This abrupt change of attitude was demonstrated in his article entitled 'Pao-chiao fei tsun-kung lun' (To Protect the Religion is not to Worship Confucius) which was published in the *Hsin-min ts'ung-pao*, the Reformers' organ in Japan in February 1902, and it was reproduced in the *Thien Nan Shin Pao* in Singapore.⁵⁰ In this article, he reversed his former position and argued that there was no need to make Confucianism the state religion which would curtail the freedom of thought of Chinese people.⁵¹ Liang was also obsessed by the frivolous and symbolic inclinations of the movement such as building Confucian temples and worshipping Confucius' portrait. As Liang wielded tremendous influence among the overseas Chinese through his writings, his drastic change of attitude must have shattered the faith of many of his followers, and held them back from supporting the movement in Singapore and Malaya.⁵²

It was not until 1908 that the movement revived again in the form of observing Confucius' birthday. On the 27th of the 8th moon of each year many Chinese paid homage to the sage by making that day a holiday.⁵³ Shops closed for business, schools closed and sacrifices were made at home in front of Confucius' portrait.⁵⁴ The movement built up momentum again, but this time the centre of gravity shifted from Singapore to Penang; control of the leadership had passed to a group of pro-Ch'ing wealthy merchants led by the ex-dignitary Chang Pi-shih (张弼士, also known as Chang Chen-hsun, best known in the West as Thio Tiau Siat) whose base of operations was in Penang. The resurgence reached its climax in 1911 with large-scale fund-raising activity in Penang. Rich merchants of various dialect groups were organized, and so were many ordinary people.⁵⁵ A Confucian temple, the first of its kind in Singapore and Malaya, was built in Penang at the end of 1911.⁵⁶

Compared with the Lo Shan She Lecture movement, the Confucian revival movement had three notable achievements. First, it was a better organized and coordinated attempt to restore the traditional and reformed values of Confucianism. It had a centralized body to plan and coordinate

its work. Although the movement did not convert all Chinese in Singapore and Malaya into Confucianists, it had visible achievements in the observance of Confucius' birthday, the opening of modern schools, and the construction of Confucian temples. Second, it was a concerted effort by all Chinese cultural nationalists, both traditional and modern, to establish an institution through which Confucian values could be reasserted. It was the first movement in the region that cut across dialect lines, and thus contributed to the solidarity of the Chinese communities in Singapore and Malaya. Third, it was a more broadly-based cultural movement. The news media were used to mobilize public support, and together with house-to-house soliciting provided the movement with effective means to reach the masses.

It should also be noticed that the Confucian revival movement was more politically oriented than the Lo Shan She Lecture movement. The early part of the movement was evidently influenced by K'ang Yu-wei's reformist ideology. It was used by Dr Lim Boon Keng and Khoo Seok-wan, two reformist leaders in Singapore, to advance their political beliefs. However the later part of the movement, particularly in Penang, was used by the pro-Ch'ing conservatives to counter the influence of the revolutionary ideology spread by Dr Sun Yat-sen and his followers. Thus cultural nationalism in general, and the Confucian revival in particular, were used at different times by diverse groups to advance their political aims.

Political Nationalism

Chinese political nationalism in Singapore and Malaya was expressed in a more sophisticated way than cultural nationalism. Some of the political nationalist movements possessed modern platforms, created effective organizations for mass mobilization, and developed techniques for indoctrination. The degree of sophistication would match any other modern political movement in the world. In a broad historical perspective, the rise of political nationalism in Singapore and Malaya during this period was a response to events in China rather than to local pressures. But the response to the situation in China was a divided one. The political nationalists were at loggerheads with one another, with their loyalties divided between the Ch'ing government, the reformists and the revolutionaries.

Pro-Ch'ing Nationalism

The movement to cultivate pro-Ch'ing nationalism among the Chinese in Singapore and Malaya began with the founding of the Ch'ing consulate in

Singapore in 1877. The Ch'ing consul was skilful at mobilizing broad support by enlisting the help of community leaders. On occasions such as the birthdays of the Emperor and the Empress Dowager, he would gather them together to pay homage. Solemn ceremonies were held at the consulate, during which rites of prostration were performed.⁵⁷ At the same time, the consul issued notices urging the people to honour the monarchy.⁵⁸ On extraordinary occasions such as the Emperor Kuang-hsu's marriage and his accession to the throne, Chinese were mobilized to express their allegiance by making the occasion a public holiday; shops and schools were closed, houses were decorated with flowers and lanterns, dragon flags were hoisted, and special drama performances were held in the streets for public entertainment.⁵⁹

As the Ch'ing consul had no legal power over the Chinese in Singapore and Malaya, he could only appeal, or use his influence to persuade people to conform, but he could not punish anyone who disregarded his notices. His influence was further curtailed by the British colonial authorities who jealously guarded their power over the Chinese subjects in the colonies.⁶⁰ In such circumstances, an effective way of mobilizing and keeping alive the overseas Chinese loyalty was to foster Chinese identity. The key to the fostering of Chinese identity was to arouse enthusiasm in Chinese culture. Things Chinese were to be promoted, encouraged and valued. The consul began to promote literary interest in the Chinese classics and poetry. In 1882 the consul Tso Ping-lung helped to organize and launch a literary society in Singapore named Hui Hsien She (The Society for the Meeting of Literary Excellence), the first of its kind in the Chinese-speaking communities in Singapore and Malaya. He acted as the patron and the judge, and set topics for essay and poem competitions at the beginning of every month.⁶¹ Tso's successor, consul-general Huang Tsun-hsien continued to foster Chinese identity in the early 1890s. Like Tso, he patronized the literary society. The Hui Hsien She was renamed Tu Nan She which means the Society for Approaching the South,⁶² the new name indicated an ambition to embrace all Chinese in the South Seas (*Nanyang*, Chinese name for the region of Southeast Asia). The new consul encouraged literary activities by offering higher awards for the winners of the competitions.⁶³ He also patronized the Lo Shan She lectures and the Confucian revival movements,⁶⁴ and rewarded those who adhered strictly to the Confucian values such as filial piety and chastity.⁶⁵

The effort of the Ch'ing consul in arousing Chinese national consciousness was greatly assisted by the fund-raising movement for the relief of national calamities in China. The provincial governments of Kwangtung

and Fukien sent out several missions to visit Southeast Asia. After arriving in Singapore and Malaya the missions made contact with the local Chinese leaders and publicized their intentions in the local Chinese newspapers. Agents were appointed among the local leaders to solicit contributions.⁶⁶ Using imperial honours as inducements, most of these missions succeeded in raising substantial funds for their relief works in China.⁶⁷ Apart from its economic aspect the movement was an effective means of bringing the overseas Chinese closer to China. The publicity about the natural calamities in China aroused overseas Chinese concern and sympathy for their motherland. The missions established links between the Ch'ing bureaucracy and the upper class of the Chinese communities in Singapore and Malaya. From the distribution of imperial honours, members of that class derived prestige, psychological satisfaction and continuing desire to be close to the Ch'ing government.

Pro-Ch'ing nationalism was stimulated by the visits of Ch'ing diplomats, dignitaries, officials and special envoys. The diplomats and dignitaries usually stopped over in Singapore on their way to Europe.⁶⁸ Although their stay was short, and their contacts with the local communities were limited, they sometimes managed to convey the imperial message of concern.⁶⁹ Officials who were sent to Southeast Asia on fund-raising, fact finding, trade and educational missions, spent a longer time in the local communities than the diplomats and dignitaries. Though they were generally not politically motivated, the nature of their business often obliged them to evoke nationalist feelings in order to get more contributions or trade.⁷⁰

There were six major visits by imperial envoys to Singapore and Malaya from 1890 to 1911.⁷¹ These visitors did have political motives. They were intending to spread China's prestige overseas, to cultivate loyalty among the overseas subjects, and to defuse the anti-Ch'ing activities of the reformists and revolutionaries in the overseas Chinese communities.⁷² Pro-Ch'ing nationalist sentiment was both excited and rewarded by the splendour of the visitations with their glamorous escort of Chinese warships. In 1894, for instance, the Singapore visit of Admiral Ting Ju-ch'ang with four warships created a sensational response. Large numbers of the local Chinese (old and young, men and women alike) crowded the harbour, all exalted by the sight of the warships and the dragon flags, and the noise of salutes.⁷³ The visits of the imperial envoys also attracted many expressions of loyalty by members of the Chinese merchant class who were often community leaders. As many of them had purchased Ch'ing brevet titles,⁷⁴ they dressed themselves in official costumes, and gathered at the harbour to greet the distinguished visitors. These were

followed by banquets hosted by the Ch'ing consul or prominent merchants with many pledges of loyalty to the emperor and to China.⁷⁵ It even happened that some leaders of the Straits Chinese whose usual political loyalty was to the British empire, nevertheless pledged their loyalty to the Ch'ing government on some of these occasions.⁷⁶ This reflected the identity problem of some of the Straits Chinese.

The spontaneous expression of pro-Ch'ing nationalism was impressive but it could not last for it could not be effectively mobilized to serve the Manchu interests without a mechanism. Partly to provide such a mechanism, the Ch'ing government encouraged the establishment of chambers of commerce throughout overseas Chinese communities. The Chinese chambers of commerce of course had its origin in China, beginning in Shanghai in 1902 as an organization to attract business support. When it proved to be successful at home, it was introduced to the overseas Chinese communities. The man who was instrumental in establishing Chinese chambers of commerce in Southeast Asia was Chang Pi-shih, a wealthy Chinese leader in the region. Chang had an audience with the Empress Dowager Tz'u-hsi in 1903 and impressed her with his ideas for modernizing China.⁷⁷ He was appointed the Imperial Commissioner to inspect Commercial Affairs Overseas (K'ao-ch'a shang-wu ta-ch'en), with a duty to tour the region to gain the support of the overseas Chinese.⁷⁸ Chang had wide contacts in the region including his commercial empire in Penang, Sumatra, Java, and his experience as vice-consul in Penang and acting consul-general in Singapore⁷⁹ facilitated his operations. When he arrived in Singapore in December 1905, he quickly mobilized the support of the leaders of various dialect groups, and convened a meeting on 18 December at the Tong Chai Hospital. There he proposed the founding of a Chinese chamber commerce, and donated S\$3,000 for the new organization. As a result, the Singapore Chinese Chamber of commerce, the first of its kind in Southeast Asia, was inaugurated on 16 March 1906.⁸⁰ With Chang's direct influence, the Chinese chamber of commerce of Penang was founded in 1907.⁸¹ This was followed by the founding of the Selangor and Perak Chinese chambers of commerce respectively in 1909.⁸² In retrospect, the Chinese chambers of commerce in Singapore and Malaya during this period helped to unite the local Chinese communities, and served the interests of the Ch'ing government well. All chambers were given official recognition by registering with the Department of Agriculture, Industry and Commerce in Peking, and each of them was granted an official seal by the court.⁸³ The chambers thus enjoyed semi-official status in relation to China. They communicated directly with the Department of Agriculture, Industry and Commerce,

without going through the local Chinese consulates, and issued protective passes to their members who escorted coffins back to China.⁸⁴ They helped the Ch'ing government to raise funds and to float capital for investment in China.⁸⁵ At the same time, they fostered pro-Ch'ing nationalism, and channelled it towards the Manchu government.⁸⁶

The use of the Chinese chamber of commerce as the Ch'ing government's agent in the Chinese communities in Singapore and Malaya does not seem to have threatened the office of Chinese consul. It did not replace the consulate, nor did it usurp the consul's major functions. As the power of the Chinese consul-general in Singapore was curbed by the local British colonial officials,⁸⁷ the chamber was in fact freer and more effective than the consul-general in carrying out the wishes of the Ch'ing government. In this sense, the chamber supplemented rather than undermined the work of the Ch'ing diplomat.

Who were the pro-Ch'ing nationalists in the Chinese communities in Singapore and Malaya? What socio-economic and educational background did they come from? A pro-Ch'ing political nationalist was likely to be a person who was wealthy, China-born and Chinese educated. He was also likely to have purchased Ch'ing official titles and have contacts with Ch'ing diplomats and visiting officials. Certainly many of the leaders of the Chinese chambers of commerce of the region were pro-Ch'ing nationalist leaders. In Singapore the first president of the chamber, Goh Siew Tin, was a well-known pro-Ch'ing leader. Goh was a wealthy merchant, born in China and had a Chinese education. He possessed two Ch'ing brevet titles, Chih-fu (知府銜) and Tao-t'ai (道台銜),⁸⁸ and had been at one stage the acting Ch'ing consul-general in Singapore.⁸⁹ He was an important leader of the Lo Shan She lecture movement,⁹⁰ and a staunch supporter of the Confucian revival movement.⁹¹ Other well-known pro-Ch'ing nationalist leaders in Singapore during this period were Wu Ching-ch'ing (吴进卿, also known as Wu I-ting 吴翼鼎 or Wu Hsin-ko 吴新科), Wu K'uei-t'u (吴夔甫, also known as Wu P'ei-chiu 吴丕球), Huang Chiang-shui (黄江水), Gan Eng Seng (颜永成, also known as Yen Hsi-k'un 颜锡坤), Hu Hsin-ts'un (胡心存), Lee Cheng Yan (李清渊) and Khoo Cheng Tiong (邱正忠). Most of them were wealthy merchants, China-born, Chinese educated, and possessed Ch'ing official titles.⁹² They actively promoted pro-Ch'ing nationalism on occasions such as the Emperor's and Empress Dowager's birthdays, and the Emperor Kuang-hsu's marriage.⁹³ They welcomed the visits of the Ch'ing dignitaries,⁹⁴ and mobilized financial support at times when China faced national calamities, or war with foreign powers.⁹⁵

Reformist Nationalism

Part of the overseas Chinese nationalism in Singapore and Malaya was expressed through the reformist movement. The movement was clearly an extension of the world-wide reformist movement led by K'ang Yu-wei. After the Empress Dowager Tz'u-hsi's palace coup against the Emperor Kuang-hsu, and the failure of the Hundred Days' Reform in 1898, K'ang Yu-wei, the main figure behind the reform, had to flee for his life to Hong Kong and Japan.⁹⁶ He then went to North America and Southeast Asia to mobilize support among the overseas Chinese. K'ang's launching of the Emperor Protection Society (Pao Huang Hui 保皇会) in July 1899 demonstrated his intention of saving the Emperor from the control of the Empress Dowager, and of restoring the sovereign power of the Emperor.⁹⁷ To K'ang and other reformist leaders, the overseas Chinese were their most important assets. They had little hope of restoring the Emperor's power by force. But they could use the overseas Chinese to bring pressure to bear on the Ch'ing government from bases beyond that government's control. K'ang and his main disciples seem to have believed that persuasion of that kind could restore the Emperor's rule. In planning a world-wide campaign to press the Empress Dowager to give up her power, the reformist leaders considered Singapore and Malaya as the key to the successful mobilization of the Chinese in Southeast Asia. But before the arrival of K'ang Yu-wei in Singapore in February 1900,⁹⁸ a movement had already developed in support of K'ang's cause. The moving spirits of the movement were Khoo Seok-wan (邱菽园) and Dr Lim Boon Keng (林文庆). Both were appalled by the decline of China's power and the rising threat of foreign imperialism, and shared the view that China could not be saved from imminent peril without a thorough political reform.⁹⁹ Stimulated by the increasing pressure of the Western imperialistic powers on China, and influenced by the activities of the reformists at home, both Khoo and Lim saw the need to mobilize local Chinese for the reformist cause. In May 1898, they founded in Singapore the *Thien Nan Shin Pao* (天南新报), a modern Chinese newspaper.¹⁰⁰ The newspaper used the Confucian calendar which was symbolic of reviving the reinterpreted Confucianism in the service of China's reform.¹⁰¹ Khoo became the publisher and the Chinese editor, Dr Lim Boon Keng was made the English editor of the newspaper.¹⁰² The newspaper was echoing the demand of the reformists in China. It advocated the introduction of a parliamentary system, attacked the corruption and inefficiency of the Ch'ing bureaucracy, and widely publicized the programmes of the Hundred Days' Reform (11 June to 21 September 1898).¹⁰³ The dramatic failure of the Hundred Days' Reform seems not to have disheartened the reformists in Singapore and

Malaya. Instead, they mobilized public opinion to give continuing support to K'ang Yu-wei's cause.

Throughout 1899, the reformists in Singapore and Malaya under the leadership of Khoo Seok-wan and Dr Lim Boon Keng, campaigned actively for the return of the Emperor Kuang-hsu's rule. On 28 September 1899, the *Thien Nan Shin Pao*, the mouthpiece of the reformists, published an editorial urging the Empress Dowager Tz'u-hsi to return sovereign power to the Emperor,¹⁰⁴ emphasizing that it was the wish of the people to see the wise and beloved Emperor return to power.¹⁰⁵ Following the editorial, the reformists demonstrated their strength by collecting a few hundred signatures among the local Chinese for a petition to the Tsungli Yamen in Peking in October 1899.¹⁰⁶ Strangely, the petition did not mention anything about restoring sovereign power, but expressed deep concern for the health of the Emperor Kuang-hsu.¹⁰⁷ This was in fact a subtle way of expressing discontent with the Empress Dowager Tz'u-hsi's handling of the whole affair, and was meant to deter her from deposing the Emperor, which she and her conservative supporters were already planning to do. In January 1899, she issued a decree claiming that the Emperor was ill and cancelling all his official engagements; at the end of January, she interviewed some child princes who were likely to be chosen as heir to the Emperor T'ung-chih, the preceding emperor who had died in 1874 without an heir.¹⁰⁸ In September of the same year she issued a further decree claiming that the Emperor's health was not improving.¹⁰⁹ All these were interpreted by the reformists in Singapore and Malaya as clear signs of a conspiracy to depose the Emperor. They thought that the best way to halt the conspiracy was not to attack the Empress Dowager openly, but to express love and concern for the health of the Emperor. The unmentioned message of the petition ought to be clear to the Empress Dowager: the Emperor was much loved by his overseas subjects, and any move to depose him would not be tolerated.

Following the October petition, the reformists in Singapore and Malaya demonstrated their strength again by mobilizing 1,000 or more supporters, and sending a telegram to the Empress Dowager on her birthday.¹¹⁰ This time the message was expressed more directly, though still delicately. She was urged to return the power to the Emperor for her own beloved sake, because of her age, so that she should be enabled to retire from burdensome administration and enjoy a peaceful life.¹¹¹

The October petition and November telegram highlighted the activities of the reformists in Singapore and Malaya before the coming of K'ang Yu-wei. There seemed to have been spontaneous responses to political developments in China during that year. After the arrival of K'ang Yu-wei

in Singapore in early 1900, the reformist movement was stepped up, and was incorporated into the world-wide mobilization under the leadership of K'ang. Two lines of activity followed. First, there was continuing mobilization of overseas Chinese to put pressure on the Empress Dowager's government. When other overseas Chinese communities in Southeast Asia protested against the conspiracy to depose the Emperor, they received wide publicity in the reformist press in Singapore and Malaya;¹¹² there were more attacks on the selection of heirs for the Emperor Tung-chih;¹¹³ and there was a full-scale celebration of the Emperor Kuang-hsu's 30th birthday as a token of strong support given to the unfortunate monarch.¹¹⁴ Second, the reformists under the leadership of K'ang Yu-wei concentrated on a world-wide fund-raising for the purpose of supporting a revolt in China. Only three months after K'ang's arrival in Singapore, the insurrections of the Boxers broke out and the wave of anti-foreignism swept through North China. K'ang and other reformist leaders saw this as an opportunity to organize an armed revolt to topple the Empress Dowager's rule. All other important leaders were busy raising funds in the overseas Chinese communities in Japan, the United States, Canada, Hawaii, Macao and Southeast Asia, making political contacts with foreign powers, and arranging purchase of arms and ammunition,¹¹⁵ while K'ang was directing and coordinating preparations from Singapore.¹¹⁶ The revolt was scheduled to take place simultaneously in four provinces in central and south China on 9 August 1900. Owing to poor coordination and shortage of funds, it failed and the ringleaders were apprehended.¹¹⁷ To what extent the Chinese in Singapore and Malaya were involved in this revolt is uncertain. But Khoo Seok-wan (pronounced in Mandarin as Ch'iu Shu-yuan), the top leader of the reformist movement in Singapore and Malaya, had certainly donated a large sum of money to finance the revolt. One source claims that the donation was in the vicinity of S\$250,000.¹¹⁸ Given the influence that K'ang Yu-wei had among the local Chinese in Singapore and Malaya, it is reasonable to suggest that he must also have obtained donations other than Khoo's. Whatever amount the Chinese in Singapore and Malaya had donated, the abortive revolt dealt a heavy blow to the reformists in general, and the reformist movement in Singapore in particular. Khoo Seok-wan was disheartened, and his relationship with K'ang Yu-wei cooled off. The strained relationship was finally broken up in 1901 after a quarrel over the handling of a contribution of S\$50,000 made by the Chinese in Australia towards the revolt.¹¹⁹ Khoo announced in the *Thien Nan Shin Pao* that he had disassociated himself from the reformists, and gave his support to the Ch'ing government.¹²⁰ In retrospect, Khoo Seok-wan's desertion from the reformist camp appears to have

demoralized some of his followers,¹²¹ and weakened the reformist movement in Singapore and Malaya. Although the movement recovered after 1905, and became the keen competitor to the Chinese revolutionaries led by Dr Sun Yat-sen, it had lost much of the dynamism generated between 1899 and 1900, and had reduced the chance of acquiring solid support from the overseas Chinese in the region.

In the course of mobilizing support, the reformists employed modern techniques. The use of the media and front organizations were the best examples. The modern media consisting mainly of newspapers, magazines and pamphlets had been used by the reformists to spread their political ideology, and mobilize public opinion. The publishing of the *Thien Nan Shin Pao* in 1898 and the *Jit Shin Pau* in 1899¹²² provided the reformists with effective means of reaching the general public. Both *Thien Nan* and *Jit Shin* were used to propagate Chinese nationalism and reform ideas, and to attack the Empress Dowager's government. They were also used to publicize the activities of the reformists, to transmit political messages from the national reformist leaders, and to solicit financial and other forms of support from the readers.¹²³

The reformists in Singapore and Malaya also adopted modern forms of organization. When the first Emperor Protection Society (Pao Huang Hui) was founded by K'ang Yu-wei in Victoria, Canada, in July 1899, branches quickly spread to other parts of Canada, United States, Mexico, South America, Hawaii and Japan. It is claimed by Wu Hsien-tzu, an important disciple of K'ang Yu-wei at that time, that a branch was set up in Penang probably in 1899, and the Singapore branch with Khoo Seok-wan as its president was established in 1900.¹²⁴ For unknown reasons, the branches in Singapore and Malaya and in other parts of Southeast Asia were made underground. This was in contrast to the branches in North and South America, Mexico, Hawaii and Japan where lists of the members' names were widely publicized.¹²⁵ Being clandestine, the societies in Singapore and Malaya badly needed front organizations to carry out activities. The organization that emerged to meet this need was Hao Hsueh Hui (好学会, known as the Chinese Philomatic Society) which was founded by Dr Lim Boon Keng on 6 September 1899 in Singapore.¹²⁶ In the announcement in the press, the society emphasized that it was a registered body, and was to organize public talks once a month at the *Thien Nan Shin Pao* office and the shop Heng Ch'un.¹²⁷ The emphasis on the legality of the society indicated the reformist concern for its image in the community. It intended to spread its message widely. The professed aim of the society was to gather literary enthusiasts (Wen-hsueh chih-shih 文学志士) together to discuss politics

(China and foreign, current and ancient) and new theories in science,¹²⁸ but in fact the society was to push the theory of reform, and to discuss China's current politics as they interpreted it. This was clearly reflected in the topics of the public lectures and the speakers who were invited. In the first ten lectures in the three months from September to December 1899, most topics were related to the theory of reform, Hundred Days' Reform, Confucianism, establishment of Confucian temples and modern schools, and reform of education.¹²⁹ The three main speakers were Khoo Seok-wan, Dr Lim Boon Keng and Yeh Chi-yuen, who were the leaders of the reformists in Singapore.¹³⁰ The society had aggressive methods of recruitment. People who signed up to attend lectures were automatically considered to be 'members' (Hui-yu 會友), and their names were published in the reformist newspapers *Thien Nan Shin Pao* and *Jit Shin Pau*. 'Members' did not appear to be required to pay subscription fees, nor were they bound by any rules and regulations. Subscriptions and rules did not concern the reformist leaders, who chiefly wanted to use the society to create an intellectual atmosphere which would help to advance their political aims. Partly due to its legal status in the community, and partly due to its loose and easy way of recruiting, the society claimed to have over 200 'members'.¹³¹ From the membership lists, it appears that the Hao Hsueh Hui had attracted mostly merchants and journalists, and some doctors and government servants. The majority of them were probably Chinese-educated.¹³² Because they were Chinese-educated and had some leisure time, such people were naturally concerned about political development in China, and susceptible to the reformists' propaganda. It seems reasonable to suggest that many of them may also have been members of the underground Emperor Protection Society.

Revolutionary Nationalism

Certainly the Chinese revolutionary movement in the period between 1900 and 1912 was the most important component part of overseas Chinese political nationalism. Details of the revolutionary movement have been discussed in my book, *The Overseas Chinese and the 1911 Revolution: With Special Reference to Singapore and Malaya*, and need not be repeated here. What should be elaborated is the relationship between the movement and overseas Chinese nationalism. Although Dr Sun Yat-sen's Three People's Principles – Nationalism, Democracy and People's Livelihood – were the guiding spirits of the Chinese 1911 revolutionary movement, nationalism was really the only one of the three that was preached in the overseas Chinese communities in Singapore and Malaya.¹³³ But the nature of the

nationalism merits some discussion. Firstly the nationalism preached by the revolutionaries was wider in scope than the pro-Ch'ing and reformist nationalism. The pro-Ch'ing nationalists only promoted loyalty towards the Ch'ing dynasty. The reformists wanted to restore the Emperor Kuang-hsu. They also wanted to save China from foreign imperialism by institutional reforms, but still in a somewhat traditional way, under the Emperor Kuang-hsu. The revolutionaries were more radical in a number of ways. Their nationalism was directed not to an emperor or the reigning dynasty, but to the nation-state of China. They did their best to make clear the difference between loyalty to emperor and loyalty to a nation-state.¹³⁴ In line with the pervasive nationalism in the world at that time, Dr Sun Yat-sen was deliberately nationalistic, and thought that part of his revolutionary message was important for the survival of China.¹³⁵ Secondly, the revolutionaries had given Chinese nationalism a new dimension. The main component of revolutionary nationalism was anti-Manchuism. Of course, anti-Manchu nationalism was not new in Chinese history; it had arisen in the seventeenth century in the resistance against the Manchu conquest.¹³⁶ But it was systematically developed and perfected by the revolutionaries. More importantly, the new revolutionary nationalism also contained constructive elements: it proposed to build China as a modern and powerful nation-state, able to take its place and defend itself in the modern world.¹³⁷ This put the anti-Manchuism in proper context – to overthrow the Manchus was not an act of revenge, but a means to save China from the foreign imperialism. Thirdly, the revolutionary nationalism had the greatest impact on the Chinese communities in Singapore and Malaya. Compared with the pro-Ch'ing nationalists and the reformists, the revolutionaries were more successful in mobilizing support. They possessed a reasonably well-organized party, the Tung Meng Hui, a clearly defined platform, and a well-developed propaganda network. The use of newspapers, books and magazines to spread the revolutionary message was obviously not different from the reformists, but the use of reading clubs (Shu Pao She), night schools, public rallies and drama troupes as propaganda vehicles was new.¹³⁸ By these means the revolutionaries broadened their social base, and effectively mobilized support among the illiterate masses of the overseas Chinese. Thus revolutionary nationalism had a greater impact than pro-Ch'ing nationalism and reformist nationalism in the Chinese communities in Singapore and Malaya.

Conclusion

Some conclusions may be drawn from the above study. Two types of

nationalist movements, cultural and political, existed side by side in the overseas Chinese communities in Singapore and Malaya during 1877-1912. Most of these nationalist movements were China-oriented. There was little or no intention to develop a separate overseas Chinese identity, nor was there any interest in local indigenous movements in the region. In this context, we conclude that overseas Chinese nationalism was an offshoot of modern Chinese nationalism, and not a component part of indigenous nationalism in Southeast Asia.

Like nationalism in other countries, the nationalism of the overseas Chinese in this period derived mainly from their race and culture, the special attachment to their birthplace, and the desire to retain racial and cultural identity. Its growth was stimulated by the efforts of the Ch'ing consuls, the visiting Ch'ing diplomats, officials and special envoys. It was greatly influenced by the rise of the reform and revolutionary movements in China, and by the activities of the reformists and revolutionaries who arrived in the region. At the same time, the growth of nationalism was heightened by the rise of world imperialism and its threat to the survival of China as a nation and of the Chinese as a race, and the overseas Chinese increasingly linked their fate with the destiny of their motherland.

Endnotes

- * This article was first published in the *Modern Asian Studies*, Vol. 16, No. 3 (Cambridge University Press, 1982), pp. 397-425.
- 1. See Siah U Chin, 'Annual Remittances by Chinese Immigrants to Their Families in China', in *Journal of the Indian Archipelago and Eastern Asia*, Vol. 1 (1847), pp. 35-6.
- 2. The best example is the Tung Hua I Yen (the Tung Hua Hospital) founded in Hong Kong in early 1870s. It began as a hospital offering Chinese medical treatment. It also acted as centre for collecting famine relief funds for China from any overseas Chinese communities. See E. Wickberg, *The Chinese in Philippine Life 1850-1898* (New Haven, 1965), p. 216.
- 3. The best example was the involvement of Tah Kar Kee, a wealthy overseas Chinese leader from Singapore, in the establishment of schools and colleges in his home district in the Fukien Province. See Tah Kar Kee, *Nan-ch'iao hui-i lu* (Autobiography), 2 Vols.
- 4. For the involvement of Chang Pi-shih and Chang Yu-nan, two well-known overseas Chinese leaders in Southeast Asia, in the construction of railways in their home districts, see M.R. Godley, 'Chang Pi-shih and Nanyang Chinese Involvement in South China's Railroads 1896-1911', in *Journal of Southeast Asian Studies*, Vol. 4, No. 1 (March, 1973), pp. 16-30.
- 5. See Wang Gungwu, 'Chinese Politics in Malaya', in *The China Quarterly*, No. 43 (July-September 1970), pp. 1-30; Yong Ching Fatt, 'Patterns and Traditions of Loyalty in

- the Chinese Community of Singapore 1900-1941', in *The New Zealand Journal of History*, Vol. 4, No. 1 (April 1970), pp. 77-87.
6. Queues and costumes that the overseas Chinese wore during this period under study were actually of the Manchus. As the conquerors, the Manchus were able to force Chinese to accept their outfits. Thus Manchu costumes and queues were regarded as part of Chinese culture at that time.
 7. Most Chinese customs regarding festivals, marriage, burial, child birth and domestic habits were observed among the Chinese in Singapore and Malaya. See *Lat Pau*, 16 May 1899, p. 1, 7 February 1890, p. 1, 13 February 1892, p. 1; *Sing Po*, 4 September 1890, p. 1, 21 June 1890, p. 1, 23 February 1891, p. 1, 9 May 1893, pp. 1 and 4; *Penang Sin Pao*, 6 February 1909, p. 3; *The Sun Pao*, 4 March 1910, p. 7. See also J.D. Vaughan, *The Manners and Customs of the Chinese of the Straits Settlements* (The Mission Press: Singapore, 1879), pp. 26-48; anonymous, 'Notes on the Chinese of Penang', in the *Journal of Indian Archipelago*, Vol. VIII (1854), pp. 1-27; 'Reports on the Federated Malay States for 1903', p. 8 in CD 2243; *The Straits Times*, 2 March 1904, p. 5.
 8. Traditional Chinese values such as loyalty, filial piety, chastity and thrift were upheld. See *Sing Po*, 3 November 1890, p. 1, 24 November 1893, p. 1.
 9. See Khor Eng Hee, 'The Public Life of Dr Lim Boon Kheng' (an unpublished B.A. Honours thesis, University of Malaya in Singapore, 1958), pp. 18-20.
 10. See Lim Boon Keng, 'Straits Chinese Reform: Filial Piety', in the *Straits Chinese Magazine*, 1899.
 11. See Rosie Tan Kim Neo, 'The Straits Chinese in Singapore: A Study of the Straits Chinese Way of Life' (an unpublished research paper, University of Malaya, Singapore, 1958), pp. 1-2, quoted in Png Poh-seng, 'Straits Chinese in Singapore: A Case of Local Identity and Socio-Cultural Accommodation', in *Journal of Southeast Asian History*, Vol. 10, No. 1 (March, 1969), p. 99.
 12. Png Poh-seng, *op. cit.*, pp. 109-14.
 13. See a discussion in Paul A. Cohen, *China and Christianity: The Missionary Movement and the Growth of Chinese Antiforeignism 1860-1870* (Cambridge, Mass., 1963), pp. 77-82.
 14. The claim by Professor L.E. Williams that the 'Confucianist phase of overseas Chinese nationalism was led not by elderly scholars in long gowns but by youthful Westernized Chinese' cannot be substantiated from the available evidence. The role of Lim Boon Keng in the Confucian revival movement in Singapore, Malaya and Dutch East-Indies was an exception. See L.E. Williams, *Overseas Chinese Nationalism: The Genesis of the Pan-Chinese-Movement in Indonesia 1900-1916* (Glencoe, 1960), p. 55; Yen Ching-hwang, 'The Confucian Revival Movement in Singapore and Malaya, 1899-1911', in *Journal of Southeast Asian Studies*, Vol. VII, No. 1 (March, 1976), pp. 51-3.
 15. See the society's statement on its history and activities, in *Sing Po*, 15 February 1895, pp. 5 and 8.
 16. The 'Hsiang-yueh lecture' system is claimed to have been inaugurated by the Emperor Shun-chih, the first Ch'ing Emperor, with the promulgation of his Six Maxims of Hortatory Edict (Liu Yu), urging his subjects to practise virtues and to lead a peaceful

- life. In order to propagate these virtues, a *hsiang-yueh* was appointed to each locality to give lectures at fixed intervals. For details, see Kung-chuan Hsiao, *Rural China: Imperial Control in the Nineteenth Century* (Seattle, 1967), pp. 184-94.
17. The Sixteen Maxims of the K'ang-hsi Emperor must be differentiated from the Six Maxims of the Emperor Shun-chih. The former was known as Sheng-yu (the Sacred Edict), while the latter was known as Liu-yu. The former was the expanded version of the latter. Apart from Sheng-yu and Liu-yu, there was a Sheng-yu kuang-hsuan (圣谕广训, the Amplified Instructions of the Sacred Edict) of 10,000 words promulgated by Emperor Yung-cheng, son of the K'ang-hsi Emperor. He must have thought that even the Sixteen Maxims were too brief for the comprehension of the ignorant masses. *Ibid.*, p. 185.
 18. The venues were established in Market Street, the Ts'ui Ying Chinese School in Amoy Street and Java Street. See *Sing Po*, 15 February 1895, pp. 5 and 8.
 19. *Ibid.*, p. 5.
 20. An English translation of the Maxims is found in Kung-chuan Hsiao, *Rural China: Imperial Control in the Nineteenth Century*, pp. 187-8. A Chinese version which was probably used as a text for the Lo Shan She lectures in Singapore and Malaya, is found in G.T. Hare's collected documents on the Chinese in the Straits Settlements. See G.T. Hare, *A Text Book of Documentary Chinese* (Singapore, 1894), pt. 1, No. 2, pp. 92-3.
 21. See Ku-shan ta-shih, 'Hsuan-chiang sheng-yu lun' (A Discussion of the Lectures on the Sixteen Maxims of Emperor K'ang-hsi), in *Sing Po*, 30 August 1892, p. 1.
 22. For a good discussion on this subject, see Cohen, *China and Christianity*.
 23. See 'Balance Sheet of the Lo Shan She for the years of 1895 and 1896', in *Sing Po*, 25 January 1897, p. 5.
 24. Wu Chin-ch'ing had purchased five Ch'ing official titles between 1889 and 1896 ranging from Tzu-cheng to Yen-yun-shih with feather; Chang Jen-hsien purchased two titles of Lang-chung and Erh-p'in between 1889 and 1896. Goh Siew Tin possessed Chih-fu and Tao-t'ai titles, and Tan Tai possessed Chung-hsien ta-fu and Tung-feng ta-fu titles. See Yen Ching-hwang, trans. by Chang Ch'ing-chiang, 'Ch'ing-ch'ao tsu-kuan chih-tu yu Hsin-Ma hua-tsu ling-tao-ch'en 1877-1912', Appendix 1, in K'o Mulin and Wu Chen-ch'ang (eds.), *Hsin-chua-po hua-tsu shih lun-chi* (Singapore, 1972), pp. 71-2.
 25. For the interpretation of the possession of Ch'ing honours and the traditional value systems, see Yen Ching-hwang, 'Ch'ing Sale of Honours and the Chinese Leadership in Singapore and Malaya, 1877-1912', in *Journal of Southeast Asian Studies*, Vol. 1, No. 2 (September 1970), pp. 26-8.
 26. See *Sing Po*, 15 February 1895, pp. 5 and 8.
 27. The typical example was Wu Chin-ch'ing (also known as Wu I-ting or Wu Hsin-k'o). Wu attended many of the lectures given by the Lo Shan She and this was reported in the press. See *Sing Po*, 16 March 1893, p. 5, 3 March 1894, p. 4, 18 February 1895, p. 5.
 28. For instance, the three teachers employed by the Ts'ui Ying Chinese School in Singapore were Wang Pan-kuei, Hsu H'o-ming (許鶴鳴) and Wang Yun-kuei (王

- 云桂). All of them were intellectuals from China. From 1895 to 1897, the three teachers of the same school were Wang Pan-kuei, Huang Shih-tso (黄世作) and Hsia Chi-ming (夏既明). Both Huang and Hsia were also intellectuals from China. See *Sing Po*, 24 February 1891, p. 8, 16 February 1895, p. 8, 22 December 1897, p. 5.
29. See *Sing Po*, 10 November 1891, p. 1, 25 January 1897, p. 5.
 30. See *Sing Po*, 25 January 1897, p. 5; the list of the directors of the founding of Confucian temples and modern schools, in *Thien Nan Shin Pao*, 19 March 1902, p. 1.
 31. The normal procedure of conducting a lecture was to set up an incense altar at the lecture hall. The Chinese Consul General in his official robes would lead executive members of the Lo Shan She to perform kowtow ceremony towards the North. This act was a symbol of kowtowing to the Emperor of China. After the ceremony the lecturer would begin his lecture. Sometimes, the consul-general might give a concluding speech towards the end of the proceedings. See 'Sheng-yu shou-chiang', in *Sing Po*, 16 March 1893, p. 5; 'Hsuan Chiang sheng-yu chi-ch'en', in *Sing Po*, 15 February 1895, p. 5; 'Shan-t'ang chi-tien', in *Sing Po*, 18 February 1895, p. 5.
 32. This opinion was held overseas as well as in China. In 1909, for instance, when the Ch'ing Ministry of Education intended to promote Chinese education among its overseas subjects, it had to induce qualified teachers to serve overseas by special rewards. See 'Memorial of the Ministry of Education relating to Overseas Chinese Schools and Teachers dated 21st December 1909', in *Cheng-chih kuan-pao* (The Ch'ing Government Gazette) (Taipei, Reprint, n.d.), No. 27, pp. 210-11.
 33. A good discussion on the Pang division and politics in nineteenth-century Singapore is Lim How Seng's article 'Shih-chiu shih-chi Hsing Hua she-hui te pang-ch'uan ch'eng-chih' (The Pang Politics of the Chinese Community in 19th Century Singapore), in Lim How Seng et al., *Shih-le ku-chi* (Historical Relics of Singapore) (Singapore, 1975), pp. 3-38.
 34. The practice at the Lo Shan She's lectures was to read the Sixteen Maxims in Man'arin, then the lecturers translated and expounded them in southern Fukien dialect. This tended to exclude those who did not understand the dialect. See *Sing Po*, 18 February 1895, p. 5.
 35. Both Cantonese and Teochew merchants in Singapore adopted the same name for their societies. See *Sing Po*, 15 February 1895, p. 5, 6 March 1897, p. 5.
 36. The main lecture hall of the Teochew T'ung Shan She was set up at the Yeh-hai-ch'ing temple, the Teochew community centre, and the lectures were conducted in Teochew dialect. See *Sing Po*, 6 March 1897, p. 5.
 37. See *Thien Nan Shin Pao*, 28 September 1899, p. 2, 30 September 1899, pp. 1-2.
 38. See 'Regulation of Promoting the Worship of Confucius', in *Thien Nan Shin Pao*, 30 September 1899, p. 1.
 39. It was the committee members of the Chinese Free School (Chui Eng Si E, or Ts'ui Ying Shu Yuan, 萃英书院), that decided to follow the example of the Kuala Lumpur Chinese. Since most leaders of the school were also leaders of the Fukien community, the decision was in fact for the Fukien community. See *Thien Nan Shin Pao*, 13 October 1899, p. 7.

40. *Thien Nan Shin Pao*, 4 December 1899, p. 2.
41. See Yen Ching-hwang, 'The Confucian Revival Movement in Singapore and Malaya', pp. 37-40.
42. These Confucian scholar-officials were Ch'iu Feng-chia (丘逢甲), Wang Hsiao-ch'ang (王晓沧), Chang K'o-ch'eng (张克诚) and Wu T'ung-lin (吴桐林); all of them were sent by the Kwangtung provincial government to tour Southeast Asia to promote commerce. See *Jit Shin Pau*, 27 March 1900, p. 1; *Thien Nan Shin Pao*, 17 March 1902, pp. 1-2.
43. See 'Hsin-chiao-po ch'ang-chien k'ung-miao hsueh-t'ang ch'uan-chien ch'i' (A Public Notice for Soliciting Funds for Establishing Confucian Temples and Schools in Singapore), in *Thien Nan Shin Pao*, 10 March 1902, p. 2.
44. See *Thien Nan Shin Pao*, 17 March 1902, pp. 1-2.
45. According to this regulation, four grades - \$5,000, \$3,000, \$1,000 and \$500 - were offered. The ancestral tablets of donors of the first grade were to be placed at the centre of the shrine; those of the second grade at centre left; those of the third grade at centre right, and those of the last grade at the left of the shrine. This gradation system was obviously based on a traditional Chinese concept of gradation of position. See 'The Fourteen Regulations for Fund Raising for Confucian Temples and Modern Schools', in *Thien Nan Shin Pao*, 10 March 1902, p. 7.
46. See Ting Wen-chiang (ed.), *Liang Jen-kang hsien-sheng nien-p'u ch'ang-pien ch'u-kao* (The Draft of the Liang Ch'i-ch'ao's Chronological Biography) (Taipei, 1959), p. 152.
47. For reasons contributing to the recession of the movement, see Yen Ching-hwang, 'Confucian Revival Movement in Singapore and Malaya', pp. 45-6.
48. See Philip C. Huang, *Liang Ch'i-ch'ao and Modern Chinese Liberalism* (Seattle and London, 1972), pp. 94-6.
49. See Chang Peng-yuan, *Liang Ch'i-ch'ao yu Ch'ing-chi ko-ming* (Liang Ch'i-ch'ao and the 1911 Revolution) (Taipei, 1964), pp. 156-78.
50. See *Thien Nan Shin Pao*, 23 May 1902, p. 2, 24 May 1902, p. 2, 26 May 1902, p. 2.
51. See Liang Ch'i-ch'ao, *Yin-ping-shih wen-chi* (Literary Works of Liang Ch'i-ch'ao) (Hong Kong, 1955), Vol. 3, pp. 20-2.
52. See Yen Ching-hwang, 'The Confucian Revival Movement in Singapore and Malaya', p. 46.
53. Traditionally Chinese had few holidays except on Chinese New Year and a couple of major festivals; the Chinese in Singapore and Malaya during this time seem to have followed that practice. Thus making Confucius' birthday an extra holiday for all Chinese must have been considered to be very important in the community.
54. See *Lat Pau*, 23 September 1908, p. 1.
55. See *Penang Sin Pao*, 5 August 1911, p. 3, 21 August 1911, p. 3, 12 September 1911, p. 3, 23 October 1911, p. 3; see also Yen Ching-hwang, 'Confucian Revival Movement in Singapore and Malaya', pp. 48-9.
56. *Penang Sin Pao*, 30 September 1911, p. 9.

57. See *Thien Nan Shin Pao*, 12 August 1898, p. 2, 21 November 1898, p. 2, 10 November 1899, p. 2, 29 July 1902, p. 1, 8 November 1902, p. 3; *Lat Pau*, 3 August 1888, p. 2, 11 February 1899, p. 2.
58. See *Lat Pau*, 3 August 1888, p. 2.
59. See Yen Ching-hwang, *The Overseas Chinese and the 1911 Revolution: With Special Reference to Singapore and Malaya* (O.U.P., Kuala Lumpur, 1976), p. 20.
60. For a discussion on the jealousy and rivalry of power between the Ch'ing consul and the colonial officials of the Straits Settlements in the late nineteenth century, see Lim How Seng, 'Ch'ing-ch'ao chu Hsin ling-shih yu hai-hsia chih-min-ti cheng-fu chien chiu-fen 1877-94' (The Dispute between the Ch'ing Consul in Singapore and the Colonial Government of the Straits Settlements 1877-94), in K'o Mo-lin and Wu chen-ch'iang (eds.), *Hsin-chia-po hua-tsu shih lun-chi* (Papers on the Chinese in Singapore) (Singapore, 1972), pp. 13-29.
61. See Tan Yeok Seong, 'Tso Tzu-hsing ling shih tui Hsin-chia-po hua-ch'iao kung-hsien' (The Contribution of the Consul Tso Ping-lung to the Overseas Chinese in Singapore), in Tso Ping-lung, *Ch'in-mien-t'ang shih-ch'ao* (Hong Kong, 1959); *Lat Pau*, 27 July 1899; Chen Mong Hock, *The Early Chinese Newspapers of Singapore 1881-1912* (Singapore, 1967), p. 115.
62. Chen Mong Hock, *ibid.*
63. See *Sing Po*, 1 January 1892, 23 October 1893, 12 March 1894.
64. See the early section of the article, and Yen Ching-hwang, 'The Confucian Revival Movement in Singapore and Malaya', p. 44; see also Hsi K'uang-sheng, 'Hsiang-chi Hsin-Chia-po k'ung-chiao t'ung-jen yen-shuo' (Details of the Speeches made by the Singapore Confucian Revivalists), in *Thien Nan Shin Pao*, 11 October 1901, p. 2.
65. This was done by the Consul-General Huang Tsun-hsien who would recommend them for awards from the Ch'ing government. See 'Ts'ai-fang chien hsiao kao shih' (Report on the Notice of Chastity and Filial Piety), in *Sing Po*, 15 August 1894, p. 5.
66. See Yen Ching-hwang, 'Ch'ing Sale of Honours and the Chinese Leadership in Singapore and Malaya', pp. 22-4.
67. *Ibid.*
68. After the establishment of the Chinese consulate in Singapore in 1877, many Chinese diplomats who were posted to European countries, stopped over in Singapore. They included Tseng Chi-tse, Hsueh Fu-ch'eng, Kung Chao-yuan and others. Among visiting dignitaries to Singapore in this period were Li Hung-chang (1896), Prince Ch'un (1901) and Tsai-chen (1902). See Tseng Chi-tse, *Tseng Hui-min kung shih-hsi jih-chi* (The Diary of Tseng Chi-tse's Mission to the West), Vol. 1, pp. 26-7; Hsueh Fu-ch'eng, *Chu-shih Ying. Fa, 1, Pi, ssu-kuo jih-chi* (Diary of My Mission to Britain, France, Italy and Belgium), Vol. 1, pp. 7-8; Wu Chung-lien, *Sui-yao pi-chi ssu-chung*, Vol. 1, pp. 6-7; *Sing Po*, 8 April 1896, p. 4; *Lat Pau*, 1 August 1901, 3 August 1901, 2 May 1902, 3 May 1902.
69. See Tsai Chen, *Ying-yao jih-chi* (Diary of My Mission to Britain), Vol. 2, p. 8.
70. See, for instance, a notice in *Lat Pau* calling local Chinese to contribute to the funds for flood relief in Hopei Province in 1891. It was issued by the visiting officials Ch'iu

- Hung-yu, Chuang Sung-ling and Wang Kuan together with a local leader, Tan Kim Cheng. See *Lat Pau*, 5 January 1891, p. 6.
71. The first two visits were led by Ting Ju-ch'ang, the Chinese Admiral. Escorted by Chinese warships, Ting visited Singapore first in April 1890, and then in March 1894. The third imperial envoy was Chang Pi-shih who visited Singapore in December 1905. In December 1907, Yang Shih-ch'i visited Southeast Asia, and then followed by Wang Ta-chen in April 1908, and Chao Ch'ung-fan in 1911. See Chui Kwei-chiang, 'Wan Ch'ing Kuan-li fang-wen Hsin-chia-po', in *Journal of South Seas Society*, Vol. 29, Pts. 1 and 2, pp. 20-2, 27-9.
 72. See *Ta-ch'ing te-tsung ching-huang-ti shih-lu*, Vol. 576, pp. 10b-11a; Chu Shou-p'eng (ed.), *Kuang-hsu-ch'ao tung-hua lu* (Peking), Vol. 5, p. 91; *Lat Pau*, 24 December 1907, p. 3.
 73. See *Sing Po*, 5 March 1894, p. 4, 12 April 1894, p. 4; see also Chui Kwei-chiang, 'Wan-ch'ing Kuan-li fang-wen Hsin-chia-po' (The Visits of the Chinese Officials to Singapore during the Late Ch'ing Period), in Chui Kwei-chiang, *Hsin-ma shih lun-t'ung* (Papers on the History of Singapore and Malaysia) (Singapore, 1977), pp. 90-1.
 74. See Yen Ching-hwang, 'Ch'ing Sale of Honours and Chinese Leadership of Singapore and Malaya', pp. 20-32.
 75. See *Lat Pau*, 10 April 1890, p. 2, 14 April 1890, p. 2, 15 April 1890, p. 5.
 76. See *Lat Pau*, 10 April 1890, p. 2; Chui Kwei-chiang, *Hsin-ma shih lun-t'ung*, p. 84.
 77. See M.R. Godley, 'The Late Ch'ing Courtship of the Chinese in Southeast Asia', in *Journal of Asian Studies*, Vol. 34, No. 2 (February 1975), pp. 372-3; see also M.R. Godley, 'The Mandarin Capitalist from Nanyang: Overseas Chinese Enterprise and the Modernization of China' (unpublished Ph.D. thesis of the Brown University, 1973), Chapter 6, 'A Program for the Development of Industry and Commerce'.
 78. See *Ta-Ch'ing te-tsung ching-huang-ti shih-lu*, Vol. 535, p. 6b; see also Cheng Kuan-ying, *Chang Pi-shih hsien-sheng sheng-p'ing shih-lu*, p. 14.
 79. Chang was appointed by Hsueh Fu-ch'eng as the first Vice-Consul of Penang in March 1893. In 1895, Chang was made the acting Consul-General of the Straits Settlements when Huang Tsun-hsien retired from his job in Singapore. See Hsueh Fu-ch'eng, *Ch'u-shih kang-tu* (Taipei, n.d.), original Vol. 7, pp. 13-4; *Sing Po*, 10 January 1895, p. 5, 1 November 1895, p. 8.
 80. See 'Hsin-chia-po chung-hua shang-wu tsung-hui teng-chi i-chih-pu' (Minutes of the Singapore Chinese Chamber of Commerce) (Unpublished), Vol. 1, pp. 2-3.
 81. See *Shang-wu kuan-pao* (Gazette of the Ministry of Agriculture, Industry and Commerce, Peking), Vol. 1 of the Ting Wei year (1907), pp. 9-10.
 82. See *Shang-wu kuan-pao*, Vol. 7 and 12 of the Chi Yu year (1909).
 83. *Shang-wu kuan-pao*, Vol. 1 of the Ting Wei year (1907), pp. 8-10, Vols. 7 and 12 of the Chi Yu year (1909). In Kuala Lumpur, a general meeting was called by the Chinese chamber of commerce in July 1909 to celebrate the use of the official seal granted by the Ch'ing court. See *Nan-yang tsung-hui pao* (The Union Times), 22 July 1909, p. 3.

84. See 'Hsin-chia-po chung-hua shang-wu tsung-hui teng-chi i-shih-pu' Chi Yu year (1909), Vol. 1, p. 144.
85. *Ibid.*, pp. 110-11; 'Hsin-chia-po chung-hua tsung-shang-hui shih-chi' (Historical Records of the Singapore Chinese Chamber of Commerce), in *Hsin-chia-po chung-hua tsung-shang-hui ta-sha lo-ch'eng chi-lien k'an* (Souvenir of the Opening Ceremony of the Newly Completed Singapore Chinese Chamber of Commerce Building) (Singapore, 1964), p. 152; *Nan-yang tsung-hui pao*, 17 July 1908, 7 August 1908, p. 1.
86. See 'hsin-chia-po chung-hua shang-wu tsung-hui teng-chi i-shih-pu', Ping Wu year to Hsin Hai year (1906-1911), Vol. 1, pp. 25, 30, 75, 80; Vol. 2, pp. 43, 67.
87. See Lim How Seng, 'Ch'ing-ch'ao chu Hsin ling-shih yu hai-hsia chih-min-ti cheng-fu chien te chiu-fen 1877-94', in K'o Mo-lin and Wu Chen-ch'iang (eds.), *Hsin-chia-po hua-tsu shih lun-chi*, pp. 13-29.
88. See Yen Ching-hwang, trans. by Chang Ch'ing-chiang, 'Ch'ing-ch'ao tsu-kuan chih-tu yu Hsin-Ma hua-tsu ling-tao-ch'en 1877-1912' (Ch'ing Sale of Honours and the Chinese Leadership in Singapore and Malaya, 1877-1912), Appendix 1, in K'o Mo-lin and Wu Chen-ch'iang (eds.), *Hsin-chia-po hua-tsu shih lun-chi* (Papers on the Chinese in Singapore), p. 71.
89. Goh Siew Tin was appointed the acting Consul-General for the Straits Settlements from January to May 1902. See *Thien Nan Shin Pao*, 22 January 1902, pp. 1-2, 1 May 1902, p. 2, 2 May 1902, p. 7, 4 June 1902, p. 1.
90. Goh was a director of the committee of the Lo Shan She in Singapore. See *Sing Po*, 25 January 1897, p. 5.
91. See Yen Ching-hwang, 'The Confucian Revival Movement in Singapore and Malaya', pp. 44, 49.
92. For the holding of Ch'ing official titles, see appendices 1, 2 and 5, Yen Ching-hwang, trans. by Chang Ch'ing-chiang, 'Ch'ing-ch'ao tsu-kuan chih-tu yu Hsin-Ma hua-tsu ling-tao-ch'en', in K'o Mo-lin and Wu Chen-ch'iang (eds.), *Hsin-chia-po hua-tsu shih lun-chi*, pp. 71-4, 83-4.
93. See *Lat Pau*, 7 March 1899, p. 2.
94. See *Lat Pau*, 14 April 1890, p. 2, 15 April 1890, p. 5, 16 April 1890, p. 2.
95. See 'Ch'ou tsu hsiang ssu' (To Raise Military Funds for the Sino-Japanese War), in *Sing Po*, 5 March 1895, p. 5.
96. K'ang fled China on the eve of the *coup d'état* to Hong Kong. He was then invited by Marquis Okuma Shigenobu, the Prime Minister of Japan, to visit Japan. See Jung-pang Lo, 'Sequel to Autobiography', in Jung-pang Lo (ed.), *K'ang Yu-wei: A Biography and A Symposium* (Tucson, 1967), p. 178.
97. *Ibid.*, p. 180.
98. See *The Straits Times*, 3 February 1900, p. 2.
99. See Wen Ching (Lim Boon Keng), *The Chinese Crisis from Within* (London, 1901), especially pp. 100-67, 285-329.
100. See *Thien Nan Shin Pao*, 28 May 1898.

101. *Ibid.*; Yen Ching-hwang, 'The Confucian Revival Movement in Singapore and Malaya', pp. 33-57.
102. *Thien Nan Shin Pao*, 31 May 1898, p. 1; see also Yang Ch'eng-tssu, 'Ch'iu Shu-yuan yen-chiu' (A Study of Khoo Seok-wan) in *Nanyang University Journal*, Vol. 4 (1969) (Singapore), p. 102.
103. See editorials of the *Thien Nan Shin Pao*, June to September, 1898.
104. The editorial was entitled 'I kung-ch'ing t'ai-hou kuei-cheng i' (Respectfully Urge the Empress-Dowager to Return the Sovereign Power to the Emperor), in *Thien Nan Shin Pao*, 28 September 1899, pp. 1-2.
105. *Ibid.*
106. See *Thien Nan Shin Pao*, 7 October 1899, p. 5, 11 October 1899, p. 8.
107. *Ibid.*
108. See Kuo T'ing-yi, *Chin-tai Chung-kuo shih shih jih-chih* (A Chronology of Modern Chinese History) (Taipei, 1963), Vol. 2, pp. 1038-9.
109. See *Thien Nan Shin Pao*, 7 October 1899, p. 5.
110. It was claimed that there were a few hundred signatures collected in Singapore, and 700 collected in Kuala Lumpur. The telegrams were sent separately to the Tsungli Yamen in Peking; the Singapore telegram was under the leadership of Lin Yun-lung (林云龙), a native of Nan-an district of Fukien, who was also a rich merchant; the Kuala Lumpur telegram was sent under the names of Fan Ch'ang (范昌) and Wang Tse-min (王泽民). See *Thien Nan Shin Pao*, 13 November 1899, p. 2, 15 November 1899, p. 2; *Jit Shin Pau*, 11 November 1899, p. 4, 17 November 1899, p. 4.
111. *Ibid.*
112. The protest movement which received a great deal of coverage in the reformist newspapers in Singapore was the one in Thailand. It was claimed that the reformists in Thailand had obtained 80,000 signatures to petition the return of the Emperor's rule. See *Thien Nan Shin Pao*, 8 March 1900, p. 2, 20 March 1900, p. 2; *Jit Shin Pau*, 12 March 1900, p. 4, 13 March 1900, p. 7, 19 March 1900, p. 4.
113. See *Jit Shin Pau*, 10 February 1900, p. 7, 12 February 1900, p. 6, 27 February 1900, p. 1, 28 February 1900, p. 1, 2 March 1900, p. 1, 3 March 1900, p. 1, 9 March 1900, p. 1, 25 April 1900, p. 1, 27 April 1900, p. 1.
114. A full-scale celebration of the Emperor Kuang-hsu's 30th birthday took place in Ipoh, Perak. See *Thien Nan Shin Pao*, 31 July 1900, p. 7.
115. See Jung-pang Lo, 'Sequel to Autobiography of K'ang Yu-wei', in Jung-pang Lo (ed.), *K'ang Yu-wei: A Biography and A Symposium*, p. 184.
116. *Ibid.*
117. See Wu Hsien-tzu, *Chung-kuo min-chu hsien-cheng-tang shih* (A History of the Chinese Reformist Party) (San Francisco, 1952), pp. 34-6; Edmund Fung, 'The T'ang Ts'ai-ch'ang Revolt', in *Papers on Far Eastern History*, No. 1 (March, 1970), pp. 70-114.
118. See Feng Tzu-yu, *Chung-hua min-kuo k'ai-kuo ch'ien Ko-ming shih* (A Revolutionary History Prior to the Founding of the Chinese Republic) (Taipei, 1954), Vol. 2, p. 105.

119. Interview with Tan Chor-nam on 7 August 1966 at his residence in Singapore. Tan was a close friend of Khoo at that time; his information could be depended upon.
120. See *Thien Nan Shin Pao*, 22 October 1901, pp. 1-2; 'Letter from Khoo Seok-wan to the Governor-General of Kwangtung and Kwangsi, T'ao Mo', reprinted in *Thien Nan Shin Pao*, 23 October 1901.
121. Khoo's move had greatly affected Tan Chor-nam and Teo Eng-hock, two reformists supporters at the time, who later became the leaders of the revolutionaries in Singapore. See Yen Ching-hwang, *The Overseas Chinese and the 1911 Revolution*, p. 56.
122. For details relating to the publication of the two newspapers, see Chen Mong Hock, *The Early Chinese Newspapers of Singapore*, pp. 63-80.
123. For details, see *Thien Nan Shin Pao* and the *Jit Shin Pau* between 1899 and 1900.
124. Wu Hsien-tzu, *Chung-kuo min-chu hsien-cheng tang shih*, p. 28; Wang Gung-wu, 'Chinese Reformists and Revolutionaries in the Straits Settlements 1900-1911' (unpublished B.A. Honours thesis, University of Malaya, Singapore 1953), p. 40 and Appendix B.
125. See Jung-pang Lo, *K'ang Yu-wei: A Biography and A Symposium*, p. 258, footnote 8.
126. See the announcement of the formation of the Hao Hsueh Hui by Dr Lim Boon Keng published in the *Thien Nan Shin Pao*, 9 September 1899, p. 1.
127. *Ibid.*
128. Writing about the Chinese Philomatic Society (Hao Hsueh Hui), Song Ong Siang stated that it 'for a few years carried on a vigorous existence and brought together a number of young men and some of the older folks for the regular study of English literature, Western music and the Chinese language'. See Song Ong Siang, *One Hundred Years' History of the Chinese in Singapore* (reprint, Singapore, 1967), p. 236. This statement appears to have contradicted the professed aims of the society and was not in line with the early part of its activities. *Thien Nan Shin Pao*, 9 September 1899, p. 1.
129. See *Thien Nan Shin Pao*, 5 October 1899, p. 1, 12 October 1899, p. 1, 24 October 1899, p. 1, 31 October 1899, p. 1, 9 November 1899, p. 1, 16 November 1899, p. 1; *Jit Shin Pau*, 6 October 1899, p. 4, 9 October 1899, p. 4, 11 October 1899, p. 1.
130. See *Jit Shin Pau*, 6 October 1899, p. 4, 9 October 1899, p. 4, 11 October 1899, p. 1. Another reformist leader, Huang Nai-shang, who was in Peking during the Hundred Days' Reform, was invited to give his account in the eighth public lecture organized by the Hao Hsueh Hui on 18 November 1899. See the advertisement for the talk in the *Thien Nan Shin Pao*, 16 November 1899, p. 1.
131. See *Thien Nan Shin Pao*, 16 November 1899, p. 1.
132. In the lists of Hao Hsueh Hui 'members', men like Wang Hui-i (王会仪), Lin Tzu-chou (林正俦), Hsu Chi-chun (徐季钧), Li Yung-hsiang (李榕梦) were Chinese journalists working with both the *Thien Nan Shin Pao* and *Jit Shin Pau*; men like Hu Po-hsiang (胡伯驊), Ch'en Yung-kuang (陈荣光), Liang Min-hsiu (梁敏修), Ch'iu Yen-pin (邱雁宾), Wu Ying-p'ei (吴应培), Teo Eng-hock (张永福), Huang Chao-k'un (黄兆焜), Huang Chao-chen (黄兆镇), Huang Chao-yuan (黄兆源), Lin Wei-fang (林维芳), were known merchants. See lists of 'members' of the Hao Hsueh Hui

- published in the *Thien Nan Shin Pao*, 9 October 1899, p. 5, 12 October 1899, p. 8, 18 October 1899, p. 5, 30 October 1899, p. 5, 4 November 1899, p. 8, 11 November 1899, p. 5, 13 December 1899, p. 5.
133. See Yen Ching-hwang, *The Overseas Chinese and the 1911 Revolution*, pp. 118–21, and Appendix 2 and 7.
134. *Ibid.*, pp. 104–5.
135. See Dr Sun Yat-sen, 'Min-tsu chu-i' (Nationalism), in *Sun Chung-san hsuan-chi (Selected Works of Dr Sun Yat-sen)* (Hong Kong, 1962), Vol. 2, p. 593.
136. The revolutionaries traced their anti-Manchu forerunner to the Koxinga (Cheng Ch'eng-kung) who led the resistance movement in South China and Taiwan against the Manchu conquest. For the relationship between the revolutionaries and the Koxinga's anti-Manchu nationalism see R.C. Crozier, *Koxinga and Chinese Nationalism* (Cambridge, Mass., 1977), pp. 50–6.
137. See Sun Yat-sen, 'Min-tsu chu-i', pp. 626–37.
138. See Yen Ching-hwang, 'Chinese Revolutionary Propaganda Organizations in Singapore and Malaya, 1906–1911', in *Journal of the South Seas Society*, Vol. 29, pts. 1 and 2, pp. 54–61.

CHAPTER 9

The Confucian Revival Movement in Singapore and Malaya, 1899–1911*

When Dr Lim Boon Keng, an eminent Western-educated Chinese and one of the comparatively few Chinese Christians in Singapore, was converted to Confucianism in 1899 when the grip of Confucianism on overseas Chinese intellectuals had shown its strength.¹ In the intellectual history of the Chinese in Singapore and Malaya, the spread of Confucianism and nationalism were the chief causes of ferment and change in the period 1899–1911. Between them these new ideas did much to transform the overseas Chinese communities and make them more adaptable to the modern world. The Confucian revival movement was first one of the stimulants of change. To understand its influence on the development of the overseas Chinese communities, it is necessary to trace its origins back to China.

The Confucian Revival Movement in China

The Confucian revival movement, which was to make Confucianism China's state religion, was an integral part of the well-known Reform movement. It was first launched in 1895 by K'ang Yu-wei and Liang Ch'i-ch'ao, the two reformist national leaders, together with other programmes for institutional reform.² It gradually gained momentum in the following years. In 1897, a society exclusively dedicated to the study and spread of Confucianism was founded in Kweilin in Kwangsi Province.³ An attempt was made by K'ang Yu-wei at the climax of his 'Hundred Days' Reforms' in 1898 to make Confucianism the state religion, to establish religious departments and Confucian temples and to base the national calendar on

Confucius' birthday. He also tried to abolish improper sacrifices (including those to Taoist, Buddhist and local deities) and replace them with the worship of Confucius.⁴ All these attempts were contained in a memorial to the Emperor Kuang-hsü, but they seemed to be of no avail. K'ang's failure to persuade the Emperor to adopt his proposals may have been partly a result of the historic circumstances under which the Hundred Days' Reforms were carried out. Without much real power in his hands, the Emperor had already taken risks in accepting K'ang's advice to reform the examination system and to establish new institutions. To have made Confucianism the state religion would have provoked even more conservative opposition to reform.

Although the Reform movement was crushed in China after 1898, the Confucian revival movement survived and had its first gain in 1906 when the Ch'ing court decreed that sacrifices to Confucius should be made as grandiose as those to Heaven.⁵ This upgrading of the Confucian sacrifices encouraged Confucian revivalists at home and abroad to be more ambitious. In 1906, a movement to establish Confucian temples and schools was launched in Singapore and Malaya. In the following year, Ch'en Huan-chang (1881-1931), a disciple of K'ang Yu-wei and then a graduate student at Columbia University, organized a *K'ung-chiao hui* (Association of the Cult of Confucius) in New York to promote Confucianism as a state cult.⁶

Ironically, the movement did not become important in China until after the fall of the Ch'ing dynasty in 1912. In that year, another *K'ung-chiao hui* was founded by Ch'en Huan-chang in Shanghai, which served as the headquarters of Confucian revivalist activities. In 1913, about 130 branches were established in major cities like Peking, Chefoo, Hong Kong and Macao. A magazine to serve as mouthpiece of the movement entitled *K'ung-chiao hui tsa-chih* (*Miscellany of the Association of the Cult of Confucius*) was published. In the same year, it petitioned the Parliament of the new Republic to adopt Confucianism as the state religion. The petition was so successful that a number of conservative scholars and military governors rallied to its support. The military support indicates that the movement had acquired a strong political character; the petition became the central issue in the political struggle between President Yüen Shih-k'ai and the conservatives on the one hand and the Kuomintang (The Nationalist Party) on the other. A resolution in the Parliament to grant Confucianism the status of a state religion was opposed by the Kuomintang members but supported by Yüen's followers and some members of the Chinputang (the Progressive Party). A compromise was reached in the Parliament in 1913 with the result that the sentence 'Confucian principles shall be the basis for the cultivation of

character in national education' was inserted into article 19 of the Draft Constitution of the Republic of China.⁷ This partial recognition of the status of Confucianism in education obviously did not satisfy the Confucian revivalist leaders, who pressed hard for further gains. Partly as the result of their efforts and partly to pave the way for the restoration of the monarchical system in China, President Yüan decreed in February 1914 the resumption of sacrifices to Confucius as well as to Heaven which the Republic in 1912 had suspended.⁸

The death of President Yüan in 1916 dealt a heavy blow to the Confucian revival movement. It lost its most powerful political supporter, and came under increasing attack, especially from Western-educated intellectuals who viewed Confucianism as a conservative force and the main hindrance to modernization. The attack had begun in 1915 when President Yüan tried to use Confucianism for monarchist purposes. The well-known leader of the new intellectuals, Ch'en Tu-hsiu 陈独秀, took the lead. Several articles appeared in the *Hsin ch'ing-nien* (*The New Youth*) monthly publication attacking Confucian ethics and institutions and calling for a total revaluation of Confucianism.⁹ The attack reached a climax during the period of the New Cultural Movement, roughly between 1917 and 1921. Stimulated by the May Fourth incident, hundreds of publications, mainly sponsored by university students, appeared with the aim of spreading patriotism and liberalism. At the same time they began a two-pronged attack on Confucianism: by a direct challenge to Confucian ethical and social principles; and by introducing new morals from the West which indirectly undermined the authority of Confucianism.¹⁰

The period after 1921 saw a rapid decline of Confucianism. Its decline was further accelerated by the general intellectual trend towards militant nationalism and Communism. The Confucian revivalists failed in a number of attempts to make Confucianism a state religion. Though Chiang Kai-shek tried in the 1930s to revive the Confucian ethical system,¹¹ the trend of decline could not be arrested. The movement had effectively ended with the death of K'ang Yu-wei in 1927.

The Confucian Revival Movement in Singapore and Malaya

The movement in Singapore and Malaya was an important part of the overall Confucian revival movement. Its importance lay not so much in supporting the movement in China, as in stimulating and influencing similar movements in other overseas Chinese communities, particularly in Southeast Asia. In contrast to the Confucian revival movement in China, the

movement in Singapore and Malaya was relatively vigorous. The two movements were apparently conditioned by different socio-political and intellectual milieus. In China, as the movement was an integral part of the Reform movement led by K'ang Yu-wei, the failure of the Hundred Days' Reform in 1898 almost sealed the fate of the Confucian revival movement. The government of the Empress Dowager Tz'u-hsi not only put handsome rewards on the heads of both K'ang Yu-wei and Liang Ch'i-ch'ao, but also attempted to uproot K'ang's influence in intellectual circles by banning his books from circulation and destroying printing blocks of his books. Moreover, China had a strong scholar-gentry class whose members always considered themselves to be the guardians of Chinese tradition. K'ang Yu-wei's re-interpretation of the Confucian classics had caused a big stir among members of the scholar-gentry. Most of them had strongly objected K'ang's new interpretation, and would regard him as an undesirable scholar who twisted Classics to advance his personal ambition. The decline of K'ang's influence and the government's stringent measures forced many of those who previously supported K'ang's idea to disassociate themselves from the Confucian revival movement. Thus, the movement in China during the late Ch'ing period failed to get off the ground.

In contrast, the social and intellectual milieu in Singapore and Malaya was favourable to the rise and development of the Confucian revival movement. Firstly, the rapid increase of Chinese immigrants to Singapore and Malaya at the end of the nineteenth and beginning of the twentieth centuries extended the size of the local Chinese community.¹² This influx naturally led the community to become more China-oriented. The China-orientation became the prerequisite for the rise of the Confucian revival movement. Secondly, the rise of modern Chinese journalism provided necessary impetus for the movement. The founding of the *Lat Pau* 叻报, the *Sing Po* 星报, the *Thien Nan Shin Pao* 天南新报 and *Jit Shin Pau* 日新报 in Singapore in the same period kept many Chinese in Singapore and Malaya informed about China, and promoted 'Chinese identity consciousness' and 'concern for China'.¹³ More importantly, some of these newspapers supported the movement as part of expression of overseas Chinese cultural nationalism, and they were used as vehicles for the movement to reach the general public. Thirdly, the rise of overseas Chinese nationalism fed and sustained the development of the movement. Close family ties and love for birthplace were the two main ingredients of overseas Chinese nationalism. Overseas Chinese nationalistic feeling emerged in 1880s after China had established its first consulate in Singapore in 1877.¹⁴ It was reinforced by China's change of her traditional policy towards overseas Chinese in 1893.¹⁵ The emerging

overseas Chinese nationalism in Singapore and Malaya expressed itself mainly in political and cultural arena. Politically, Chinese in Singapore and Malaya expressed their nationalism by supporting China in the war against France in 1884,¹⁶ by observing the birthdays of Chinese Emperor and Empress Dowager,¹⁷ and by welcoming visiting Chinese warships to Singapore.¹⁸ Culturally, the Chinese in Singapore and Malaya expressed their feeling by repudiating the trends of Westernization and *Babaization*, and by promoting Chinese culture and literature through the founding of various literary clubs such as *Hui Hsien She* 会贤社, *T'u Nan She* 图南社 and *Hao Hsueh Hui* 好学会 (known as the Chinese Philomatic Society).¹⁹ To overseas Chinese nationalists, the revival of Confucianism meant not only the salvation of China from mounting Western imperialism as K'ang Yu-wei interpreted it, but also the revival of traditional Chinese moral values and reassertion of Chineseness in the local Chinese community.

Compared with China, the Confucian revival movement in Singapore and Malaya took substantially different forms. In China, the Confucian revivalists tried to 'succeed from above': they used political methods in attempts to get Confucianism accepted as a state religion. By contrast, the Confucian revivalists in Singapore and Malaya tried to convert people directly, by establishing Confucian temples, promoting study of Confucianism and observing Confucius' birthday. Their more popular, non-political strategy was probably dictated by the different environment in which they lived. It would have been absurd to try to make Confucianism a state religion in the British Straits Settlements and the Malay States.

The movement in Singapore and Malaya began in 1899, the year after the failure of the 'Hundred Days' Reform' in China, and intensified in 1902. There was then less activity until 1908, after which the movement gradually revived and reached another climax in 1911. The early campaigns concentrated on the establishment of Confucian temples and modern schools. The second phase began with campaigns to observe Confucius' birthday as a national festival, but towards the end of the period the construction of Confucian temples and modern schools again became the dominant issues. The geographical centre of the movement meanwhile shifted from Singapore to Penang.

Before the commencement of the movement, there had already been increasing worship of Confucius. As early as the middle of 1894, a treatise by a top *chin-shih*,²⁰ exalting the greatness of Confucius was reproduced in *Sing Po*,²¹ a Chinese daily in Singapore. The paper had been appearing since 1890,²² but this was its first notice of Confucius, and may perhaps be considered as the first sign of interest in Confucianism by Chinese intellectuals

in Singapore and Malaya.²³ In the years up to 1899, several articles were published in the same paper to glorify Confucianism or explain its weaknesses.²⁴ Two of these articles which deserve our attention were the important documents of the Confucian revival movement in China. The regulations of the *Sheng-hsueh hui* (Association of Sagacious Studies) which was drafted by K'ang Yu-wei in 1897 in Kweilin was published on 4 June of the same year;²⁵ and a public notice written by Hsu Ch'in, an important disciple of K'ang, calling upon Chinese in Yokohama to worship Confucius, appeared on 28 October 1898.²⁶ The appearance of these documents, together with other similar articles, not only show the increasing interest of overseas Chinese intellectuals in Confucianism, but are also indicative of the intellectual ferment overseas about China's reform. The editors and editorial writers of the *Sing Po*²⁷ wrote often in favour of China's reform, and seem to have been greatly stirred by the words and deeds of the Confucian revivalist leaders in China. Although no evidence is available to prove that the *Sing Po* was an organ of the China reform movement, it had, to a large extent, echoed that reform sentiment among the Chinese in Singapore and Malaya. It is noticeable that a chief editor of the newspaper, Huang Nai-shang 黄乃裳,²⁸ who later became a staunch advocate of revolution,²⁹ had an early intellectual inclination towards reformism. His association with and admiration for K'ang and other reformist leaders may have influenced his attitude towards Confucianism, and helped to shape the intellectual ferment in Singapore.

From March to August 1899, a number of articles appeared in the editorial of the *Thien Nan Shin Pao*, a Chinese daily in Singapore, calling upon local Chinese to worship Confucius by observing his birthday.³⁰ Other articles reporting the worship of Confucius by the Chinese in Rangoon (Burma), Victoria (Canada) and Celebes (Dutch East Indies) also appeared in the same paper.³¹ Then in September 1899, a group of Chinese merchants in Kuala Lumpur organized a public meeting to launch the movement. The meeting resolved to observe Confucius' birthday (27th of 8th moon of lunar calendar) as a holiday for all Chinese. Shops were to be closed for business, there was to be celebration at home, and people had to pay homage to a portrait of Confucius temporarily installed at the T'ung Shan Hospital.³² Representatives were to be elected from various dialect groups in the local Chinese community to perform sacrificial ceremonies to Confucius. All Chinese were called upon to adopt the Confucian calendar along with the Emperor Kuang-hsu's reigning year.³³ It is interesting to note that this first step to launch the movement was taken not in Singapore which was the commercial and intellectual centre for the Chinese in Southeast Asia, but

in Kuala Lumpur which was relatively unimportant. A possible explanation is that Kuala Lumpur had a predominantly Cantonese population who perhaps were proud to respond to the Confucian revival movement in China which was initiated by their fellow Cantonese, K'ang Yu-wei and Liang Ch'i-ch'ao.

The movement was quickly under way. About two weeks after the meeting in Kuala Lumpur, the committee members of the Chinese Free School known as 'Chui Eng Si E' 萃英书院³⁴ decided to follow the lead of Kuala Lumpur's Chinese by observing Confucius' birthday.³⁵ As most of them were leaders of the Fukien community in Singapore, their decision could be taken as indication of the support of the community for the movement. Only a few days later, Dr Lim Boon Keng, a leader of the Fukien community and one of the main driving forces of the reform and Confucian revival movements in Singapore and Malaya, went to Kuala Lumpur to preach the establishment of Confucian temples and modern schools.³⁶ In December of the same year, the Chinese in Malacca followed suit by honouring Confucius.³⁷ These Chinese responded partly to the enthusiasm shown by the Chinese in Kuala Lumpur, and partly to the call made by some Chinese newspapers. The *Thien Nan Shin Pao*, which was founded by Khoo Seok-wan 邱菽園,³⁸ to advocate the reform movement in China, played the major role in creating and shaping the movement. Apart from reproducing important speeches made by the Confucian revivalist leaders in China,³⁹ and reporting details of Confucian revivalist activities in other overseas Chinese communities,⁴⁰ the newspaper after 1898 opened its editorial page as a forum for Confucianism in Singapore and Malaya. Its editors and editorial writers constantly urged Chinese leaders to revere Confucius and to spread Confucianism.⁴¹ The initial step taken by the Chinese merchants in Kuala Lumpur appeared to have been strongly influenced by it.⁴² The newspaper had gone so far as to champion a united Confucius Association (*K'ung-chiao hui*) for British Malaya (including Singapore).⁴³ Although that did not succeed, the paper had shown its determination to promote Confucianism and its devotion to the movement.

Meanwhile the movement was supported by another Chinese newspaper in Singapore – the *Jit Shin Pau* 日新報. Founded in October 1899 by Dr Lim Boon Keng partly to help carry out a reform movement in local Chinese communities,⁴⁴ the paper, like its counterpart the *Thien Nan Shin Pao*, fervently backed the Confucian revival movement. It reproduced speeches and articles by eminent revivalists from other reformist newspapers; it reported activities of other Confucian revivalists overseas; it opened its editorial page to discussions of Confucianism.⁴⁵ The staunch support by the two local reformist newspapers indicates that there was a strong link between

the Confucian revival and the Reform movements. As in the Confucian revival movement in China, the reformist leaders like Khoo Seok-wan and Dr Lim Boon Keng became the main driving forces behind the movement in Singapore and Malaya. Apart from using the *Thien Nan Shin Pao* and *Jit Shin Pau* to create public opinion in support of the movement, they gave occasional lectures to the members of the Chinese Philomatic Society 'Hao Hsueh Hui 好学会', in an attempt to indoctrinate both English and Chinese educated intellectuals in the Straits Settlements.⁴⁶ Dr Lim Boon Keng was particularly active. He wrote articles, both in English and Chinese, to expound Confucius' teachings;⁴⁷ sponsored Confucian classes and toured around many urban centres in the Malay Peninsula and Dutch East Indies to preach Confucianism.⁴⁸ His efforts undoubtedly contributed a great deal to the development of the movement.

Further impetus was given to the movement by the visit of K'ang Yu-wei and two other Confucian revivalists, Ch'iu Feng-chia 丘逢甲 and Wang Hsiao-ch'ang 王晓沧 in 1900. K'ang arrived in Singapore on 2 February 1900 at the invitation of Khoo Seok-wan.⁴⁹ He spent about six months in Singapore and four months in Penang before he left for India in December of the same year.⁵⁰ In Singapore he stayed mainly with Khoo Seok-wan and Lim Boon Keng, the two leaders of the Confucian revival movement. There is no evidence to suggest that K'ang was directly involved in the movement. He did not make speeches or publish articles in support of it. But he was probably dissembling – he lived in constant fear of assassination because the Ch'ing government had set a large price on his head.⁵¹ In such a situation, any open association with the Confucian revival movement was undesirable.⁵² He was also preoccupied with planning and coordinating work for the uprising at Hankow in Central China,⁵³ as part of his plan to restore power to the dethroned Emperor Kuang-hsu. He was busy with the work of channelling overseas funds to support the plot.⁵⁴ He may nevertheless have offered help and advice to the local Confucian revival movement through his close contacts with Lim Boon Keng and Khoo Seok-wan; and the mere fact of his presence among them must have given tremendous confidence to the Confucian revivalists in Singapore and Malaya.

The visit of the other two Confucian revivalists from China, Ch'iu Feng-chia and Wang Hsiao-ch'ang, proved to be of equal importance. Little is known about Wang except that he was a native of Chia-ying prefecture of Kwangtung Province and a minor official holding the position of Sub-Director of Studies of the Chan Prefecture 儋州.⁵⁵ Ch'iu Feng-chia was better known. He was a statesman, educationist and poet. Born into an established family in Formosa, he obtained the degree of *chin-shih* at 25 *sui*.

His success in passing the highest stage of the imperial examination at a relatively young age indicates his grasp of Confucian Classics. He was then admitted into the local bureaucracy, and once occupied a high position as the Financial Commissioner of Formosa.⁵⁶ When Formosa was ceded to Japan after the defeat of China in the First Sino-Japanese War in 1895, Ch'iu and the Governor, T'ang Ching-su were directly involved in a resistance movement against Japanese takeover.⁵⁷ When it failed, he fled to the home of his ancestors in Kwangtung. The defeat and humiliation of China awakened him, like other enlightened Confucian scholars, to the need for institutional reform. Although he did not join forces with K'ang Yu-wei's reform movement, he founded modern schools and an academy,⁵⁸ introducing Western learning as well as expounding the so-called 'real teachings' of Confucius. He did not believe that the founding of a Western school conflicted with principles of Confucianism. This linking of Confucianism and modern education became one of the main features of the Confucian revival movement in Singapore and Malaya. Both Wang and Ch'iu were sent by the Kwangtung government to visit Chinese communities in Southeast Asia in order to promote commerce.⁵⁹ As Confucian revivalists, it was quite natural for them to mix with local Confucian revivalist leaders,⁶⁰ and to serve as a spearhead of the movement. They toured Singapore and Malaya to campaign for the establishment of Confucian temples, as well as to promote commerce. They published articles and gave public talks advocating the movement;⁶¹ wherever they went, they convened public meetings to raise funds for Confucian temples and libraries. Owing to their official positions and their influence among local Chinese merchants, their campaign was very successful. It was reported that a rich merchant of Perak, Wang Yuan-shui, responded by donating a piece of land worth S\$7,000 as a site for a Confucian temple, and assigned part of his premises for a proposed library.⁶²

The progress of the movement was not without obstacles. The difficulties came from three sources: the traditional Chinese attitude towards any social or political movement; communal disunity; and fear of being entangled with the reformist exiles who were wanted by the Ch'ing government. The traditional Chinese attitude towards politics was one of apathy – an apathy common in traditional societies and encouraged by traditional Chinese government. It was encouraged further by the commercial orientation of overseas Chinese,⁶³ who were more interested in making money than involving themselves in any social movement. Communal disunity certainly had a role to play in retarding the movement. Since Chinese communities in Singapore and Malaya during that time were still divided into several major dialect groups, many people responded to public appeals according to

dialect identity.⁶⁴ It was rather unfortunate for the Confucian revival movement that both its foremost leaders, Lim Boon Keng and Khoo Seok-wan, were Fukien; this limited the movement's appeal to other dialect groups. But the biggest obstacle, in the early years, was fear of being entangled with the political exiles K'ang Yu-wei and Liang Ch'i-ch'ao. Khoo and Lim were known in Singapore to have supported the Reform movement in China before and after the 'Hundred Days' Reform' in 1898. The *Thien Nan Shin Pao* and *Jit Shin Pau* which supported the Confucian revival movement, had also strongly criticized the Ch'ing government. These links created the suspicion among the public that the Confucian revival movement was merely a political instrument of K'ang Yu-wei.⁶⁵ The visit of K'ang, and his close contacts with both Lim and Khoo in Singapore, strengthened such suspicions.

The suspicion was best manifested in a statement by a visiting Chinese degree-holder (*chin-shih*) who advised the merchants in Kuala Lumpur not to support the movement. In a statement published in 1899, he declared that its supporters would be identified by the Ch'ing government as followers of K'ang Yu-wei and Liang Ch'i-ch'ao, or as members of secret societies engaging in subversive activities. A warning of this kind created fear in the minds of local Chinese of being drawn into any activity against the Ch'ing government which still had some control over their fate. The fear was confirmed by the Ch'ing government's punishment of Khoo Seok-wan who, with Dr Lim Boon Keng, was believed to have been directly involved in the abortive Hankow Revolt.⁶⁶

The leaders of the movement adopted several tactics to overcome these difficulties: they attacked the opposition argument; they identified Confucianism with the Chinese way of life; and they allied themselves with the Ch'ing officials. They did their best to allay the fears provoked in Kuala Lumpur by the visiting Chinese *chin-shih*. Soon after his statement appeared, articles attacking it were published in the *Thien Nan Shin Pao*, the semi-official organ of the movement, in which the *chin-shih* was accused of being utterly ignorant. The authors argued that although K'ang Yu-wei and Liang Ch'i-ch'ao started the Confucian revival movement in China, those who supported a Confucian revival movement in Singapore and Malaya could not be considered as K'ang's and Liang's followers, or as engaging in secret society activities.⁶⁷

More generally – and more effectively – they worked to identify the movement with the interest of all Chinese. Traditionally, Confucianism was considered as the ideology of the scholar-official class which also served as the only guardian of that ideology. Many overseas Chinese considered that

the movement to revive Confucianism had nothing to do with them. This thinking had obviously inhibited their support for the movement. To change such a traditional outlook, the leaders of the movement repeatedly emphasized that Confucianism belonged not just to the scholar-officials, but also to all other social classes, and it should be considered as a major part of the Chinese way of life.⁶⁸ How effective this argument was in gaining public support is difficult to gauge, but this identification of Confucianism with all Chinese helped to broaden its base of support in the society, and gave a sense of belonging to a number of overseas Chinese.

The most important and difficult task for the leaders was to dispel popular fears of the Ch'ing authority. Though the departure of K'ang Yu-wei in December 1900 for India helped to allay fears,⁶⁹ the majority of Chinese merchants were unwilling to support the movement unless specific approval was obtained from the Ch'ing government. At this critical juncture, the leaders were fortunate to have another two Confucian revivalist officers from China to come to their aid. Both Chang K'o-ch'eng 张克诚 and Wu T'ung-lin 吴桐林 were sent to Southeast Asia by the Kwangtung Government to promote commerce among Chinese.⁷⁰ As a result of Chang's efforts, the Governor-General of Kwangtung and Kwangsi, T'ao Mo gave approval to the movement and instructed the Chinese Consul-General in Singapore to help to set up Confucian temples and modern schools.⁷¹

Exploiting such favourable conditions, the leaders of the movement pressed the general public for direct action. On 9 October 1901 (27th day of 8th moon of the 27th year of Kuang-hsu), the anniversary of Confucius' birthday and only a week after the official approval of the movement was published, a preliminary meeting to discuss the establishment of Confucian temples was convened by Lim Boon Keng and some other Confucian revivalist leaders in Singapore. A few hundred representatives of various dialect groups were present, including many rich merchants.⁷² Important speakers were Lim Boon Keng, Wu T'ung-lin, the Ch'ing government's commerce promoter and Lo Shu-keng, the Ch'ing Consul-General in Singapore. Lo called upon the participants to support the construction of Confucian temples.⁷³ He strengthened his appeal by issuing an official notice to all Chinese which was published the next day (10 October).⁷⁴ It is significant to note that this was the first time that the Ch'ing Consul-General was directly involved in the Confucian revival movement. Lo was merely carrying out an officially approved line towards overseas Chinese, but to many Chinese merchants, his direct participation was probably viewed as patronage. Thus it gave a considerable boost to the movement.

After the main obstacle was cleared, the movement developed rapidly. In January 1902, Consul-General Lo was transferred to Australia. The patronage position was taken over by the Acting Consul-General, Goh Siew Tin (Wu Shou-chen 吴寿珍 in Mandarin, or known in Chinese official circles as Wu Shih-ch'i 吴世奇). Goh was a rich merchant and leader of the Fukien community in Singapore. His cordial relationship with the Confucian revivalist leaders,⁷⁵ and his inclination to preserve Chinese traditions,⁷⁶ made him more willing to become the official patron and champion of the Confucian revival movement. Under his auspices, two meetings were convened in February and March 1902 at the T'ung Chi Hospital (or known as Thong Chai Hospital, 同济医院). A committee of 195 members was set up;⁷⁷ a public notice appealing to all Chinese was published; and regulations for establishing Confucian temples and modern schools were also issued.⁷⁸ It is noteworthy that the various dialect groups were well-represented on the committee, which reflected the real power structure of the Chinese community in Singapore.⁷⁹ This fair representation of various dialect groups was essential to the success of the appeal, for it provided the basis of communal solidarity among the Chinese.

The major task of the committee was to raise adequate funds for the construction of the temples and schools. Apart from donations on the spot at the second meeting, which amounted to more than S\$40,000,⁸⁰ committee members were organized into groups along dialect lines and were assigned to press for house-to-house donations.⁸¹ These methods appear to have been effective. But the most effective method was the giving of prestige to big donors. Regulations provided that ancestral tablets of the most generous donors would be placed in a shrine built in or beside the Confucian temple. Four grades ranging from S\$500 to S\$5,000 were offered, and the ancestral tablets were to be ranked in the shrine according to the amount of money donated.⁸² As many rich Chinese merchants in Singapore and Malaya were interested to acquire prestige through various forms of donation,⁸³ this device proved to be the most successful.⁸⁴ The same method with slight modification is still being used in the Chinese communities in Singapore and Malaysia.⁸⁵

More than S\$200,000 had been raised by the middle of 1902.⁸⁶ But then, abruptly, the movement appears to have gone into recess until 1908. There were no clamorous public talks, meetings or study groups to promote Confucianism; no heated discussions in the newspapers on Confucian doctrines. Most surprisingly there was no actual construction work on the Confucian temple despite the large sum of money raised.⁸⁷ Two factors may account for the setback. The first was a weakness inherent in the movement. It was neither a religious nor a political movement, but a combination of

cultural, religious and social ferments. Unlike a religious movement, it lacked a group of devoted people like Christian missionaries or Muslim imams who would persist with effective evangelistic work. Unlike a political movement, it lacked a long-term objective, coherent platforms and an organizational network to fulfil its aims. This lack of organization was clearly shown in mid-1902 when Lim Boon Keng went to London to attend the coronation of King Edward the Seventh,⁸⁸ other leaders like Khoo Seok-wan and Goh Siew Tin became inactive,⁸⁹ and the movement almost came to a standstill.

A more immediate blow to the movement came from an abrupt change of attitude in Liang Ch'i-ch'ao, one of the main figures of the Confucian revival movement in China. In February 1902 he published an important article entitled 'Pao-chiao fei tsun-K'ung lun' ('To Protect Religion is not to Worship Confucius') in the *Hsin-min ts'ung-pao* in Japan. The article was republished in the *Thien Nan Shin Pao* at the end of May 1902 in Singapore.⁹⁰ In this article, Liang argued that there was no need to make Confucianism a national religion, which would curtail the Chinese people's freedom of thought, which was essential to the salvation of China as a nation.⁹¹ Although Liang's objection to the movement was partly based on his new conviction that China's future depended very much on her ability to absorb new foreign ideas,⁹² he was probably more obsessed by the frivolous and symbolic inclinations of the movement. He even questioned the validity of spending large sums of money in building Confucian temples and observing Confucius' birthday.⁹³ As Liang wielded tremendous influence among overseas Chinese through his writings, his sudden change of attitude towards the Confucian movement must have held back many supporters in Singapore and Malaya.

The movement receded for several years. It was gradually revived in 1908 in the form of celebrating Confucius' birthday on the 27th of the 8th moon every year.⁹⁴ Many people demonstrated their enthusiasm by making that day a holiday, shops closed for business, schools closed for teaching, and some even put up Confucius' portrait at home for offering sacrifices.⁹⁵ The movement gathered momentum, and reached its climax in 1911 with large-scale fund-raising activity to establish Confucian temples (though this was mainly confined to Penang).⁹⁶

The resurgence appears to have been under the strong influence of the Ch'ing government and its allies in the overseas Chinese communities. The Ch'ing Consul-General's initiative in calling for the celebration of Confucius' birthday,⁹⁷ should not be interpreted merely as his personal cultural inclination and his dedication to Confucianism,⁹⁸ but should be seen also as the general

line taken by the Ch'ing government. The fact that the Singapore Chinese Chamber of Commerce, which was a strong pro-Ch'ing institution and performed semi-official functions in local Chinese communities, also lent its support to the movement reinforces this argument.⁹⁹ Although Ch'ing rulers had been the patrons of Confucianism, the official ideology of imperial China, their attitudes towards the Confucian revival movement appeared to be vague and inconsistent. The Emperor Kuang-hsu who relied on K'ang Yu-wei to embark on the ambitious 'Hundred Day's Reform' did not accept K'ang's advice to make Confucianism the state religion.¹⁰⁰ The Empress Dowager Tz'u-hsi who deposed the Emperor Kuang-hsu at first tended to be hostile towards the movement because it was initiated by her arch political rivals K'ang Yu-wei and Liang Ch'i-ch'ao; but she came to realize that the movement could be directed to her advantage. Her change of attitude was clearly indicated in the upgrading of Confucian sacrifice in 1906.¹⁰¹ She and her Confucian ministers also felt that Confucianism would serve as a bulwark against excessive Western influence during the period when the empire was reluctantly forced to undertake modernization programmes.¹⁰² Chang Chih-tung, the foremost Confucian minister, abhorred Western influence on students' behaviour and clothing in the modern schools, and emphasized the importance of the study of the Confucian classics.¹⁰³ It was natural for these protectors of traditional Chinese values to see the danger in the intrusion of Western culture, and especially in the ideas of revolution which had been widely spread among young students and overseas Chinese communities. Certain Confucian values, such as loyalty to emperor and filial piety to parents, might be enlisted in defence against subversion.

The change of attitude towards Confucianism coincided with Ch'ing' efforts to control overseas Chinese education. The Ch'ing government first showed its interest in the education of its overseas subjects in 1898 under the stimulation of the 'Hundred Days' Reform'.¹⁰⁵ But it suddenly cooled off after the Emperor Kuang-hsu was removed from his throne. The Empress Dowager Tz'u-hsi showed no interest in overseas Chinese education until 1904 when she awarded the first modern Chinese school in Penang, the Chung Hua Primary School, a tablet and a set of valuable books.¹⁰⁶ Officials were despatched to Southeast Asia to promote education,¹⁰⁷ with the result that a number of modern Chinese primary schools were established in Singapore and Malaya.¹⁰⁸ These efforts were intended not only to emphasize the cultural identity of the overseas Chinese, but also to serve as a political weapon of the government.¹⁰⁹

Under the stimulus of the Ch'ing government's changing attitude towards Confucianism, and its new policy towards overseas Chinese education,

the patronage given to the Confucian revival movement in Singapore and Malaya by the Ch'ing Consul-General was not surprising. Although the Consul-General had taken over the leadership of the movement, the movement in Penang was apparently under the control of a group of pro-Ch'ing merchants led by the ex-dignitary Chang Pi shih (张弼士, also known as Thio Tiau Siat or Chang Chen-hsu 张振勋).¹¹⁰ It is difficult to determine whether the group was carrying out the Ch'ing policy or just reacted naturally against the increasing influence of the revolutionary ideology in the local Chinese community.¹¹¹ Whatever the motive, it is clear that the movement had successfully rallied the support of the conservative forces in the community including the reformists.¹¹²

The revival movement in the later part of the period under study seems to have had better organization and more appeal to the general public. Soon after the preliminary meeting to discuss establishing Confucian temples and modern schools on the 2 August of 1911, a working committee of 22 was set up.¹¹³

It soon enlarged the basis of its support by increasing its members to 54 to include most of the leading merchants of the community.¹¹⁴ It further widened its appeal to the masses by launching a house-to-house fund-raising campaign,¹¹⁵ and organizing drama performances.¹¹⁶ As a result, a Confucian temple in Penang was founded at the end of 1911.¹¹⁷

Leadership

Two of the striking characteristics of the leadership of the movement were its heterogeneous background and the lack of continuity at the top. The movement was first led by scholars and merchants such as Lim Boon Keng and Khoo Seok-wan, and was aided by merchant-officials like Goh Siew Tin and by visiting Ch'ing scholar-officials. In the later period of the movement, the leadership was apparently in the hands of a group of conservative merchants with the strong support of merchant-officials like Chang Pi-shih. This heterogeneity partly reflects the complex nature of the movement, and partly indicates the complex motives among the top leaders. Apart from the common motive to revive Confucianism in order to make Chinese traditional culture viable in the modern world, Lim and Khoo used it to support the Reform movement led by K'ang Yu-wei, and to reform the manners and customs of the Chinese in Singapore and Malaya during that time.¹¹⁸ Merchant-officials like Goh Siew Tin and Chang Pi-shih, however, seem to have used it to enhance their personal prestige and to please the Manchu authorities. The conservative merchants

in Penang were inclined to use it to counter the revolutionary influence in the local Chinese communities. The diverse motives help to account for the discontinuity of the leadership: when leaders were disappointed in some of their aims, they tended to leave the movement. Other reasons for the lack of continuity must be sought in the nature of the movement. As it was not a purely religious movement, it lacked a group of religiously dedicated persons who could plan and execute programmes cohesively. Besides, most of the top leaders had direct connections with trade or business.¹¹⁹ They could hardly spend a great deal of time in planning, organizing and executing programmes for the movement.

In China, there was a clear domination of leadership of the Confucian revival movement by scholar-officials. Both K'ang Yu-wei and Liang Ch'i-ch'ao came from the scholar-official class. In contrast, the leadership in Singapore and Malaya was dominated by merchants. Apart from the top leaders with strong connections with trade and business who have been mentioned, the second echelon of leadership consisted almost purely of merchants. Among 195 committee members charged with sponsoring the establishment of Confucian temples and modern schools in Singapore and Malaya in 1902, many were renowned merchants.¹²⁰ Men like Lam Kim Seng 藍金升, Low Kim Pong 刘金榜, Lim Peng Siang 林秉祥, Loke Yew 陆佑, Chua Tse Yong 蔡子庸, Teo Sian Keng 张善庆, Lee Choon Guan 李俊源 and Lam Wai Fong 林维芳 were among the wealthiest in Singapore and Malaya.¹²¹ The merchant dominance in the leadership of the Confucian revival movement was not surprising. As there was no scholar-gentry class and bureaucrats in the overseas Chinese communities, merchants could combine the influence of wealth with the prestige of the scholar-gentry, the power of the bureaucrats and the authority of clan headmen, without their leadership, no movements could hope to succeed, or to raise funds.

The leaders listed above were not only the wealthiest merchants, but also the leading figures in the three major dialect groups in Singapore: Fukien, Teochew and Cantonese.¹²² It would appear that the Fukien and Teochew had more representation on the committee than Cantonese and the other minority dialect groups combined.¹²³ This partly reflected the Chinese community power structure in Singapore. The power distribution among dialect groups seems to have been dependent not only on the size, but also on financial power of the various groups. Differential representation of dialect groups was clearly illustrated in semi-official organizations like *Po Leung Kuk*,¹²⁴ and cross-section organizations, such as the Chinese Chamber of Commerce.¹²⁵ As the Confucian revival movement was designed to appeal to all Chinese rather than one particular dialect group, the inclusion of

most of the important dialect leaders in the committee was a logical step to guarantee a certain degree of support from the Chinese community as a whole.

Certainly the fact that the names of the leaders appeared in the newspaper does not necessarily mean that they were Confucian enthusiasts. It must be noted that the committee members were not elected on the spot at the convention. A number of them were nominated in absentia, and there was a tendency on the part of the convention to include most leaders of the major dialect groups. On the other hand, some leaders allowed their names to be associated with the movement as a sign of their prestige and leadership status.¹²⁶ Whatever the motive, it is clear that those leaders who allowed their names to appear on the committee and be published in the newspaper tacitly approved the movement. Thus, the leadership of the movement ranged from enthusiasts and supporters to opportunists and onlookers.

Generally speaking, Straits-born Chinese leaders played an insignificant role in the movement despite the fact that the Straits-born Chinese were one of the four major social groups in the Chinese community in Singapore.¹²⁷ The prominent role played by one of them, Dr Lim Boon Keng, has led some scholars to the mistaken conclusion that Straits-born Chinese leaders had strong affiliations with Confucianism.¹²⁸ In fact, among 34 identifiable leaders on the committee for sponsoring the establishment of Confucian temples and modern schools in Singapore in 1902, only four were Straits-born.¹²⁹ Moreover, the renowned leaders of the Straits-born in Singapore such as Tan Jiak Kim 陈若锦, Seah Liang Seah 余连城 and Song Ong Siang 宋旺相 were not on the committee.¹³⁰ The insignificant role they played is understandable. As most of them were conscious of their duty to the British empire and their ties with Western culture,¹³¹ a movement so strongly oriented to Chinese culture could hardly appeal to them. Dr Lim Boon Keng and a few others seem to have been exceptional, rather than representative.

The most striking fact about the top leadership of the Confucian revival movement in Singapore and Malaya was Lim Boon Keng's change from a Christian to a Confucian revivalist leader. Lim was one of the comparatively small number of early Chinese Christian converts in the Straits Settlements. He was baptized while studying in Scotland. He returned to Singapore in 1893 and started a private medical practice. He was very successful, and established a good reputation in the local Chinese communities.¹³² He became active socially in 1895. Four years later he was converted to Confucianism.

Two forces, inner and outer, seem to have propelled him to this conversion. These were his constant search for an identity and his political

commitment to K'ang Yu-wei's reform movement. Identity was a common problem for many Straits-born Chinese during this period, but for Lim Boon Keng who had overseas experience and had benefited from both English and Chinese cultures, the problem was more acute. Educated in the best colonial English school in Singapore and steeped in English literature and history,¹³³ Lim probably did not have any identity problems before he went to Scotland, for he could proudly identify himself as a loyal British subject like many other English-educated Straits Chinese. However, an identity crisis occurred during his period of study in Scotland. Although he put on Western clothes without an easily identifiable Manchu queue, and behaved like an English gentleman, he was still identified by most as a Westernized Chinaman rather than a British subject. He was embarrassed when his teacher and friends discovered that he could not read Chinese and knew very little of Chinese culture.¹³⁴ After his experiences in Scotland, identity became a serious problem in his life. He seems to have wavered between the two identities, and sometimes carried them both,¹³⁵ but his overseas experience turned him in the Chinese direction. After his return to Singapore in 1893, he started learning Mandarin and Cantonese.¹³⁶ His Chinese identity was further developed after he had married Huang Tuan Chiung, the elder daughter of Huang Nai-shang, a renowned Chinese scholar. He became interested in Chinese culture, religion and history. Benefiting from his father-in-law's profound knowledge of the Chinese Classics, Lim had a good grasp of the essence of Confucianism. He was so attracted to Confucius teachings that he became convinced that Confucianism was not only superior to Christianity, but also the best among the world's leading religions.¹³⁷ He deeply believed that the original Confucian teachings were obscured by the conservative Confucian scholars in China, and he seems to have shared with K'ang Yu-wei the view that real Confucianism must be revealed and revived for the benefit of all human beings.¹³⁸ It was probably this conviction that made him so active in the Confucian revival movement in Singapore and Malaya.

The development of Lim Boon Keng's Chinese identity naturally aroused his concern about China's politics and its future. He noticed the decay of the Manchu empire and the decline of China's international status, particularly after her humiliating defeat at the hands of Japan in 1895. He seems to have shared the view held by some farsighted Chinese intellectuals that China could not survive without a drastic political change.¹³⁹ As his father-in-law was a staunch supporter of K'ang Yu-wei's Reform movement, his conversion to K'ang's views was no surprise.¹⁴⁰ His political commitment together with his respect for K'ang Yu-wei,¹⁴¹ led him to accept K'ang's interpretation of Confucianism as an advanced political ideology, and Confucius

as a progressive reformer who lived ahead of his time, and always supported social change.¹⁴² Lim also believed that Confucianism was good for Chinese people as a whole, that it should be embraced by all overseas Chinese, and that it should be used to modernize overseas Chinese communities.¹⁴³

Ideology

The ideology of the movement sprang directly from K'ang Yu-wei's reformism. K'ang believed that Confucius was a great reformer who lived ahead of his time, and whose teaching contained all the truth which should be revived to serve not only Chinese people but also mankind.¹⁴⁴ In his famous book *A Study of Confucius as a Reformer* (K'ung-tzu kai-chih k'ao, published in 1896), K'ang pointed out that Confucius drew on the past for support for his political and social reforms: change was inherent in his teaching.¹⁴⁵ K'ang believed that Confucius' teachings had been distorted and misinterpreted by the Classical Text School:¹⁴⁶ the real teachings needed to be re-discovered and established as a main source of political reformism and national strength.

Confucianism as the Main Source of National Strength

Why was China weak and the Western nations strong? This question was repeatedly asked by many Chinese leaders after China's defeat in the Opium War in 1842. Many Confucian scholar-statesmen before K'ang saw the secret of Western strength in their superior arms and technology. This gave rise to a movement of 'Self-Strengthening' as the result of which Western techniques of manufacturing arms and ammunition were borrowed on a large-scale. But after the failure of the 'Self-Strengthening' movement in the 1880s and 1890s, observant and radical Confucian scholar-statesmen saw the need for institutional reform in China. At the same time, they discovered that the Western powers derived their strength not from military technology alone, but also from their social, political and economic institutions. K'ang Yu-wei was one of these radical Confucian scholars. Among many Western social institutions, K'ang seems to have noticed a close connection between Christian churches and Western power. He saw not only the cohesive force of Christian churches in welding different groups together, but also their educational activities in generating intellectual power among the people.¹⁴⁷ In search of China's national strength, K'ang naturally looked to Confucianism for his newly interpreted Confucianism was a dynamic and progressive force, and his image of Confucius was that of a sage-statesman and institutional innovator.¹⁴⁸ He was thus confident that an institutionalized Confucianism

could play a role in Chinese society similar to the role of Christian churches in the West.

The Confucian revivalists in Singapore and Malaya attempted to expand K'ang's line of argument. They emphasized that religion was the foundation of national strength. Countries which had a state religion prospered and those which lacked one declined: it seemed to follow that China's power had declined for lack of a state religion.¹⁴⁹ A visiting Confucian revivalist, Ch'iu Feng-chia, argued that many people incorrectly saw the source of Western strength in armies, commerce, industry and agriculture, whereas in fact it lay in religion and education. According to him, religion provided the focal point for the national solidarity on which national power was based, while education provided the popular culture and skill on which material civilization was built.¹⁵⁰ Based on these arguments, the Confucian revivalists concluded that China could be revitalized only by adopting Confucianism as the state religion, and they saw the newly re-interpreted Confucianism the only hope for China.

What the Confucian revivalists did not see was economic power as the very essence of the national strength, the secret behind the material achievement of Western nations. Without the Industrial Revolution, without a new dynamic economic system which generated tremendous wealth, the Western nations could not have acquired immense military strength. Men like Yen Fu 严复, the great Chinese interpreter of Western civilization at the end of the nineteenth century, saw the point clearly, and had attributed the wealth and power of modern Europe to the science of economics.¹⁵¹ Yen Fu saw that the basic problem of China was economic, the poverty of the nation and its people, what China needed was a system which could generate wealth and power like Western countries. In his opinion, what China should do was to re-orientate its people towards economic activities and release their economic energies.¹⁵² But the Confucian revivalists in China and overseas seem to have been unable to come to grips with the crux of the problem. They still analysed China's ills within the Confucian moral context. This failure was apparently connected with their education in Confucian Classics, and their intellectual horizon and their lack of real understanding of the West. The attitude of Dr Lim Boon Keng is surprising, he kept silent on the issue of arguing that Confucianism is the source of national strength. As Lim had spent several years in Scotland and had ample opportunity to observe the West, he must have realized the foundation of national strength of Western nations rested not on religion but economics. His silence on this issue could be interpreted as his dilemma between passion and reality. His passion for the revival of Confucianism prevented him from speaking the truth.

Confucianism as an Effective Modernizing Force

The Confucian revivalists wanted to adopt Confucianism as a state religion not just a matter of national pride. More importantly, they saw Confucianism in its revitalized form as an effective modernizing force. They argued that Confucianism is an ideology advocating change, the change from old to new, and from decadence to vigour. They believed it could inspire the reform of institutions to meet the changing world.¹⁵³ They saw it also as an ideology conducive to economic development.¹⁵⁴ They argued that although Confucius had no systematic economic thought, some of his teachings were closely related to the principles of economic development. They asserted that Confucius' teachings such as 'sharpen your tools before you can accomplish your task well' and 'if all craftsmen come, the finance of a nation has no problem' were similar to some basic principles adopted by Western countries during the Industrial Revolution. The modern principle of developing steamships, railways and telegraph lines as a precondition to rapid economic development was in line with Confucius' teachings, the Confucian revivalists argued.¹⁵⁵ Obviously, this argument linking Confucianism with economic modernization is poor in reasoning and unconvincing. The Confucian revivalists who knew little about the subject of economic development tried to gloss over it. Nevertheless, the argument reflects to a certain degree their awareness of the importance of economic affairs, as well as their lack of real grasp of the subject.

Besides their enthusiasm for China's modernization, some of the Confucian revivalists in Singapore and Malaya were also concerned about modernization of local Chinese communities. They were well aware of the existence of old customs and practices which had obstructed the progress of local Chinese. The cumbersome and expensive marriage and funeral customs, idolatry worship, and the attitude towards women in the society, clearly reflected conservatism of overseas Chinese in Singapore and Malaya. To them, more lamentable than the existing customs and practices was the absence of moral education for young overseas Chinese. In their opinion, moral education was of great importance, not only because it was the basis of Chinese culture, but also the source of strength of progress. Based on this belief, they argued the need of a Chinese school where moral education would be provided, and the young overseas Chinese could be regularly taught the ethical values of Confucius.¹⁵⁶ They did not hesitate to argue that Confucian ethical system formed the best part of Chinese culture, and it would bring benefit to Chinese people just like the Koran to Muslims, and the Bible to Christians.¹⁵⁷ In fact, some of them even considered Confucianism superior to other religions in relation to ethical teaching, because it taught

people how to take their proper places in society, and it drew a line between superior and subordinates, and between the old and the young.¹⁵⁸ To them, permissiveness as the extreme form of Western liberalism and acquisitiveness as the extreme form of materialism were both undesirable and unsuitable for the Chinese people.

Convinced that the revitalized Confucianism was an effective modernizing force, some Confucian revivalists were actively involved in a social reform movement which was aimed at changing old values, customs and practices of local Chinese communities. Dr Lim Boon Keng and Khoo Seok-wan, the two important leaders of the Confucian revival movement, actively propagated reform programmes such as 'queue cutting', reform of marriage and funeral customs, and educational reform.

One of their outstanding achievements was promotion of female education. Both Lim and Khoo seem to have opposed the Confucian value of subjugation of women in Chinese society, particularly the discrimination of women in relation to education. They saw education and intellectual betterment of Chinese female was crucial to the progress of society as a whole. They argued that no country in the world could make any great progress while half of the population was kept perpetually in ignorance and degradation. They also saw that the keeping of womenfolk in a low servile state would in fact retard the progress of the society,¹⁵⁹ and the apathy of Chinese parents towards the education of their daughters was a basic factor in the decline of the Chinese nation.¹⁶⁰ The solution to the problem was promotion of female education. Thus, both Lim Boon Keng and Khoo Seok-wan began to campaign for the establishment of the Singapore Chinese Girls' School. Meetings were held and circulars were sent to leading Chinese to seek both moral and financial support. The support was not forthcoming from rich Chinese merchants, nor from Chinese parents.¹⁶¹ It was due to Lim Boon Keng's untiring effort and Khoo Seok-wan's \$3,000 donation that the Singapore Chinese Girls' School was successfully established in 1899.¹⁶²

The idea of reform and the reform programmes of the Confucian revivalists clearly demonstrated that their idea of modernization was not equivalent to Westernization. Although they admired Western material advancement and were prepared to borrow some Western manners and customs, they did not go to the extent of total acceptance of Western values and systems. In this sense, they were not Westernizers. At the same time, they strongly believed that the Confucian ethical system was the best and that a revitalized Confucianism would enable Chinese people to advance both materially and morally. In this sense, they can be considered as Confucian modernists.

Confucianism as an Emerging Force of Chinese Nationalism

As most of the Confucian revivalists in Singapore and Malaya were nationalists, they shared with many other Chinese nationalists of the time an intense and widespread fear that China would be partitioned and the Chinese would perish as a race.¹⁶³ They felt the need of finding an ideology which could effectively counter the threat of imperialism. Since the type of ideology they envisaged would be politically dynamic and socially cohesive, the newly-interpreted Confucianism obviously met such a requirement. As the imperialism of the West and Japan was armed with Social-Darwinism which was basically aggressive, a dynamic Confucianism would probably generate enough strength to resist and roll back the tide of imperialism. Based on this consideration, they believed that the revitalized Confucianism would provide a focal point for the unity of Chinese people, and it would also generate enormous intellectual power on which many vital developments in the West depended.¹⁶⁴

Coming down to the local level, many Confucian revivalists must have been appalled by the existing disunity in the Chinese communities. The division of society along dialect and kinship lines, together with factional struggles among Chinese secret societies, had greatly retarded unity and progress of the Chinese communities. They believed the new Confucianism would provide overseas Chinese with a common identity, and a sense of nationhood, and it could effectively help to eliminate differences between dialect and kinship groups.¹⁶⁵ When differences were eliminated and unity was achieved, the Chinese communities in Singapore and Malaya would therefore confidently march forward.

In short, in the eyes of the Confucian revivalists in Singapore and Malaya, the revitalized Confucianism was the source of national strength of China, the essence of Chinese nationalism, and a dynamic modernizing force. It could revive and strengthen China. It would enable her to ward off foreign encroachments and to take her rightful place in the modern world.

Endnotes

- * First published in the *Journal of Southeast Asian Studies*, Vol. 7, No. 1 (FEP International Ltd, Singapore, 1976), pp. 33-57.
- 1. Dr Lim Boon Keng's conversion to Confucianism is discussed later in this article.
- 2. In the regulations of the Shanghai Ch'iang-hsüeh hui (Society for the Study of National Strengthening) drafted by K'ang Yu-wei in 1895, lecture halls were to be erected to

- preach Confucianism. Chung-kuo shih-hsueh hui (ed.), *Wu-hsu pien-fa* (*The Reform of 1898*) (WHPF) (Shanghai 1953), Vol. 4, p. 391.
3. The Society, 'Sheng-hsueh hui' 圣学会, was founded by K'ang Yu-wei. See K'ang Nan-hai tzu-pien nien-p'u (*Chronological Autobiography of K'ang Yu-wei*, Chao Feng-t'ien (edition) in WHPF., Vol. 4, pp. 136-37; see also English translation of K'ang Tung-pi's edition by Jung-pang Lo in Jung-pang Lo (ed.), *K'ang Yu-wei: A Biography and a Symposium* (Tucson, 1967), p. 77; Chih Hsin Pao (*The China Reformer*), 17 May 1897.
 4. See K'ang Yu-wei, 'Tsou-ch'ing tsun K'ung-sheng wei kuo-chiao li chiao-pu chiao-hui i K'ung-tzu chi-nien erh fei yin-su che' (A Memorial Urging the Throne to Proclaim Confucianism a State Religion, to Establish a Religious Department and Confucian Temples, to Base the National Calendar on the Birth Date of Confucius, and to Abolish Improper Sacrifices), in *K'ang Nan-hai wen-chi* (*Collected Works of K'ang Yu-wei*) (Shanghai, 1913), Vol. 5, 'Tsou-i' (Memorials), pp. 10-3; see also K'ang Yu-wei, *Pu-ten tsa-chih*, No. 7 (August, 1913), 'Wen', pp. 1-8; WHPF, Vol. 2, pp. 230-36.
 5. See *Ta-ch'ing Te-tsung ching huang-ti shih-lu* (*Veritable Records of the Emperor Kuang-hsu of the Ch'ing Dynasty*) (Mukden, 1937), Vol. 567, p. 6.
 6. See Jung-pang Lo, 'Sequel to the Chronological Autobiography of K'ang Yu-wei', in Jung-pang Lo (ed.), *K'ang Yu-wei: A Biography and A Symposium*, pp. 206-7.
 7. See Chow Tse-tsung, 'The Anti-Confucian Movement in Early Republic China', in A.F. Wright (ed.), *The Confucian Persuasion* (Stanford, 1960), p. 289.
 8. See *Cheng-fu kung-pao* (*Government Gazette*), No. 631, 8 February 1914.
 9. Chow Tse-tsung, *op. cit.*, p. 293.
 10. See Chow Tse-tsung, *The May Fourth Movement: Intellectual Revolution in Modern China* (Stanford, 1967), pp. 50, 300-13.
 11. Chiang Kai-shek used in 1934 the four Confucian Cardinal Virtues of *li*, *i*, *lien* and *ch'ih* ('regulated attitude, right conduct, clear discrimination, and real self-consciousness') as the four pillars of the New Life Movement which he and the Nationalist government sponsored in the mid-1930s. See Wing-tsit Chan, *Religious Trends in Modern China* (New York, 1953), p. 22. An article which examines the ideology behind the New Life Movement is Arif Dirlik's 'The Ideological Foundations of the New Life Movement: A Study in Counterrevolution', in *Journal of Asian Studies*, Vol. 34, No. 4 (August, 1975), pp. 945-80.
 12. See J. Ee, 'Chinese Migration to Malaya', in *Journal of Southeast Asian History*, Vol. 2, No. 1 (March, 1961), p. 38; *Straits Settlements Blue Book*, 1881; J.R. Innes & H. Marriott, 'Report on the Census of the Straits Settlements', 1911.
 13. See Chen Mong Hock, *The Early Chinese Newspapers of Singapore 1881-1912* (Singapore, 1967), pp. 111-46.
 14. For details of the establishment of Ch'ing Consulate in Singapore, see Wen Chung-chi, 'The Nineteenth Century Imperial Chinese Consulate in the Straits Settlements' (unpublished M.A. thesis, University of Malaya, Singapore, 1964).
 15. The abolition of traditional hostile policy towards overseas Chinese was proclaimed in September 1893, the Court acted on this matter on the recommendation of the Chinese

- Minister to Britain, France, Italy and Belgium, Hsüeh Fu-ch'eng 薛福成. See Hsüeh Fu-ch'eng, *Hsüeh Fu-ch'eng ch'üan-chi* (The Complete Works of Hsüeh Fu-ch'eng), *hai-wai wen-pien*, Vol. 1, pp. 17-20; *Kuang-hsü ch'ao tung-hua lu* (Records of the Kuang-hsü Reign) (Peking, 1958), Vol. 3, pp. 3243-44.
16. A well-known Chinese Kapitan, Chang Keng Kwee (郑景贵, Cheng Ching-kuei in Mandarin, or known as Chung Keng Kwee and Ah Quee) donated 100,000 taels to the Ch'ing government to support the fight against the French in Indo-China. See 'The paper Presented to Chang Keng Kwee on his 75th birthday by Chang Pi-shih and others', quoted in *K'uang Kuo-hsiang, Pin-ch'eng san-chi* (Hong Kong, 1958), p. 112.
 17. See *Lat Pau*, 27, 28 February, 8, 11, 18 and 26 March 1889; *Thien Nan Shin Pao*, 12, 21 November 1898, p. 2, 10 November 1899, p. 2, 29 July and 8 November 1902.
 18. When Chinese warships under the command of Admiral Ting Jü-ch'ang visited Singapore in April 1890, Admiral Ting and his crew were well received and entertained by local Chinese communities. See *Lat Pau*, 10, 14 and 16 April, 1890, p. 2, 15 April 1890, p. 5.
 19. See Chen Mong Hock, *op. cit.*, pp. 114-16, 124.
 20. *Chün-shih* was a title given to successful candidates in the metropolitan examination.
 21. The treatise was written by Hui-yüan T'ao Shih-feng 陶世凤. See *Sing Po*, 7 June 1894, p. 1.
 22. See Chen Mong Hock, *op. cit.*, p. 54.
 23. It is also significant that an examination of the editorials of the *Lat Pau*, the earliest Chinese newspaper published in Singapore, reveals that no article was written in connection with Confucianism earlier than 1894.
 24. See *Sing Po*, 7-8 January 1895, pp. 1 and 4, 28 April 1896, p. 1, 8 September 1896, p. 4, 22 October 1896, pp. 1 and 4, 29 October 1896, p. 1, 1 October 1897, p. 1, 16 October 1897, pp. 1 and 4. The article written by an editorial writer entitled 'Lun K'ung-chiao sheng yü Chi-tu-chiao' (Confucianism is Superior to Christianity) serves as a typical example. The author refuted the view of well-known British missionary Lin Lohih (林乐知 Young John Allen) that Confucianism was the source of China's weaknesses, and emphasized that Confucianism was not identical to conservatism. See *Sing Po*, 22 October 1896, pp. 1, 4.
 25. See *Sing Po*, 4 June 1897, pp. 5, 8.
 26. See *Sing Po*, 28 October 1898, p. 3.
 27. *Sing Po*, 25, 27 November 1895, 20, 23 December 1895, 3, 14, 20 January 1896, 6, 8, 25 February 1896, 2, 4, 5, 11, 20 March 1896, 6 April 1896, 18, 19, 23 June 1896, 3, 7, 9, 11 July 1896, 30 August 1897, 28, 29 September 1897.
 28. See Chen Mong Hock, *op. cit.*, p. 57.
 29. About Huang Nai-shang's change from a reformist to a revolutionary, see Teo Eng Hock, *Nan-yang yü ch'uang-li Min-kuo* (Nan-yang and the Founding of the Chinese Republic) (Shanghai, 1933), pp. 108-12.
 30. *Thien Nan Shin Pao*, 8 March 1899, p. 1, 29 April 1899, pp. 1-2, 2 May 1899, pp. 1-2, 3 May 1899, p. 3, 4 May 1899, pp. 1-2, 6 June 1899, pp. 2-3.

31. *Ibid.*, 31 March 1899, p. 2, 10 August 1899, pp. 1-2, 17 August 1899, p. 2.
32. *Ibid.*, 28 September 1899, p. 2, 30 September 1899, pp. 1-2.
33. See 'Regulations of Promoting the Worship of Confucius' in the *Thien Nan Shin Pao*, 30 September 1899, p. 1.
34. The school which was among the earliest Chinese schools ever founded in Singapore and Malaya, belonged to the Fukien community for the purpose of educating Fukien children. See Song Ong Siang, *One Hundred Years' History of the Chinese in Singapore* (Reprinted edition, Singapore, 1967), p. 46; Hsü Su-wu, *Hsin-chia-p'o hua-ch'iao chiao-yü ch'üan-mao* (*Chinese Education in Singapore*) (Singapore, 1950), p. 14.
35. *Thien Nan Shin Pao*, 13 October 1899, p. 7.
36. *Ibid.*, 17 October 1899, p. 2.
37. *Ibid.*, 4 December 1899, p. 2.
38. Khoo Seok-wan was born in Hai-ch'eng district of Fukien Province in 1874. His father, Khoo Cheng Tiong 邱正忠 came to Singapore with meagre means and gradually advanced to become one of the best known rice merchants in the settlement. Seok-wan was first brought up by his aunt in Macao, and later came to Singapore at the seven *sui*. He received private tuition at home, mainly in the Confucian Classics. He went back to China to sit for imperial examinations, and obtained his *chü-jen* degree in 1894. When he returned to Singapore in 1895 after his disillusionment with the Chinese bureaucracy, he became a prominent figure in the Chinese community in Singapore. He became a leader in literary circles in Singapore, and was often a judge for the monthly literary competitions. Details of his involvement in the reform and Confucian revival movements will be discussed in later sections. See Khoo Seok-wan, *Wu-pai-shih tung-t'ien hui-ch'eng*, Vol. 10, pp. 18-9; Khoo Ming Kuan (daughter of Khoo Seok-wan), interview on 4 and 9 September 1966 at her residence in Singapore.
39. *Thien Nan Shin Pao*, 28 October 1898, p. 3, 10 August 1899, pp. 1-2.
40. *Ibid.*, 31 March 1899, p. 2, 9 October 1899, p. 2, 19 October 1899, p. 5, 28 October 1899, p. 2, 7 November 1899, p. 2.
41. *Ibid.*, 16 June 1898, p. 3, 8 March 1899, p. 1, 29 April 1899, pp. 1-2, 2 May 1899, pp. 1-2, 3 May 1899, p. 3, 4 May 1899, pp. 1-2, 26 March 1900, p. 1, 27 March 1900, pp. 1-2, 28 November 1901, p. 2.
42. A letter was sent by the Chinese merchants in Kuala Lumpur to the *Thien Nan Shin Pao* praising its effort in promoting Confucianism. *Ibid.*, 6 June 1899, pp. 2-3.
43. *Ibid.*, 8, 9 November 1899, p. 2, 10 November 1899, p. 7, 11 November 1899, p. 2, 13, 14 November 1899, p. 2.
44. The *Jit Shin Pau* was the successor to the *Sing Po* which was probably bought and re-organized by Dr Lim Boon Keng who became the *Jit Shin Pau*'s proprietor. See *Jit Shin Pau*, 14 October 1899, p. 1; Chen Mong Hock, *op. cit.*, pp. 75-7.
45. See *Jit Shin Pau*, 13 October 1899, p. 1, 14 October 1899, p. 1, 13 November 1899, p. 1, 14 November 1899, p. 1, 15 November 1899, p. 1.
46. *Ibid.*, 5 October 1899, 9 October 1899, p. 4.
47. *Jit Shin Pau*, 13 December 1899, p. 1, 14 December 1899, p. 1, 15 December 1899, p.

1. Most of Lim Boon Keng's English writings in expounding Confucian teachings were published in the *Straits Chinese Magazine*, see for instance, 'The Confucian Code of Conjugal Harmony' (Vol. XI, 1907, No. 1, pp. 24-7), 'The Confucian Ethics of Friendship' (Vol. XI, 1907, No. 2, pp. 73-8).
48. *Thien Nan Shin Pao*, 11 October 1901, p. 2.
49. K'ang's passage from Hong Kong to Singapore was paid by Khoo, see Jung-pang Lo, 'Sequel to Autobiography of Kang Yu-wei' p. 183; *The Straits Times*, 3 February 1900, p. 3.
50. K'ang was in Singapore from 1 February to 8 August, and in Penang from 9 August to 6 December. In Penang, he mainly stayed in the mansion of the Resident-Councillor, and visited Perak once in October. See Jung-pang Lo, *op. cit.*, pp. 188-9.
51. 100,000 taels were offered by the Ch'ing government for his and Liang Ch'i-ch'ao's life. See *Ta-Ch'ing Te-tsung Ching huang-ti shih-lu*, Vol. 458, p. 11. See also *Kuang-hsi-ch'ao t'ung-hua lu*, Vol. 4, pp. 4-5.
52. To hoodwink potential assassins, K'ang pretended to leave Singapore and appeared on board a ship on 23 February. But by arrangement he returned to Singapore and remained in hiding. See Song Ong Siang, *op. cit.*, pp. 313-14.
53. Jung-pang Lo, *op. cit.*, p. 184; Wu Hsien-tzu, *Chung-kuo Min-chu hsien-cheng-tang shih* (A History of the Democratic Constitutional Party of China) (San Francisco, 1952), p. 32.
54. Jung-pang Lo, *op. cit.*, p. 184.
55. See Ch'iu Feng-chia, 'Ch'ien Hsing-chou Min Yüeh hsiang-jen ho-chien K'ung-tzu-miao chi ta-hsüeh-t'ang ch'i' (To Urge Fellow Countrymen of Fukien and Kwangtung Provinces in Singapore to Found Confucian Temples and Modern Schools), in *Jit Shin Pau*, 27 March 1900, p. 1.
56. See A.W. Hummel (ed.), *Eminent Chinese of the Ch'ing Period 1644-1912* (Washington, 1943-1944), Vol. 1, p. 171.
57. See Tseng Nai-shih, 'I-wei chih i Ch'iu Feng-chia shih-chi k'ao-cheng' (Note of the Deeds of Ch'iu Feng-chia in the 1895 War), in *T'ai-wan wen-hsien* (Historical Documents of Taiwan), Vol. 7, pp. 3-4, 67-8; See also Lamley, H.J., 'The 1895 Taiwan Republic', in *Journal of Asian Studies*, Vol. 27, No. 4 (August, 1968), p. 745.
58. A.W. Hummel, *op. cit.*, p. 171.
59. Ch'iu Feng-chia, *op. cit.*, in *Jit Shin Pau*, 27 March 1900, p. 1.
60. According to Ch'iu, he met Lim Boon Keng, Khoo Seok-wan, Huang Nai-shang and Hsü Chi-chun (an editor of the *Thien Nan Shin Pao*) and was informed about the movement. He was thus committed to support it. *Ibid.* According to Jung-pang Lo, Ch'iu was one of a few people who had close contact with K'ang Yu-wei in Singapore. Ch'iu might have got encouragement from K'ang to commit himself to the movement. See Jung-pang Lo, *op. cit.*, p. 184.
61. See Wang Hsiao-ch'ang, 'Hsing-chou i chien K'ung-miao chi k'ai ta-hsüeh-t'ang shuo' (An Argument for Establishing Confucian Temples and Schools in Singapore), in *Jit Shin Pau*, 26 March 1900, p. 1; see also the public talk given by Ch'iu Feng-chia in Ipoh in May 1900, in *Thien Nan Shin Pao*, 4 June 1900, pp. 1-2.
62. *Jit Shin Pau*, 5 May 1900, p. 6.

63. For a discussion of values in Chinese communities in Singapore and Malaya during this period, see Yen Ching-hwang, 'Ch'ing's Sale of Honours and the Chinese Leadership of Singapore and Malaya', in *Journal of Southeast Asian Studies*, Vol. 1, No. 2 (September 1970), pp. 20-32.
64. See Yen Ching-hwang, 'Chinese Revolutionary Movement in Malaya 1900-1911' (Unpublished Ph.D. thesis, Australian National University, Canberra, 1970), Vol. 1, pp. 7-9a.
65. I am unable to find the original statement itself, but infer from regulations against it published in the *Thien Nan Shin Pao*. See *Thien Nan Shin Pao*, 12 December 1899, p. 1, 13 December 1899, p. 1.
66. One of the dramatic episodes in Singapore at the turn of the twentieth century was Khoo Seok-wan's repentance of his association with K'ang Yu-wei. Because of his deep involvement in the Hankow Revolt, the Ch'ing government used Khoo's kinsmen at his native village in China as hostage to force him to denounce publicly his past association with the reformists. At the beginning of 1901, the Governor-General of Kwangtung and Kwangsi, Tao Mo 陶模, instructed the Ch'ing Consul-General in Singapore, Lo Shu-keng 罗叔羹, to investigate Khoo and Lim's involvement in the revolt. The letter was first published in the *Hua Chih Jih Pao* in Hong Kong, and was republished in the *Thien Nan Shin Pao* on 4 April 1901. Khoo published two open letters in the same newspaper denying his involvement. In fact, he paid a large sum of money to purchase a Ch'ing title in token of diverting allegiance from the reformists to the Ch'ing. See the 'Letter of the Governor-General of Kwantung and Kwangsi Tao Mo to the Consul-General Lo Shu-keng', in *Thien Nan Shin Pao*, 4 April 1901, p. 1; interview with Khoo Meng-kuan, daughter of Khoo Seok-wan, on 11 September 1966 at her residence in Singapore; Chen Mong Hock, *op. cit.*
67. See *Thien Nan Shin Pao*, 12 December 1899, p. 1, and 13 December 1899, p. 1.
68. This point will be developed in the following section about the doctrine of the Confucian revival movement.
69. After nearly a year's stay in Singapore and Malaya, K'ang with his daughter T'ung-pi set sail from Penang for Northern India on 8 December 1900. See Jung-pang Lo, 'Sequel to Autobiography', in Lo (ed.), *K'ang Yu-wei: A Biography and Symposium*, p. 189.
70. Chang was a *chü-jen* degree-holder, and a native of Ta-p'u of Kwangtung Province, he had some personal connections with some merchants in Kuala Lumpur. Wu, a Szechwanese, was holding a title of *t'ung-chih* (sub-prefect), and was awarded by the Ch'ing court in 1903 for his effort in promoting Confucianism overseas. See Wu T'ung-lin, 'An Open Letter to Comrades about the Founding of Confucian Temples and Modern Schools', in *Thien Nan Shin Pao*, 17 March 1902, pp. 1-2; *Ta-ch'ing Te-tsung Ching-huang-ti shih-lu* (Veritable Records of the Emperor Kuang-hsu), Vol. 516, p. 4b.
71. *Lat Pau*, 2 October 1901, p. 6, 3 October 1901, p. 6.
72. See Hsi K'uang-sheng, 'Hsiang-chi Hsing-chia-p'o K'ung-chiao t'ung-jen yen-shuo' (Details of the Speeches made by the Singapore Confucian Revivalists), in *Thien Nan Shin Pao*, 11 October 1901, p. 2.
73. *Ibid.*

74. *Lat Pau*, 11 October 1901, p. 2.
75. Goh came from the same prefecture, Chang-chou 漳州, with Lim Boon Keng and Khoo Seok-wan, and the three of them were the important leaders of the Fukien community during that time.
76. Goh was an active member of the board of the Lo Shan She 乐善社 in Singapore which upheld Chinese tradition by holding regular lecture classes. The Sixteen Maxims of the Sacred Edict of the Emperor K'ang-hsi were the main contents of the lectures. See *Sing Po*, 5 March 1896, p. 5, 6 March 1897, p. 5.
77. A full list of these committee members was published in the *Thien Nan Shin Pao*, 19 March 1902, p. 1.
78. See 'Hsin-chia-p'o ch'ang-chien K'ung-miao hsüeh-t'ang ch'uan-chien ch'i' (A Public Notice for Soliciting Funds for Establishing Confucian Temples and Schools in Singapore), in *Thien Nan Shin Pao*, 10 March 1902, p. 2.
79. The known leaders of the Fukien community were Goh Siew-tin, Khoo Seok-wan, Lim Boon Keng, Tan Boo Liat 陈武烈, Low Kim Pong, Wu K'wei-p'u 吴燮甫, Wu I-ting 吴翼鼎, Teo Sian Keng 张善庆 and Lim Peng Siang 林秉祥; Cantonese noted leaders were Loke Yew, Lam Wai Fong 林维芳 and Wong Ah Fook (黄亚福 or known as Huang P'u-tien 黄莆田); Teochew leaders were Teo Eng-hock 张永福, Tseng Chao-nan 曾兆南 and Chang Shun-shan 张顺善. See *Thien Nan Shin Pao*, 19 March 1902, p. 1.
80. See *Thien Nan Shin Pao*, 17 March 1901, pp. 1-2.
81. See Wu Tung-lin, *op. cit.*, in *Thien Nan Shin Pao*, 17 March 1902, pp. 1-2.
82. According to this regulation, four grades - \$5,000, \$3,000, \$1,000, \$500 were offered. The ancestral tablets of donors over \$5,000 were to be placed at the centre of the shrine; those of \$3,000 at centre left; \$1,000 at centre right and those of \$500 at the left of the shrine. This gradation system was apparently based on a traditional Chinese concept of gradation of position. See 'The Fourteenth Regulations for Fung Raising for Confucian Temples and Modern Schools', in *Thien Nan Shin Pao*, 10 March 1902, p. 7.
83. See Yen Ching-hwang, 'Ch'ing's Sales of Honours and the Chinese Leadership in Singapore and Malaya, 1895-1912', pp. 20-32.
84. *Thien Nan Shin Pao*, 2 May 1902, p. 6.
85. In any building of Chinese *hui-kuan* (association) in Singapore and Malaya, one will notice many portraits hung on the walls. These portraits mainly of the founders and donors of large sums of money to the associations. This practice is apparently designed to offer prestige and reputation in order to attract big benefactors.
86. No total figure of the funds raised was published in the *Thien Nan Shin Pao*. Writing at the end of September 1902, the editor of the *Thien Nan* mentioned that about 70 to 80,000 dollars were donated by about a dozen rich merchants. This figure obviously does not represent the total amount of the money. In a letter to K'ang Yu-wei dated November 1902, Liang Ch'i-ch'ao believed that more than S\$200,000 was raised. This figure may be quite close to the total amount raised in Singapore. See *Thien Nan Shin Pao*, 27 September 1902, p. 2; Ting Wen-chiang, *Liang Jen-kang hsien-sheng nien-p'u ch'ang-pien ch'u-kao* (The Draft of Liang Ch'i-ch'ao's Chronological Biography) (Taipei, 1959), p. 152.

87. See 'Ta k'e wen Pen-p'o K'ung-miao hsüeh-t'ang shih' (In Reply to Our Readers about Confucian Temples and Modern Schools in Singapore), in *Thien Nan Shin Pao*, 27 September 1902, p. 2.
88. *Ibid.*
89. Goh relinquished his post as the Acting Consul-General soon after the arrival of the new Consul-General.
90. See *Thien Nan Shin Pao*, 23 May 1902, p. 2, 24 May 1902, p. 2, 26 May 1902, p. 2.
91. See the original text of Liang's 'To Protect Religion Is Not to Worship Confucius' published in the *Hsin-min ts'ung-pao*, particularly Section 5. See also Liang Ch'i-ch'ao, *Yin-ping-shih wen-chi* 飲冰室文集 (Hong Kong, 1955), Vol. 3, pp. 20-2.
92. *Ibid.* Philip C. Huang, *Liang Ch'i-ch'ao and Modern Chinese Liberalism* (Seattle, 1972), pp. 62-83.
93. See Ting Wen-chiang (ed.), p. 152.
94. See *Lat Pau*, 23 September 1908, p. 1, 30 September 1908, p. 9, 9 October 1909, 12 October 1909, p. 5.
95. *Lat Pau*, 23 September 1908, p. 1.
96. See *Penang Sin Pao*, 31 July 1911, p. 2, 3 August 1911, p. 2, 5 August 1911, p. 3, 21 August 1911, p. 3, 12 September 1911, p. 3, 15 September 1911, p. 3, 5 October 1911, p. 3, 9 October 1911, p. 2, 23 October 1911, pp. 2 and 3; *Nan Ch'iao Jih Pao*, 28 October 1911, p. 9, 30 October 1911, p. 9.
97. A notice urging all Chinese to observe Confucius' birthday as a public holiday was put up at the Consul's office, and was published in the local Chinese newspapers. See *The Union Times*, 29 September 1909, p. 3, 5 October 1909, p. 4; *Lat Pau*, 29 September 1909, p. 5.
98. Consul-General Tso Ping-lung 左秉隆, who held that post twice in Singapore (1891-1894, 1907-1911), was famous for his cultural inclination and activities in the local Chinese communities. His poems and writings are collected in a book entitled *Ch'im-mien-t'ang shih-ch'ao* (Collection of Poetry of the Diligence Hall) (Hong Kong, 1959).
99. The Standing Committee of the Singapore Chinese Chamber of Commerce resolved that a notice declaring Confucius' birthday a public holiday for Chinese should be widely distributed to all Chinese merchants in Singapore. They were also urged to hoist Chinese flags and put up lanterns to celebrate the occasion. See *Minutes of the Singapore Chinese Chamber of Commerce* dated the ninth day of eighth moon on the *l-yu* year (22 September 1909) (manuscript), p. 176.
100. The important Ch'ing documents such as *Ta-Ch'ing Te-tsung Ching huang-ti shih-lu* and *Kuang-hsü-ch'ao tung-hua lu* give no indication that the Emperor had accepted K'ang's advice in his memorial dated 1898.
101. The sacrifice for Confucius in the Ch'ing Dynasty was based on those of the previous dynasties. It was of middle grade, while sacrifices to Heaven and Earth were of the first grade. See *Ta-Ch'ing t'ung-li* (General Regulations of the Ch'ing), *chüan* (part) 12.
102. Under the Boxer Protocol in 1901, the Ch'ing Government under the rule of the Empress Dowager Tz'u-hsi was to undertake reforms. The reforms covered governmental

- structure, economic and legal institutions, education and examination systems. See M. E. Cameron, *The Reform Movement in China 1898-1912* (New York, 1963).
103. See the memorial of Chang Chih-tung, incorporated in the *Kuang-hsü-ch'ao tung-hua lu*, Vol. 5, pp. 50-1.
104. See the memorial of the Ministry of Education incorporated in the *Kuang-hsü-ch'ao tung-hua lu*, Vol. 5, pp. 148-49.
105. See *Ta-Ch'ing Te-tsung Ching huang-ti shih-lu*, Vol. 423, pp. 4-5; see also *Kuang-hsü-ch'ao tung-hua lu*, Vol. 4, pp. 136-37.
106. See *Ta-ch'ing Te-tsung Ching huang-ti shih-lu*, Vol. 536, p. 6.
107. Several officials were sent by the Ch'ing government, particularly the government of Kwangtung Province, to Southeast Asia to promote Chinese education. In 1906, Liu Shih-chi (刘士骥 who held the rank of district magistrate) and Wang Feng-hsiang (汪凤翔 who also held the same rank) were despatched to Singapore and Malaya and the Dutch East Indies for that purpose. They were followed by Ch'ien Hsun 钱恂 in 1907. See *Lat Pau*, 24 October 1906, p. 5; *The Straits Times*, 25 October 1906, p. 6; and L.E. Williams, *Overseas Chinese Nationalism: The Genesis of the Pan-Chinese Movement in Indonesia, 1900-1916* (Glencoe, 1960), pp. 150-51.
108. Modern Chinese primary schools, established in Singapore and Malaya as the result of the visit of the Ch'ing officials were the Confucian School in Kuala Lumpur, and the Tuan Mong School in Singapore. See 'A Short History of the Confucian Middle School', in the *Souvenir Magazine of the Senior and Junior Middle Graduates of the Confucian Middle School of 1965* (Kuala Lumpur, 1965), p. 6; Lin Kuo-chang, 'A Brief History of the Tuan Meng School', in *The Souvenir Magazine of 30th Anniversary of the Tuan Meng School in Singapore* (Singapore, 1936), p. 11. A detailed study of the rise of modern Chinese schools in Singapore and Malaya is found in Lee Ah Chai's 'Policies and Politics in Chinese Schools in the Straits Settlements and the Federated Malay States 1786-1941' (Unpublished M.A. thesis, University of Malaya, Singapore, 1958).
109. See the memorial of the Ministry of Education incorporated in the *Kuang-hsü-ch'ao tung-hua lu*, Vol. 5, pp. 148-49.
110. Chang was one of the wealthiest Chinese merchants in Southeast Asia during his time. He was made the first Chinese Vice-Consul in Penang, and then the Acting Chinese Consul-General in Singapore in 1895. Because of his effort in promoting China's economic modernization, he was given an audience with the Empress Dowager Tz'u-hsi in 1903, and was then appointed as the Special Trade Commissioner to Southeast Asia in 1904 and concurrently the Director of Agriculture, Industry and Mining for the Kwangtung and Fukien Provinces. Apart from these offices, Chang held several Ch'ing titles. A short biography of Chang in English is found in *Biographical Dictionary of Republic of China*, Vol. 1 (New York, 1967), edited by H.L. Boorman and R.C. Howard. His short biography in Chinese is found in K'uang Kuo-hsiang's *Ping-ch'eng san-chi*, pp. 97-107, and the same author's article published in P'an Hsing-nung (ed.), *The Teocheus in Malaya* (Singapore, 1950), p. 153, and in Liang Shu-lin et al. (ed.), *K'e Chia: Souvenir of the Opening Ceremony of the Perak Hakka Association* (Penang, 1951), pp. 505-07.
111. See Yen Ching-hwang, thesis cited in fn. 64, pp. 68-129, 217-40.
112. The Reformist organ in Penang, the *Penang Sin Pao* strongly advocated the movement

by giving it wide publicity and moral support. See the *Penang Sin Pao* from 31 July to 31 December 1911.

113. See *Penang Sin Pao*, 5 August 1911, p. 3.
114. *Penang Sin Pao*, 21 August 1911, p. 3.
115. *Penang Sin Pao*, 12 September 1911, p. 3.
116. *Penang Sin Pao*, 11 September 1911, p. 3, 12 September 1911, p. 3, 23 October 1911, p. 3.
117. *Penang Sin Pao*, 30 September 1911, p. 9.
118. See Khor Eng-hee, 'The Public Life of Dr Lim Boon Keng' (Unpublished B.A. Honours thesis, University of Malaya, 1958), p. 29. With regard to Lim's proposed reform of Chinese social customs such as marriage, funeral and value of filial piety, see Lim's articles in the *Straits Chinese Magazine*, Vol. 4, No. 13, pp. 25-30, No. 14, pp. 49-57; Vol. 5, No. 17 pp. 58-60.
119. Khoo Seok-wan involved in speculating in land and property. In 1903 he went into partnership with Mei Hua-chang which was involved in real estate, a pawn shop and jewellery. Another important leader Goh Siew Tin was more deeply involved in business. He was the proprietor of a famous shop, Chop Ann Ho, and was involved in shipping, tin-mining and saw-milling. See Song Ong Siang, *op. cit.*, pp. 101-2, 143-4; *Thien Nan Shin Pao*, 2 January 1903, p. 3; Su Hsiao-hsien, 'A Short Biography of Goh Siew-tin', in Su Hsiao-hsien (ed.), *Chang-chou shih-shu lu Hsin t'ung-hsiang lu (A List of Chang-chou People in Singapore)* (Singapore, 1948), p. 59.
120. See *Thien Nan Shin Pao*, 19 March 1902, p. 1.
121. Lam Kim Seng was a famous entrepôt trader and banker; Low Kim Pong was a famous Chinese medicine merchant and a banker and he demonstrated his wealth by building a famous Buddhist temple 'Shuang-lin Shin' 双林寺 in 1903; Loke Yew was the leading tin-miner in Malaya, a multi-millionaire; Lim Peng Siang was a leading shipowner, banker and manufacturer; Chua Tse Yong was a multi-millionaire engaged in entrepôt trade, particularly in rice and sugar; Teo Sian Keng, a renowned export and import merchant; Lee Choon Guan was a famous merchant and financier. The wealth of Chua Tse Yong, Lim Peng Siang, Teo Sian Keng and Lam Wai Fong enabled them to hold important positions like president and vice-president in the Singapore Chinese Chamber of Commerce from 1906 to 1908. See Su Hsiao-hsien (ed.), *op. cit.*, pp. 59-61; Pan Hsing-nung (ed.), *op. cit.*, pp. 158, 178, 195, 211; Koh Kow Chiang (ed.), *Who's Who in South East Asia* (Singapore, 1965), pp. A4-A7, A58-A64; See also the list of the Committee Members of the Singapore Chinese Chamber of Commerce for 1906, 1907 and 1908, in the *Minutes of the Singapore Chinese Chamber of Commerce* (Manuscript), Vol. 1, pp. 2-3, 60, 61, 125-27.
122. According to the 1901 census of the Straits Settlements, there were 93,851 Hokkien (Fukien), 50,591 Cantonese, 44,230 Teochew, 18,446 Kheh (Hakka), 16,788 Hailam (Hainanese) and 13,725 Hok-chiu. It must be noted here that the term 'Hokkien' referred only to Southern Fukien. See *Straits Settlements Blue Book for 1906*, p. 5, 'Population of the Straits Settlements'.
123. This is the impression from those identifiable leaders on the committee. Of those leaders

- mentioned above, Lim Peng Siang, Low Kim Pong, Teo Sian Keng and Lee Choon Guan were leaders of Fukien dialect group; Lam Kim Seng, Chua Tse Yong were Teochew leaders; Loke Yew and Lam Wai Fong were Cantonese leaders.
124. *Po Leung Kuk* was a welfare organization initiated by the Straits Settlements government for protecting Chinese female immigrants who were forced to prostitution. On the *Po Leung Kuk* committee for 1904, there were nine for Fukien, seven for Teochew, five for Cantonese, one each for Hakka and Hainanese. In another semi-official organization known as Chinese Advisory Board, the distribution of dialect group representatives was Hokkien six, Teochew five, Cantonese four, Hakka two and Hainanese two. See *Annual Departmental Reports of the Straits Settlements for 1904*, p. 127.
 125. Before the founding of the Chinese Chamber of Commerce in Singapore in 1906, a commercial organization known as Bureau of Commercial Affairs was founded in 1896. On the committee, there were thirteen Fukien representatives, eleven Teochew, seven Cantonese, six Hakka and three Hainanese. See *Sing Po*, 1 February 1896, p. 4. Since its inception in 1906, the representation of dialect groups on the executive committee of the Singapore Chinese Chamber of Commerce was based on the *Pang* concept which was a combination of geographical and dialect differences. There were two *pangs*: Fukien and Kwangtung, the latter including Cantonese, Teochew, Hakka and Hainanese. On the 1908 executive committee, there were thirty-one members for Kwangtung *pang*, and twenty-one for Fukien *pang*. However, on sub-committees, representation seemed to have worked on a dialect basis. In the financial sub-committee for 1911, there were four Fukien, three Teochew, two Cantonese, Hakka and Hainanese one each. See *Minutes of the Singapore Chinese Chambers of Commerce*, Vol. 1, pp. 125-26, Vol. 2, pp. 65-6.
 126. This practice is still common among Chinese leadership in Singapore and Malaysia. Some leaders allowed their names to appear on committees of various organizations purely because of social prestige and leadership status. It is interesting to note that in biographical writings Chinese leaders in Singapore and Malaysia tend to put down as many positions in various social organizations as possible to support claim to leadership status.
 127. According to the Census of 1891, the number of the Straits-born Chinese was 12,805 and ranked fourth after Fukien (45,856), Teochew (23,737) and Cantonese (23,397). See *Straits Settlements Blue Book for 1904*, p. 12, 'Population of the Straits Settlements'.
 128. See for instance, L.E. Williams, *op. cit.*, pp. 55-6.
 129. They were Tan Boo Liat, Lim Boon Keng, Lee Choon Guan and Chua Mien Kuai (蔡綿漢, or romanized in Mandarin as Ts'ai Mien-hsi). See *Thien Nan Shin Pao*, 19 March 1902, p. 1.
 130. See a list of leaders of the Straits Chinese British Association in Yong Ching Fat's 'A Preliminary Study of Chinese Leadership in Singapore 1900-1941', in *Journal of Southeast Asian History*, Vol. 9, No. 2 (September, 1968), p. 264.
 131. *Ibid.*, p. 267.
 132. A news item in *Sing Po* in March 1894 praised Dr Lim Boon Keng as an excellent medical practitioner. It was reported that the Chinese Consul-General for the Straits

Settlements, Huang Tsun-hsien, paid Dr Lim tribute by sending him some presents. See *Sing Po*, 13 March 1894, p. 4.

133. See Anonymous, *Lin Wen-ch'ing chuan* (*A Biography of Dr Lim Boon Keng*) (Singapore, 1972), p. 2.
134. Two incidents occurred in Scotland while he was studying at Edinburgh University. One was that he was not accepted by the Chinese students from China on the ground that he did not know Chinese language. The second was that he was embarrassed by a lecturer who asked him to translate a Chinese scroll, and he had to admit his ignorance of Chinese language. See Khor Eng-hee, 'The Public Life of Dr Lim Boon Keng' (Unpublished B.A. Honours thesis, University of Malaya, Singapore, 1958) p. 4.
135. In August 1900, the newly formed Straits Chinese British Association partly under the leadership of Lim Boon Keng clearly spelled out its main aims: to promote interest in the affairs of the British Empire and to encourage and maintain members' loyalty to the Queen. In July 1901, less than a year after its formation the association under the leadership of Lim Boon Keng also pledged loyalty to the Chinese Emperor through the visiting Prince Ch'un. See Song Ong Siang, *op. cit.*, p. 319 and *The Straits Times*, 31 July 1901, p. 2.
136. Khor Eng-hee, p. 21.
137. Lim Boon Keng, 'Lun Ju-chiao' (On Confucianism), in *Jih Hsin Pau*, 15 December 1899, p. 1.
138. In a footnote to the article 'On Confucianism', Lim stated that in view of the obscurity of the real Confucianism and the rise of heresy, there was a need to reveal the essence of Confucius' teachings and to benefit human beings. *Ibid.*
139. See Wen Chin (Lim Boon Keng), *The Chinese Crisis From Within* (London, 1901), especially pp. 100-67, 285-329.
140. Khor Eng-hee, p. 21.
141. K'ang was described by Lim as the Chinese Encyclopaedist, and K'ang's works on Confucianism were considered to be of the highest importance in developing a new notion of teaching of the ancient Chinese Classics, and the influence of K'ang's works on China was compared with what Voltaire did for France before the French Revolution. See Wen Ching, *op. cit.*, pp. 23-4, 33.
142. Wen Ching, *op. cit.*, pp. 33-5.
143. Khor Eng-hee, *op. cit.*, p. 29.
144. See Kung-ch'uan Hsiao, 'K'ang Yu-wei and Confucianism', in *Monumenta Serica*, XVIII (Nagoya, 1959), pp. 92-212, particularly p. 165.
145. Jung-pang Lo, *K'ang Yu-wei: A Biography and A Symposium*, p. 6; see also the original text of the *K'ung-tzu kai-chih k'ao*.
146. Classical Text School (or known as Ancient Text School) and the Modern Text School (to which K'ang Yu-wei belonged) were the two competing schools interpreting Chinese Classics after the Six Classics were burned by the first emperor of the Ch'in dynasty (221-207 B.C.).

147. See K'ang Yu-wei, 'Tsou ch'ing tsun K'ung-sheng wei kuo-chiao li chiao-pu chiao-hui i K'ung-tzu chi-nien erh fei yin-ssu che', in K'ang Yu-wei, *K'ang Nan-hai wen-chi*, pp. 10-3.
148. See Kung-ch'uan Hsiao, 'K'ang Yu-wei and Confucianism', *Monumenta Serica*, Vol. 18, pp. 88-212; Chang Hao, *Liang Ch'i-ch'ao and Intellectual Transition in China 1890-1907* (Cambridge, Massachusetts, 1971), pp. 50-1.
149. See Wang Ssu-hsiang, 'Hsin-chou i chien K'ung-miao chi k'ai ta-hsüeh-t'ang shuo' (Singapore Chinese Should Found Confucian Temples and Set Up An University), in *Jit Shin Pau*, 26 March 1900, p. 1.
150. Ch'iu Feng-chia, 'Ch'ien Hsing-chou Min Yüeh hsiang-jen ho chien K'ung-tzu miao chi ta-hsüeh-t'ang ch'i' (An Open Letter to Urge the Compatriots of Fukien and Kwangtung Provinces in Singapore to Found Confucian Temples and Set up an University), in *Jit Shin Pau*, 27 March 1900, p. 1.
151. See Benjamin Schwartz, *In Search of Wealth and Power: Yen Fu and the West* (Cambridge, Massachusetts, 1964), p. 114.
152. *Op. cit.*, pp. 120-21.
153. Wang Ssu-hsiang, *op. cit.*
154. Wei-ch'uan chü-shih, 'Chung-kuo shih nung kung shang chieh K'ung-chiao chung jen shuo' (All Classes of China, i.e. Scholar, Peasant, Artisan and Merchant, are Confucian Supporters), in *Thien Nan Shin Pao*, 5 June 1900, p. 1.
155. *Ibid.*
156. See Lim Boon Keng, 'The Education of Children', in *Straits Chinese Magazine*, Vol. 3, No. 2, 1899.
157. *Ibid.*
158. This was contained in a speech given by Dr Lim Boon Keng to a group of Confucian revivalists in Singapore in celebrating the birthday of Confucius. See 'Hsiang-chi Hsin-chia-p'o K'ung-chiao t'ung-jen yen-shuo' (Detailed Records of Speeches made by Singapore Confucian Revivalists) in *Thien Nan Shin Pao*, 11 October 1901, p. 2.
159. See Lim Boon Keng, 'Education of Children', in *Straits Chinese Magazine*, Vol. 3, No. 2, 1899.
160. See Lim Boon Keng, 'Singapore Chinese Girls School' in *Straits Chinese Magazine*, Vol. 6, No. 24, pp. 168-69.
161. See Khor Eng-hee, 'The Public Life of Dr Lim Boon Keng', p. 27.
162. Song Ong Siang, *op. cit.*, p. 101.
163. See 'Chi Ch'iu kung-pu Feng-chia ta Pi-li fuo yen-shuo' (Records of Ch'iu Feng-chia's Speech in Perak), in *Thien Nan Shin Pao*, 4 June 1900, p. 1.
164. *Ibid.*
165. Dr Lim Boon Keng's Speech, *op. cit.*

CHAPTER 10

Chinese Revolutionary Propaganda Organizations in Singapore and Malaya, 1906–1911*

In examining the 1911 Revolution in China, one can hardly ignore the role played by propaganda activities. The revolutionary propaganda first sprang up in Japan, gradually spread to overseas Chinese communities in America and Southeast Asia, and then to China itself. This reflects the process of political awakening: from Chinese students in Japan to overseas Chinese and then to Chinese at home. Revolutionary propaganda activities in Singapore and Malaya thus represented an important link in a loose chain of the gigantic propaganda movement against the Manchus. Its strategies and techniques were strongly influenced by other links, and its success had greatly contributed to the concerted effort of bringing about the downfall of the Manchus. On the other hand, it represented another process of politicization of local Chinese. It successfully transformed their ideological outlook and strengthened their ties with China. This article seeks to examine the revolutionary propaganda organizations and their activities in the local Chinese communities in Singapore and Malaya.

Background

A brief survey of Chinese revolutionary movement in Singapore and Malaya before 1906 is essential for the understanding of propaganda activities in these regions. Unlike the 1949 Revolution which was an organized revolt with popular support from within, the movement leading to the 1911 Revolution mainly operated from outside China. The nature of this movement limited its support from the vast majority of population in China and forced

many revolutionary leaders to seek their prime assistance from overseas. Three social groups outside China became the main strength of the movement: Chinese students overseas; secret society members; and overseas Chinese. Among these three, overseas Chinese seemed to be the most important. The importance lies in the fact that overseas Chinese not only provided the movement with a main financial source and places for shelter, but also partly provided leadership and manpower.

Right from the beginning of the movement, revolutionary leaders had fully realized revolutionary potential of overseas Chinese and had used it for uprisings. Dr Sun Yat-sen, the national leader of the movement, staged his first abortive revolt in Canton in 1895 with substantial support from the Chinese in Honolulu and Hong Kong.¹ Along the same lines, Sun and another leader Yang Chu-yun made two unsuccessful attempts from 1895 to 1900 to enlist support from the Chinese in Singapore and Malaya for further revolt.² However, this failure did not prevent Singapore and Malaya being used as revolutionary bases and a source of support. A group of revolutionary leaders sought refuge in Singapore soon after the failure of the Waichow Revolt in 1900. It carried on the unsuccessful attempts made by Yang and Sun through a new form of contact. Most members of this group settled in Singapore, disguised themselves as physicians and merchants, and successfully enlisted a number of secret society members.³ As a result, a semi-political organization named Chug Ho T'ang which had close affiliations with Dr Sun's Hsing Chung Hui, was founded in 1901, and it soon spread to Malaya.

In the meantime, another group of revolutionaries, mainly comprised local Chinese youth, emerged in Singapore. Most of them came from the merchant class and had some Chinese education. Among them were Tan Chor-nam (Ch'en Ch'u-nan 陈楚楠) and Teo Eng-hock (Chang Yung-fu 张永福) who later became important leaders of the movement. Unlike members of the previous group, these local revolutionaries were active. They did not endeavour to recruit many followers, nor did they attempt to set up any semi-political organization like the Chug Ho T'ang. They tended to be isolated and idealistic, gathered in a club named 'Hsiao T'ao Yuan' (The Small Peach Garden), they aired their resentment of the ruling Manchus and their hopes for change in China.⁴

The emergence of these two groups marked the beginning of Chinese revolutionary activities in Singapore and Malaya. Under internal and external stimuli, they joined forces in 1903 to carry out more open activities. In 1903, in a protest against the Manchu Government's victimization of the two renowned revolutionaries in the famous *Su Pao Case*,⁵ Tan Chor-nam and Teo Eng-hock telegraphed the British Consul in Shanghai urging

protection for the victims.⁶ Apart from this unprecedentedly bold action against the will of the Manchu Government, Tan and Teo, with the support of the expatriate revolutionaries, began to publish a newspaper, the *Thoe Lam Jit Poh* (*T'u Nan Jih Pao*), in the beginning of 1904. With the founding of this newspaper, the revolutionary movement in Singapore and Malaya gained considerable momentum. It began to spread its message by attacking the Manchu Government and the reformists. It also began to shape the radical outlook of the new emerging intelligentsia in local Chinese communities. In order to consolidate a united front against its enemies, contacts were extended to other revolutionary newspapers in Hong Kong, Honolulu and San Francisco.⁷

Apart from these early propaganda activities, the concerted strength of the expatriate and local revolutionaries was manifest in an anti-American movement which developed swiftly in Singapore and Malaya in 1905.⁸ Prominent leaders such as Tan Chor-nam, Teo Eng-hock and Yu Lieh were deeply involved in it and had increased patriotic and revolutionary sentiment among the Chinese by encouraging anti-foreignism.

The rapid growth of these activities in this part of the world naturally attracted the attention of national revolutionary leaders. Dr Sun Yat-sen who had failed to enlist any followers in Singapore in 1900, began to establish ties with the local revolutionary leaders through his contact with the *Thoe Lam Jit Poh*.⁹ In 1904, both Tan and Teo were introduced by Yu Lieh to Sun through correspondence. A year later when Sun was on his way back from Europe to Japan for the founding of the *T'ung Meng Hui*, he stopped at Singapore and had a meeting with Tan and Teo to discuss the possibility of setting up a branch there.¹⁰ These contacts, although rather informal and brief, had greatly strengthened the ties between local and national leadership, and integrated the activities into the revolutionary movement. Thus, a solid foundation for the establishment of a *T'ung Meng Hui* branch in 1906 was laid. On the other hand, the rapid growth of these activities aroused the hostility of reformists and conservatives. The reformists, the opponents of the revolutionaries, had come to Singapore and Malaya earlier, and had obtained staunch support from local Chinese merchants and intellectuals.¹¹ Their leader, Kang Yu-wei, came to Singapore in February 1900,¹² and exerted considerable influence in local Chinese communities. The open activities of the revolutionaries posed a threat to the reformists' interest and challenged the supremacy they had hitherto enjoyed. To the conservative elements who were loyal to the Ch'ing Government and considered themselves as the guardians of Chinese traditions and Confucian ethics, the revolutionaries' open advocacy of a racial revolution and attack

on the government were serious crimes which would ruin traditional moral values if unchecked. Moreover, the Ch'ing Consul-General of the Straits Settlements in Singapore, whose main function was to foster loyalty among overseas subjects,¹³ was undoubtedly annoyed by the revolutionaries' action. Thus, all these anti-revolutionary forces formed into a united front against their common enemy. Their concerted effort was shown in their hostile attitudes towards the *Thoe Lam Jit Poh* after its birth at the beginning of 1904. The newspaper was accused of being evil and malicious. Youngsters and shop assistants to whom the revolutionaries had directly appealed for support, were warned not to read it.¹⁴ Tan Chor-nam and Teo Eng-hock, the proprietors of the newspaper, were frequently attacked as being traitors and rebels who had no respect for the emperor and their fathers. It was said that the government of the Straits Settlements, at the request of the Ch'ing Consul-General, threatened to take action against Tan and Teo if their attacks on the Manchus were not halted.¹⁵

It was against this setting – the gradual integration of the local activities into the national revolutionary movement, and the increasing tension between the revolutionaries and their opponents – that revolutionary propaganda activities spread throughout Singapore and Malaya.

Organization and Activities

The increasing link between the local activities and the world-wide Chinese revolutionary movement was strengthened by the founding of the T'ung Meng Hui in August 1905. Its founding was not merely designed to unite various revolutionary student groups in Japan and Europe, but also aimed at mobilizing support of overseas Chinese and secret society members under an anti-Manchu flag. Soon after its inception, the front accentuated its propaganda activities by publishing a main revolutionary organ – *The People's Tribune* (Min Pao 民報) through which its principles and platforms were to be publicized.¹⁶ To further an overall ideological assault on its principal opponent – the reformists – the *Tribune* soon engaged in heated polemics with the reformists' *Hsin Min Ts'ung Pao* (*The New People's Miscellany*) in Tokyo.¹⁷

The founding of the T'ung Meng Hui and its dynamic propaganda activities immediately were echoed in the Chinese communities in Singapore and Malaya. In April 1906, seven months after the founding of the T'ung Meng Hui headquarters, a branch in Singapore was inaugurated by Dr Sun Yat-sen. In the same year, branches were also established in Kuala Lumpur and Penang where Chinese predominated.¹⁸ Following the establishment of the

T'ung Meng Hui branches, revolutionary propaganda activities flourished throughout these areas. From the founding of the Singapore branch to the downfall of the Ch'ing Government at the beginning of 1912, the number of propaganda organizations waxed and waned. They appeared in the form of newspaper, reading clubs and drama troupes. These forms represented not so much different phases of development, as rather channels through which appeals were made to different social groups. In view of the illegal status of the T'ung Meng Hui in all host countries where overseas Chinese communities existed, most of these organizations became not only the propaganda arm of the revolutionary movement, but also served as the political front line of the T'ung Meng Hui. They formed the most important links between the party and the masses, and functioned as centres for large-scale mass indoctrination.

Newspapers

In any political movement, a newspaper is always used as the main organ for propaganda. Its importance lies in the fact that it reaches a wider and more varied public. It is one of the most effective means of popularizing political doctrines, party platforms and policies. It also continuously influences readers' beliefs and outlooks. The Chinese revolutionary movement was no exception in this respect. Following the founding of the Singapore branch of the T'ung Meng Hui, a newspaper to serve as the party's mouthpiece and to propagate revolutionary doctrines in Southeast Asia was urgently needed. *Chong Shing Yit Pao* (*Restoration Daily*) was founded in Singapore on the 20 August 1907.¹⁹

The founding of the *Chong Shing Yit Pao* marked an important step in the development of revolutionary newspaper propaganda activities in Singapore and Malaya. Although revolutionary newspapers such as the *Thoe Lam Jit Poh* and the *Nanyang Tsung Hui Pao* (*The Union Times*)²⁰ appeared in Singapore earlier than the *Chong Shing*, none of them was well-organized, nor did they systematically propagate revolutionary doctrines. They only represented some personal efforts in advocating revolution. Unlike its predecessors, the *Chong Shing Yit Pao* had the strong backing of a party, both in finance and manpower. Through the T'ung Meng Hui branches, it had a better circulation than its predecessors outside Singapore and Malaya.²¹ The increase of circulation, together with donations and other forms of support from the party members, had greatly strengthened the newspaper's financial position. The newspaper was also greatly assisted by a group of veteran journalists from Japan and Hong Kong. Men like Wang Fu (王

斧) and T'ien T'ung (田桐) who had ample journalistic experience, became the chief editors;²² prominent leaders like Dr Sun Yat-sen, Hu Han-min and Wang Ching-wei also frequently came to its aid.²³ The significance of a strong backing of a group of professional journalists and national leaders lies not so much in the fact that their writing attracted more readers and carried more influence, but more to help establish the newspaper's status as chief spokesman for the whole revolutionary movement after 1907.

Apart from the *Chong Shing Yit Pao*, four other revolutionary newspapers – the *Yang Ming Pao* (The Sun Bright newspaper, 阳明报 in Malaya), the *Sun Poo* (The Morning Daily, 晨报), the *Kwong Wah Yit Poh* (Glorious Chinese Daily, 光华日报) and the *Nam Kew Poo* (Straits Chinese Morning Post, 南侨日报) – were published in Singapore and Malaya between 1907 and 1911. Not all of them were initiated by the Tung Meng Hui, but most were closely affiliated with it and had its backing in one form or another. Except for the *Kwong Wah Yit Poh* which was published in Penang, the rest were located in Singapore. The choice of Singapore as the seat of newspaper propaganda activities was by no means accidental. It was chosen in part, as the converging point of overseas Chinese in Southeast Asia, and partly as the centre of commerce and communication. Of more importance was the fact that Singapore had a bigger proportion of literacy among its Chinese population than the Malay Peninsula, and it could well serve as the fountain-head of propaganda dissemination.

The whole process of revolutionary newspaper propaganda activities in Singapore and Malaya went through three different stages. The first stage was from the founding of the *Chong Shing Yit Pao* in August 1907 to the publishing of the *Sun Poo* in August 1909; the second stage ended with the stoppage of the *Sun Poo* in November 1910; the third began with the publishing of the *Kwong Wah Yit Poh* in Penang at the end of 1910, and went through till the abdication of the Manchu Emperor in February 1912.

The first phase, which was represented by the *Chong Shing Yit Pao*, was characterized by heated polemics with the reformists. In this early stage when the reformists' ideology was still pervasive in overseas Chinese communities, the most pressing task for the revolutionary propagandists was to combat it in order to pave the way for the spread of revolutionary doctrines. The reformists who came to these regions earlier and entrenched themselves in schools and social institutions,²⁴ had made a substantial impression on the local Chinese. They claimed that constitutional monarchy was the best form of government and most suitable for China. They exerted that the adoption of a constitution would bring China wealth and power comparable to Russia and Japan, and that a constitution could be obtained

through peaceful means.²⁵ These claims created hopes among overseas Chinese of an easier way than revolution to realize their dream of having a wealthy and powerful China without demanding much sacrifice. On the contrary, the revolutionaries believed in a racial and armed revolution, the overthrow of the ruling Manchus, the replacement of the monarchy by a republic and enforcement of social equality. The spread of the reformist ideas obviously impeded the dissemination of such revolutionary doctrines.

The attack by the *Chong Shing Yit Pao* on *The Union Times* (change from revolutionary to reformist organization after 1906) was an integral part of the world-wide revolutionary ideological war against the reformists. It could also be considered as the continuation of the heated polemics waged in Japan by the *People's Tribune* against the *Hsin Min Ts'ung Pao*. The Singapore attack began in December 1908, three and a half months after the first publication of the *Chong Shing Yit Pao*. It was at the outset confined to the editorial column, but then its tempo was accelerated by political developments in China. By the middle of 1908 both parties devoted two full columns to the argument. The revolutionaries regarded it as important. T'ien Tung, chief editor of the *Chong Shing*, was made to take charge of the operation. The distinguished leaders like Wang Ching-wei and Hu Han-min came to help as casual editors and editorial writers. Dr Sun Yat-sen, under the pseudonym of 'A primary school student from Southeast Asia' (南洋小学生) also wrote several articles attacking the reformists.²⁶

The ideological offensive in Singapore differed from that in Japan which argued more about theoretical subjects.²⁷ Its emphasis was on the impracticability of constitutional monarchy in China. It confronted the reformists' arguments with the record of Manchu insincerity on projects for a constitution and a parliament.²⁸ Revolution, on the other hand, was argued to be feasible. A line of revolutionary radicalism was advanced,²⁹ probably to counteract the pessimism of some revolutionaries and the general public who were depressed by a series of defeats of uprisings in South and Southwest China from 1907 to 1909.

The second stage was marked by the publishing of the *Sun Pao* in August 1909 and its vehement attack on the Manchus. In the period from 9 September 1909 to 19 October 1910, 23 leading articles attacked the Ch'ing government. The onslaught ranged from the government's false constitution, its new naval programme, to its capitulating attitude towards Japan.³⁰ This shift of target from the reformists to the Ch'ing government reflected the decline of reformist rivalry after the death of the Emperor Kuang Hsu at the end of 1908; it also indicated that the government's move in these directions constituted a more immediate threat to the revolutionary appeal. The attack

was now direct, especially on the false constitution and the Manchu capitulation to the Japanese demands.

Apart from their main concerns with the reformists and the Ch'ing government, both the *Chong Shing* and the *Sun Poo* attempted to revolutionize some traditional and Confucian ideas which had great influence in the overseas Chinese communities. Revolutionary leaders realized through experience that among the obstacles retarding the responses of overseas Chinese to their cause were the traditional and Confucian ideas like 'loyalty to emperor and nation' and 'loyalty to tradition'. These values were strongly held and the word 'revolution' seemed to threaten them both.³¹ Few overseas Chinese questioned the legitimacy of the Manchu ruler's claim to loyalty, nor did anyone distinguish between loyalty to emperor and to nation. Reformists and conservatives appealed to the traditional ideas, with considerable effect, to counter the ideology of revolution. Revolutionary doctrines were damned as evil and vicious, and revolutionaries were accused of being traitors disloyal to emperor and nation alike.

In transforming these traditional ideas, the revolutionaries set out to distinguish 'emperor' from 'nation', and to give new meaning to the language of 'loyalty' and 'treason'. According to the old concept, 'nation' was equated to 'dynasty' which owed its existence to an emperor who received the mandate of heaven to rule it; the emperor was the only legitimate representative of heaven on earth (he was usually addressed as T'ien Tzu, son of heaven) and was considered as the equivalent of the nation. So a patriot was loyal to him, and anyone opposed to him was a traitor. The revolutionaries, however, tried to give the nation a different origin. They argued that the formation of a nation was not for the interest of an emperor or a ruling family, but for the people as a whole. Nation and emperor were entirely distinct entities, and the emperor's interests should be subordinate to the nation's. A nation is like a share-company, the revolutionaries argued, an emperor is like a manager who takes care of the company and works for the benefit of all shareholders.³² If the manager does badly, any of the shareholders can work for his dismissal. Far from being treason against the company, this is in its best interests. Just so, the revolutionaries concluded, those who worked for the overthrow of the Ch'ing government should not be regarded as traitors to the nation.³³

Having clarified the relationship between 'emperor' and 'nation' and denied the divinity of autocracy, the revolutionaries went on the reverse the concepts of 'loyalty' and 'patriotism'. Whenever the interests of the dynasty and nation clashed, those who fight for the nation – against the dynasty if need be – were the real patriots.³⁴

Thus legitimizing revolution, the revolutionaries also invoked Confucius. They were not unaware that the basic tenets of Confucianism were incompatible with revolution. But they skilfully chose some of its elements as quite compatible with racial revolution. They particularly singled out the racial difference made in Confucianism between Chinese and barbarians to justify the nationalism which was the most important slogan against the Manchu rule in China.³⁵ They also used one of the Confucius' key tenets, 'anti-egoism' to defend their own activities. They stressed that the risk they were taking in fighting the Manchus was not in their own interests, but in the interests of the people and nation. This spirit of self-sacrifice conformed well with Confucius' teaching, and should, they maintained, be deemed praiseworthy.³⁶

The third stage of propaganda activity began with the founding of the *Kwong Wah Yit Poh* in Penang in December 1910.³⁷ Towards the end of this stage, another important revolutionary newspaper, the *Nam Kew Poo*, was published to strengthen the front.³⁸ Although the former did launch polemics against the reformist *Penang Sin Pao* (*The Penang Daily*),³⁹ the main attention of both newspapers was directed to the report of revolutionary uprisings in China, particularly after the outbreak of the Wuchang Revolution on the 10 October 1911. Revolutionary doctrine, and attacks on both the reformists and the Manchus, gave way to more urgent and immediate revolutionary aims – the large-scale mobilization of financial and manpower support from overseas Chinese communities. The papers concentrated on reporting the progress of revolutionary armies in South China and the eager response of local Chinese, and urgent appeals for funds.⁴⁰

In addition to these tasks, the newspapers also served as the spokesmen for the revolutionary government among the Chinese in Southeast Asia. To maintain public confidence, setbacks suffered by the revolutionary armies were not reported. To arouse enthusiasm and attract financial support for the revolution, rumours in favour of revolutionaries, such as the fall of Peking and the killing of the Emperor Hsuan-t'ung, were published.

Reading Clubs

Although the newspaper was an effective propaganda medium for spreading the revolutionary gospel, its effectiveness was limited by the nature of the overseas Chinese community. Popular illiteracy prevented it from penetrating deep into society, particularly to the lower stratum where the real strength of revolution lay. There, numbers of young people from lower classes could not be reached, even those who could read might not be able to afford the

price of newspapers and books. To reach more of such people, an organization was needed to transmit the radical message of the revolutionaries. In the course of their activities, revolutionary activists discovered that a kind of cultural organization called a 'reading club' (书报社) served this purpose well.

The origins of the revolutionary reading clubs in the Malay Peninsula can be traced to the 'Singapore Reading Club' (星洲书报社) which was founded by a Chinese Christian missionary, Cheng P'in-t'ing (郑聘廷), in 1903. Cheng's aim was neither to propagate revolution nor to create a forum for the revolutionaries, but to provide reading facilities for poor young people in the hope of winning them over to Christianity.⁴¹ The association between the club and the revolutionaries, was, however, by no means accidental. It happened that Cheng was a friend of Tan Chor-nam who foresaw that the institution could be used for revolutionary purposes. He donated money and became one of its supporters. Whenever it sponsored public talks, Tan, with another revolutionary leader, Teo Eng-hock, took the opportunity to address the audience on radical doctrines and this aroused considerable public interest.⁴²

The infiltration of the Singapore Reading Club was reported to Dr Sun Yat-sen when he visited Singapore in 1905. Sun shared the view that the institution could and should be fully exploited, not only for propaganda but also for recruiting purposes.⁴³ This plan was gradually realized after Cheng was persuaded to join the T'ung Meng Hui. Through his influence, a number of Chinese Christian leaders became members of the party.⁴⁴

When the other revolutionary leaders saw the effectiveness of the club, they began to set up their own clubs. Dr Sun, who had turned his attention from Japan to Southeast Asia after 1907, instructed Singapore leaders to take the initiative. As a result, the K'ai Ming Public Speaking and Reading Club (开明演说书报社) was founded in November 1907,⁴⁵ and in 1908 the Kung I Reading Club (公益书报社) and the T'ung Te Reading Club (同德书报社).⁴⁶ The Penang Philomatic Society (the Penang Reading Club 檳城阅书报社) which became the leading revolutionary organization in Northern Malaya, came into being in the same year.⁴⁷ Between 1908 and 1911, more than 50 clubs were established throughout Singapore and Malaya. Following this example, Chinese revolutionary leaders in the Dutch East Indies, French Indo-China, Thailand and Burma took similar steps to found clubs to spread revolutionary messages. During 1906-1911, more than 100 clubs sprang up throughout Southeast Asia.

The size of reading clubs differed from place to place. In big urban centres like Singapore, Kuala Lumpur and Penang where members were

numerous, the clubs were usually bigger and elaborately organized. Besides rank and file membership, there was an executive committee consisting of a President with a title of *She-chang* 社长,⁴⁸ a vice-president, a chairman with a title of *Tsung-li* 总理,⁴⁹ a vice-chairman, an accountant, an auditor, several people in charge of book ordering, and a number of newspaper commentators.⁵⁰ In small country towns where members were few, the reading clubs were organized on a simpler basis. Although there were divisions between executive committee and ordinary members, the committee comprised less members than the city ones, and ordinary members were also allowed to take part in decision-making.

Whatever their size, all revolutionary reading clubs were organized on the principle of unity and solidarity among Chinese. Those who were interested in reading were accepted as members irrespective of their dialect differences or political inclinations. When some large reading clubs in Singapore were reorganized according to dialect origins, this was not due to provincial feelings, but was rather to facilitate the functions of the clubs and to strengthen their cooperation with the *Tung Meng Hui*.⁵¹

The clubs were important centres for disseminating revolutionary publications. Revolutionary newspapers, books, magazines and pamphlets were constantly donated by other revolutionary organizations,⁵² and were widely read among the members. With the lack of public libraries during that time, reading clubs also emerged as the cultural centres for the general public. So members and public mixed, and both were well exposed to revolutionary ideas. The clubs intensified the exposure by sponsoring public talks, often with active support from the party and other revolutionary organizations. Prominent leaders, both local and national, were invited to speak, and speakers and topics were usually advertised in the local revolutionary papers.⁵³ Most of the talks attracted large audiences and were highly successful.⁵⁴ Among other effects, these public successes were good for the morale of the club members; and of course they commended the clubs to the public.

Other steps were taken to that same end. Some of the leading clubs gave free medical services to the poor,⁵⁵ sponsored night schools, published newspapers,⁵⁶ or led large-scale mass agitations.⁵⁷ These actions were apparently aimed at expressing the spirit of philanthropic brotherhood, recruiting cadres and mass indoctrination. Mass agitation might arouse and increase public consciousness of revolution. It was likely to be specially good for morale, which focused attention on revolutionary martyrs and presented them to the general public as heroes, memorable and inspiring emulation.

The reading clubs in Southeast Asia did not merely disseminate the

revolutionary message widely but they also came to form an integral part of the revolutionary party's political structure. They performed many functions for the local T'ung Meng Hui branches: they made opportunities for activists, they provided venues for party meetings, and they acted as enrolment centres for the party.⁵⁸ In country towns and on the outskirts of urban areas where members were few, reading clubs and the T'ung Meng Hui branches were closely identified; sometimes the club was the party branch.

Thus through a wide sector of population in the Chinese communities in Southeast Asia, the reading clubs forged links between the party, the revolutionary elite and the minds of the ordinary people. The clubs were two-way channels. Through them the leaders could transmit intelligence and direction to influence the thinking and outlook of a much larger public than the party membership; they also kept the leaders in touch with the rank and file and the general public, and extended and organized their popular support.

Drama Troupes

Another important propaganda organization was the drama troupe. The use of drama as a revolutionary medium in Singapore and Malaya had particular significance, for its effective indoctrination of the great proportion of illiterates in the Chinese communities. It carried revolutionary ideas deeper than the printed word or the formal lecture could ever penetrate into the lower strata of society. The medium was also more vivid than print, and probably planted revolutionary values more firmly in society, nation and revolution.

Drama was one of the oldest forms of social entertainment in China, and was also the most suggestive agency of mass education. Since the Sung dynasty, drama had been popular and was particularly widespread in South China. Under the Mongol and Manchu rules, drama not only became one of the main forms of literary expression, but was also used sometimes as a weapon to attack alien rule and to preserve national feelings among the vast Chinese mass. The origin of the revolutionary dramatic movement goes back to 1904. In that year, a graduate of a military school, Ch'eng Tzu-i (程子儀), who was interested in social education suggested that a drama school be founded in Hong Kong to modernize Chinese drama. His plan was helped to materialize by two local revolutionary leaders, Ch'en Shao-pai (陈少白) and Li Chi-t'ang (李纪堂).⁵⁹ The first revolutionary drama troupe, 'Ts'ai Nan Ko' (采南歌) was founded in the following year. It began to perform new plays with a strong revolutionary flavour in Hong Kong and

Macao,⁶⁰ and was well received by the masses, but after only two years of existence, it had to dissolve because of financial difficulties. Two more revolutionary drama troupes, 'Yu T'ien' (优天) and 'Chen T'ien Sheng' (振天声) soon came into being, and carried out similar work in those two colonies.⁶¹

The activities of these troupes in Hong Kong and Macao had great significance for the revolutionary movement as a whole, for they proved that drama was one of the best media for mass indoctrination, and they also provided a valuable and convenient means for the revolutionaries to gauge progress. The reasons for the success of drama in Hong Kong and Macao are clear. Both colonies had predominant Chinese population, and a great proportion of them were illiterate. The revolutionary leaders in Hong Kong further saw the possibilities of using the drama medium in other communities with similar conditions, including Singapore and some cities in Malaya. On their own initiative those centres soon had some drama troupes performing new plays with revolutionary appeal.⁶² There is no evidence that their plays were directly imported from Hong Kong, but the close commercial and cultural contacts between Hong Kong and Singapore made it possible that the Hong Kong example inspired them. The inspiration became direct and compelling when the Hong Kong revolutionary drama troupe Chen T'ien Sheng toured Singapore and Malaya at the end of 1908. The ostensible purpose of the tour was to raise funds for flood relief in Southern China,⁶³ but there was no doubt of its revolutionary purpose. The troupe was given a warm welcome by the Singapore revolutionaries and was highly praised by Dr Sun Yat-sen who was by then in Singapore. Non-revolutionaries in the troupe were recruited into the Singapore Tung Meng Hui.⁶⁴ From December 1908 to April 1909, the troupe toured extensively round Singapore and Malaya playing in all the urban centres in the Western Peninsula, such as Seremban, Kuala Lumpur, Klang, Ipoh, Taiping and Penang. Wherever it went, it was warmly welcome by local Chinese.⁶⁵ Despite attacks and obstructions from the reformists who considered its activities helped to spread revolutionary causes, its visits went off smoothly, and its performances were highly successful. In many of the places visited, it was urged to extend its stay.⁶⁶ It was not a self-contained troupe; everywhere, and especially in Singapore, it enlisted the aid of local revolutionary and dramatic talents. So the tour left a trail of training and experience, as well as enthusiasm.

The direct impact left by the Chen T'ien Sheng was a surge of revolutionary drama troupes in these areas. Disguised as charitable organizations, they sprang up one after another. In October 1909, a small group of revolutionary activists who had been aides to the Chen T'ien

Sheng's Performances in Singapore, took advantage of a campaign to raise funds for the Foochow typhoon relief to found a troupe named Fan Ai Pan (泛爱班 Altruistic Troupe).⁶⁷ Its birth and its professed aim received considerable encouragement from the local revolutionary newspapers and full support from other revolutionaries.⁶⁸ Its performances were so successful that about S\$5,000 was raised for the relief funds.⁶⁹ The success had a particular significance. This had been a temporary organization, dissolved after completing its charitable task. Unlike the Chen T'ien Sheng, its performers were revolutionary enthusiasts who had no acting experience whatsoever.⁷⁰ From its success, the revolutionaries concluded that the plays themselves were more important than the quality of acting and production, and that a permanent organization for revolutionary drama was quite feasible.

Following the dissolution of the Fan Ai Pan, Lin Hang-wei (林航苇) the Chinese secretary of the Singapore Anti-Opium Society, who had played important roles in both the Chen T'ien Sheng and Fan Ai Pan performances, took the initiative to found another troupe named Min To She (民铎社, the Association of the Bell of People), in December 1909.⁷¹ It claimed that it would raise funds for the forthcoming Pan Singapore and Malaya Anti-Opium Conference due to take place in 1910.⁷² The new group was hailed by the revolutionaries and their supporters in Singapore.⁷³ After a spectacular inaugural performance, it carried out extensive and vigorous activities. It soon found its cause: to raise funds for schools and for some social organizations.⁷⁴ It also extended its scope from Singapore to the southern part of the Malay Peninsula and to part of the Dutch East Indies.⁷⁵

Together with the appearance of the Fan Ai Pan and Min To She, there emerged other revolutionary drama groups in Malaya, such as the Perak Welfare Troupe (吡叻慈善班) in Ipoh, the Anti-Opium Drama Troupe (振武班) in Kuala Lumpur and the Ching Shih Pan (警世班, Troupe of Warning of the Age) in Penang.⁷⁶ All these troupes had some connections with the previous two, and were energetically engaged in performing new plays and spreading revolutionary ideas. They all adopted charitable disguises. Their charitable purposes made them legitimate and respectable, and warded off the interference they might otherwise have expected from local authorities, and from reformist and conservative groups in the Chinese communities. Much depended on the goodwill of the British colonial governments in Singapore and Malaya which still maintained diplomatic relations with the Ch'ing government, as their position was quite vulnerable. Unlike books, magazines and newspapers which could be smuggled in and circulated among readers even while banned, any restriction on dramatic performances would have crippled

the whole movement. So genuine fund-raising for charitable and social purposes allowed the troupes to escape official interference or conservative Chinese discouragement, while the content and success of the plays did a great deal to disseminate the revolutionary message.

The popular new plays performed by all the revolutionary drama troupes were Hsu Hsi-lin *ch'iang sha En-ming* (Hsu Hsi-lin Shot Governor En Ming 徐锡麟枪杀恩铭),⁷⁷ Hsiung-fei *chiang-chun chan shih Liu-hua-t'a* (熊飞将军战死榴花塔 General Hsiung Fei Fought to the Death at Liu Hua Pagoda),⁷⁸ Ch'iu nu-shih *pei-hai* (秋女士被害, The Execution of Madam Ch'iu Chin),⁷⁹ T'ieh-lu *ch'ao* (铁路潮, The Storm over the Railways), *Po-lang-sha chi Ch'in* (博浪沙击秦, The Attempt of Assassination of the Emperor of Ch'in at Po Lang Sha),⁸⁰ Yen-jen *ch'i* (烟人妻, The Wife of an Opium-smoker), Wen-ming *ching* (文明镜, A Mirror of Civilization), Yen-ching *pai nien* (烟精拜年, New Year for an Opium-smoker), Shen-ch'uan *chao ho* (神权肇祸, The Disaster of Superstition), Hei-hai *tz'u hang* (黑海慈航, The Prodigal Son), Tu chung *tu* (毒中毒, The Most Poisonous Poison), and Tse-tzu *sheng kuan* (贼仔升官, Thief in Good Fortune).⁸¹ These plays can be divided into three groups, each of which, directly or indirectly, is related to the theme of revolution. The first group comprising the first five plays (above) was oriented towards nationalism. The story of General Hsiung who fought against the Mongols was obviously used to spread the idea of racial resistance to non-Chinese rulers (including the Manchus to whom indirect reference was made). The story of the descendants of the Han Kingdom who made a bold attempt to assassinate the Emperor Shih Huang of the Ch'in, which was contained in the play of *The Attempt of Assassination of the Emperor of Ch'in at Po Lang Sha*, was used to spread the idea of a determined revenge. It was almost implied that the Chinese who shared the same fate with the descendants of the Han Kingdom should take similar action. The performance of stories of the assassinations of high-ranking Manchu officials by two well-known revolutionary martyrs, Hsu Hsi-lin⁸² and Ch'iu Chin, was designed to incite radical anti-Manchu feeling and to demand for armed action. The martyrdom and dedication to the radical revolution of Hsu and Ch'iu which had received wide publicity and praise in revolutionary publications and speeches were transmitted to the minds of the masses through the stage performances. This would undoubtedly arouse hatred against the Manchus and build the image of the revolutionary martyrs in the minds of the masses.

The second group (*The Bell After the Dream*, *Red Lotus in Hell*, *The Opium-smoking Devil*, *The Wife of an Opium-smoker*, *A Mirror of Civilization*, *New Year for an Opium-smoker*, *The Disaster of Superstition*, *The Prodigal Son*, and *The Most Poisonous Poison*) was orientated towards the anti-opium and

anti-superstition movements in Singapore and Malaya during that period. All these attacked and exposed, through actual dramatic scenes, the evils opium-smoking and superstition rife in the Chinese communities, and clearly warned that these social evils would bring disaster to addicts.⁸³ This orientation indicates that the revolutionaries were not merely nationalists who aimed at driving Manchus out of China, but also modernizers who were concerned with social reforms. Besides, the stamping out of these social evils would help the overseas Chinese to shake off this physical and spiritual yoke, and free them to devote their energies to revolution.

The third group consists only of one play *Thief in Good Fortune* which attacked the bureaucracy of the Ch'ing government. It exposed the evils of the Manchu rule, its corruption, nepotism and injustice. This directly hinted to the audiences that the Manchu government must be overthrown in order to wipe out these malpractices.

The revolutionary message probably spread wider and penetrated deeper through dramatic performances than through publications and public talks. The majority of the uneducated Chinese public were poor immigrants from Southern China where they had very little opportunity to enjoy drama performances, and the revolutionary dramatic performances held a very strong appeal for them. Certainly the contribution of the drama troupes to the Revolution of 1911 was fully appreciated by revolutionary leaders in Singapore and Malaya. Teo Eng-hock, the chairman of the Singapore branch of the Tung Meng Hui stated that the actors had contributed very greatly to the overthrow of the Manchus.⁸⁴ The editor of the *Sun Poo* declared in 1909 that the influence wielded by the revolutionary drama troupes was even greater than that by the reading clubs.⁸⁵

Endnotes

- * First published in the *Journal of the South Seas Society*, Vol. 29, Pts. 1 & 2 (South Seas Society, Singapore, 1974), pp. 47-67.
- 1. Feng Tzu-yu, *Hua-ch'iao ko-min k'ai-kuo shih* (A History of Overseas Chinese Participation in Revolution and the Creation of the Republic, thereafter *k'ai-kuo shih*) (Reprinted edition, Taipei, 1953), pp. 3-7, 25-6; Feng Tzu-yu, *Hua-ch'iao ko-min tsu-chih shih-hua* (A Short History of Organizations of the Overseas Chinese Participation in Revolution, thereafter *tsu-chih shih-hua*) (Taipei, 1954), pp. 2-6; Ch'en Shao-pai, 'Hsing-chung-hui ko-ming shih-yao' (An Outline of Hsing-chung-hui's Revolutionary History), in *Hsin-hai ko-min* (The 1911 Revolution, thereafter *HHKM*) (Shanghai, 1961), Vol. 1, pp. 28-9.
- 2. Hsieh Tsuan-t'ai, *Chung-hua min-kuo ko-ming mie-shih* (The Chinese Republic: Secret History of the Revolution) (Hong Kong, 1924), p. 10; Feng Tzu-yu, *Ko-ming i-shih*

- (*Reminiscences of the Revolution*, thereafter *i-shih*), Vol. 5, pp. 8-15; According to Chua Hui Seng (Ch'ai Hui-sheng), an old revolutionary in Singapore, Sun did attempt to persuade his old classmate Dr Wong I Ek to form a revolutionary party in Singapore. Chua Hui Seng interviewed on 25 February 1965 at the Tung Teh Reading Club, Singapore.
3. Feng Tzu-yu, *Chung-hua min-kuo k'ai-kuo ch'ien ko-ming shih* (A History of Revolution before the Founding of the Republic, thereafter *ko-ming shih*) (Shanghai, 1930), Vol. 2, pp. 104-05; Yen Ching-hwang, 'Chinese Revolutionary Movement in Malaya, 1900-1911' (an unpublished Ph.D. thesis of the Australian National University, Canberra), Vol. 1, pp. 36-8.
 4. Tan Chor-nam interviewed on 7 August 1966 at his residence in Singapore.
 5. The two revolutionaries were Chang Ping-lin (章炳麟) and Tsou Jung (邹容). Details of the case can be referred to Chang Huang-hsi, 'Su-pao-an shih-lu' (A True Record of the Su Pao Case), in *HHKM*, pp. 367-86; Chang Hsing-yen, 'Su-pao-an shih-mo chi hsu' (Narration of the Beginning and End of the Su Pao Case), in *HHKM*, Vol. 1, pp. 387-90.
 6. The cable was published in the *Kuo Min Jih Jih Pao*, a revolutionary newspaper in Shanghai. See *Kuo Min Jih Jih Pao*, 7 August 1903; see also Teo Eng-hock, *Nanyang yu chuang-li min-kuo* (Nanyang and the Founding of the Chinese Republic, thereafter *chuang-li min-kuo*) (Shanghai, 1933), p. 7; Tan Chor-nam, 'Wan-ch'ing-yuan yu chung-kuo ko-ming' (Wan-ch'ing-yuan and the Chinese Revolution), in *Chuang-hua min-kuo k'ai-kuo wu-shi nien wen-hsien* (Documents of 50 Years' History of the Chinese Republic, thereafter *WSNWH*), Vol. 1, pt. 11, p. 534; Feng Tzu-yu, *tsu-chih shih-hua*, p. 73.
 7. Tan Chor-nam, 'Wan-ch'ing-yuan yu chung-kuo ko-ming', in *WSNWH*, Vol. 1, pt. 11, p. 535; Yen Ching-hwang, 'Chinese Revolutionary Movement in Singapore and Malaya, 1900-1911', (an unpublished Ph.D. thesis of the Australian National University, Canberra), p. 61.
 8. In June 1905 an extensive campaign to boycott American goods spread throughout China as a protest against the American Exclusion Law. This boycott soon found response among the Chinese in Singapore and Malaya. See Song Ong Siang, *One Hundred Years of the Chinese in Singapore* (London, 1923), p. 375; 'Report of W.D. Barnes, Secretary for Chinese Affairs of the Straits Settlements', in *Straits Settlements Annual Departmental Reports* (thereafter *SSADR*), 1905, P. 633; Feng, *k'ai-kuo shih*, pp. 76-7.
 9. Teo Eng-hock in his memoir recalled that when the calendar, printed by the *Thoe Lam Jit Poh* to promote revolutionary sentiment among the readers, reached Honolulu Dr Sun was struck by this new venture and its beautiful design. Sun sent \$US20.00 to obtain 20 copies of it. See Teo Eng-hock, *chuang-li min-kuo*, pp. 2-3, 8; Tan Chor-nam, 'Wan-ch'ing-yuan yu chung-kuo ko-ming', in *WSNWH*, Vol. 1, pt. 11, p. 535.
 10. Tan Chor-nam, *ibid.*
 11. In 1889, the reformist leaders in Singapore were able to collect more than 600 signatures from Chinese commercial quarters in Singapore, Kuala Lumpur, Rangoon, Rhio, Batavia and Makassar for a petition to the Ch'ing court urging restoration of the Emperor Kuang Hsu. Khoo Seok-wan and Lim Boon Keng, the two leaders representing new emerging

- Chinese- and English-speaking intellectuals in Singapore, published newspapers and magazines to support reformist cause. See *T'ien Nan Hsin Pao* (*The T'ien Nan Daily*), 7 October 1899, p. 5, 11 October 1899, p. 8, 21 October 1899, p. 5. See also Yen Ching-hwang, 'Chinese Revolutionary Movement in Singapore and Malaya, 1900-1911', Vol. 1, pp. 147-48, Vol. 2, pp. 38-9.
12. *The Straits Times*, 3 February 1900, p. 3.
 13. Wen Chung-chi, 'The 19th Century Imperial Chinese Consulate in the Straits Settlements' (an unpublished M.A. thesis of the University of Singapore), pp. 267-73.
 14. Feng Tzu-yu, *k'ai-kuo shih*, p. 76; Tan Chor-nam interviewed on 7 August 1966 at his residence in Singapore.
 15. Teo Eng-hock, *op. cit.*, p. 8.
 16. Details of the publishing of *The People's Tribune* can be referred to Man Hua, 'T'ung-meng-hui shi shih-tai Min-pao shih-mo chi' (The Beginning and End of the Publishing of the *People's Tribune* During the T'ung Meng Hui Period), in *HHKM*, Vol. 2, pp. 438-59; also in Lo Chia-lun (ed.), *Ko-ming wen-hsien* (thereafter *KMWH*), Vol. 2, pp. 78-98.
 17. Details of this polemic can directly be referred to the two newspapers. Two works have given good summaries of this polemic. They are Kao Liang-tso, 'K'ai-kuo ch'ien ko-ming yu chun-hsien chih lun-chan' (The Polemics Between the Revolutionaries and the Monarchists Before the Commencement of the Chinese Republic), in *Chien-kuo yeh-k'an* (*Nation Construction Monthly*), Vol. 7, p. 3-6, Vol. 8, pt. 5-6, and Chang P'eng-yuan, *Liang Ch'i-ch'ao yu Ch'ing-chi ko-ming* (*Liang Ch'i-ch'ao and the Revolutionary Movement in the Late Ch'ing Period*) (Taipei, 1964), pp. 207-32.
 18. Yen Ching-hwang, *op. cit.*, Vol. 1, pp. 79-87.
 19. The choice of the name of the newspaper was evidently to imply that Chinese would restore their rule in China. The first preface was drafted by Hu Han-min, one of the national leaders of the revolutionaries. See Hu Han-min (recorded by Chang Chen-chih), 'Nan-yang yu Chung-kuo ko-ming' (Southeast Asia and the Chinese Revolution), (original text kept in the Kuo-ming-tang, thereafter KMT, archives in Taichung, Taiwan), pp. 1-2; see also *WSNWH*, Vol. 1, pt. 11, p. 458; *Chong Shing Yit Pao*, 20 August 1907, p. 2.
 20. Since the stoppage of the *Thoe Lam Jit Poh* in 1905, another attempt was made by Tan Chor-nam and Teo Eng-hock to further revolutionary propaganda work. *The Union Times* was published in Autumn 1905 by Tan and Teo in cooperation with some Chinese merchants. But a quarrel over its political stand split the proprietors. Tan and Teo lost in the fight and the newspaper was taken over by the reformists who turned it into their main propaganda organ in Singapore. See Teo Eng-hock, *Chuang-li min-kuo*, p. 89; Feng Tzu-yu, *k'ai-kuo shih*, p. 78; Feng, *ko-ming shih*, Vol. 2, p. 121; Chen Mong Hock, *The Early Chinese Newspapers of Singapore 1881-1912* (Singapore, 1967), p. 86.
 21. See Yen Ching-hwang, 'The Chinese Revolutionary Movement in Singapore and Malaya', Vol. 1, p. 213.
 22. Wang Fu was the founder and the chief editor of *Shao Nien Pao* (*The Youth Daily*), 少

- 年報) and *Jen Pao* (人報) in Hong Kong; T'ien Tung was one of the founders and editors of the famous revolutionary magazine in Japan, the *Twentieth Century China* and the *Fu Pao Monthly* (復報月刊). Apart from Wang and T'ien, T'ao Ch'eng-chang (陶成章) and Chu Cheng (居正), another two well-known journalists, also joined the *Chong Shing* editorial staff for some time. See Tsou Lu, 'A Brief Biography of Wang Fu, in *Ko-ming hsien-lieh hsien-chien chuan* (Biographies of Revolutionary Martyrs and Pioneers, thereafter KMHLHCC) (Taipei, 1965), pp. 636-37; Hsia Ching-kuan, 'A Brief Biography of T'ien Tung', in *Kuo-shih-kuan kuan-k'an* (Bulletin of the National Museum of Historical Records, thereafter KSKKK), Vol. 1, No. 13; Feng Tzu-yu, *i-shih*, Vol. 2, pp. 159-70; Man-hua, 'Tung-meng-hui shih-tai Min-pao shih-mo chi', in *KMWH*, Vol. 2, p. 92; Chu Cheng, *Mei-ch'uan p'u-chih* (梅川譜例), p. 42.
23. Feng Tzu-yu, *k'ai-kuo shih*, pp. 84-5; Feng, *tsu-chih shih-hua*, pp. 49-50; Hu Han-min, 'Hu Han-min chih-chuan' (autobiography), in *KMWH*, Vol. 3, p. 30.
 24. Yen Ching-hwang, *op. cit.*, Vol. 1, pp. 151-53, 158-59.
 25. Yen Ching-hwang, *ibid.*, pp. 183-212.
 26. See *Chong Shing Yit Pao*, 12 and 15 September 1908.
 27. The Japan polemics were focused on 'racial origin of the Manchus' and 'consequences of a racial revolution'. See Kao Liang-tso, 'The Polemics Between the Revolutionaries and the Monarchists Before the Commencement of the Chinese Republic', in *CKYK*, Vol. 7, No. 4, pp. 7-31, No. 5, pp. 1-10.
 28. Especially a long editorial entitled 'Hearty Advice to Those Who Long for a Constitutional Monarchy' by Tien Tung under a pseudonym of 'Hen-hai' (恨海), see *Chong Shing Yit Pao*, 21, 23 and 24 March 1908, p. 2.
 29. Wang Ching-wei, 'The Revolutionary Radicalism', in *Chong Shing Yit Pao*, 24 December 1907, p. 2.
 30. See especially the editorials on 9, 11, 15, 21 and 22 September 1909, p. 2, and 22 and 25 October 1909, p. 2.
 31. When Dr Sun Yat-sen first visited Penang in 1906, he was considered by conservative merchants as a traitor and the revolutionary doctrine he preached was regarded as being poisonous. See Ch'en Hsin-cheng, *Hua-ch'iao ko-ming hsiao-shih* (A Brief History of Overseas Chinese Participation in Revolution, manuscript), p. 2.
 32. The *Sun Poo*, 13 October 1909, p. 2.
 33. *Ibid.*
 34. See Chi-ch'en, 'A Comparison Between Loyalty and Patriotism', in the *Sun Poo*, 23 September 1910, p. 2.
 35. Chang Shao-hsuan, 'The Reason Why the Han Race (Chinese) Should Commemorate Confucius', in *Chong Shing Yit Pao*, 8 October 1909, p. 1.
 36. Wu-wo, 'The Confucianists Should Know the Purpose of Revolution', in the *Sun Poo*, 9 October 1909, p. 2.
 37. See Yang Han-hsiang, 'Chung-hua min-kuo k'ai-kuo ch'ien-hou chih pen-she ko-ming shih' (The Revolutionary History of the Penang Philomatic Society Before and After the Creation of the Republic of China), in Yang Han-hsiang (ed.), *The Souvenir of the*

- 24th Anniversary of the Penang Philomatic Society, pp. 19–21; Wang Ching-ch'eng, 'Wu-shih-nien lai te pin-lang-yu kuang-hua jih-pao' (Fifty Years of the Penang's Kwong Wah Yit Poh) in Liu Wen-chu (ed.), *This Half Century: Souvenir of the Golden Jubilee of the Kwong Wah Yit Poh* (Penang, 1960), pp. 271–72; Feng Tzu-yu, *k'ai kuo-shih*, pp. 87–8.
38. Feng Tzu-yu mistakenly put the date of publication as in April 1911. In fact, the newspaper was first published on 27 October 1911, about a fortnight after the outbreak of the Wuchang Uprising. See Feng Tzu-yu, *k'ai kuo-shih*, pp. 86–7; Nam Kew Poo, 27 October 1911.
 39. Early years of the Kwong Wah Yit Poh no longer exist. Part of the polemics can be seen in the *Penang Sin Pao*, especially 18, 21–28 February, 3, 4 March and 25 April 1911.
 40. Yen Ching-hwang, 'Chinese Revolutionary Movement in Singapore and Malaya, 1900–1911' (unpublished), Vol. 1, pp. 253–63.
 41. Teo Eng-hock, *chuang-li min-kuo*, pp. 91–2.
 42. *Ibid.*
 43. *Ibid.*
 44. See Anonymous, 'Min-kuo ch'ien Sing-chou chih ko-ming yun-tung' (Revolutionary Movement in Singapore before the Founding of the Chinese Republic) (Manuscript kept in the KMT Archives, Taichung, Taiwan).
 45. Feng Tzu-yu, a Chinese revolutionary leader and the well-known biographer of the Chinese revolution, obviously made a mistake by placing the founding date of the K'ai Ming Public Speaking and Reading Club to Wu-shen year (戊申, 1908). The club was definitely founded on 7 November 1907 which should be in Ting-wei year (丁未) in lunar calendar. See Feng Tzu-yu, *k'ai-kuo shih*, p. 85; Feng, *tsu-chih shih-hua*, pp. 50–1; Feng, *Chung-kuo ko-ming yun-tung erh-shih liu-nien tsu-chih shih*, p. 158; *Chong Shing Yit Pao*, 7 November 1907, p. 5.
 46. See anonymous, 'Min-kuo ch'ien Sing-chou chih ko-ming yun-tung' (Revolutionary Movement in Singapore Before the founding of the Chinese Republic) (Manuscript kept in the KMT Archives, Taichung, Taiwan).
 47. See Yang Han-hsiang, 'Chung-hua min-kuo k'ai-kuo ch'ien-hou chih pen-she ko-ming shih' (The Revolutionary History of the Penang Philomatic Society Before and After the Creation of the Republic of China), in Yang Han-hsiang (ed.), *The Souvenir of the 24th Anniversary of the Penang Philomatic Society*, p. 8; Ch'en Hsin-cheng, *Hua-ch'iao ko-ming hsiao-shih* (A Concise History of Overseas Chinese Participation in the Revolution) (Manuscript copied and prefaced by Mr Wu Tee-jen), p. 10.
 48. This means head of the association.
 49. The actual meaning of *Tsang-li* is to superintend or to take charge of general affairs. In present usage, the term used in Chinese social organizations is equivalent to 'chairman', and is a standard translation for 'Prime Minister' in a political context.
 50. The *Sun Poo*, 31 January 1910, p. 6, 16 February 1910, p. 7.
 51. The K'ai Ming Public Speaking and Reading Club was mainly composed of Cantonese, the Tung Te Reading club of Teochew and the Tung Wen Reading Club (同文书报社) of Hailam. The main reason for organizing reading clubs on the basis of dialect

origin were given by Hu Han-min, the head of the Southeast Asia Branch of the Tung Meng Hui. See Teo Eng-hock, *chuang-li min-kuo*, p. 92, and Hu Han-min's manuscript which also appears in Teo's *Chuang-li min-kuo*, p. 93.

52. *Chong Shing Yit Pao*, 20 February 1908, p. 5.
53. *Ibid.*, 2 January 1908, p. 2, 4 January 1908, p. 2, 28 March 1908, p. 2, 17 June 1908, p. 2, 6 August 1908, p. 4.
54. *Ibid.*, 6 August 1908, p. 4.
55. A small group of Chinese physicians of the K'ai Ming Public Speaking and Reading Club, including one of the founders of the club, Ho Hsin-t'ien (何心田), was responsible for making prescriptions for the poor. This practice was taken soon after its inception. See *Chong Shing Yit Pao*, 2 January 1908, p. 6.
56. For instance, the Penang Philomatic Society took the lead to publish a revolutionary newspaper, *Kuang Wah Yit Poh* (Kwang Hua Jit Pao 光华日报) in 1909, which eventually become the main revolutionary organization in Singapore and Malaya from 1910 to 1911. See Yang Han-hsiang, *op. cit.*, in *The Souvenir of the 24th Anniversary of the Penang Philomatic Society*, pp. 19-21.
57. For instance, the Chung Hua Public Speaking and Reading Club (光華演說書報社) in Singapore sponsored a public gathering to mourn a revolutionary martyr, Hsu Hsi-lin (徐錫麟) in September 1907, and was attended by many people. See *Chong Shing Yit Pao*, 5 October 1907, p. 3, 7 October 1907, p. 3.
58. The Singapore Reading Club and the Penang Philomatic Society are two good examples. One of the important functions of the Penang Philomatic Society was to persuade its members to join the Tung Meng Hui. The procedure was very simple, those who intended to join had only to swear in front of a referee on the oath of the Tung Meng Hui, and their names were sent to the headquarters in Tokyo for record. Yang Han-hsiang, *op. cit.*, pp. 19-21.
59. Ch'en helped to produce new plays, while Li provided a large sum of money for training young girls and boys. See Feng Tzu-yu, *i-shih*, Vol. 2, pp. 241-42.
60. New plays were all quite radical and nationalistic, such as *Ti-fu ko-ming* (Revolution in Hell, 地府革命), *Huang-ti cheng ch'i-yu* (The Yellow Emperor's Expedition against the Barbarian Chief-ch'i-yu, 黃帝征蚩尤) and *Wen T'ien-hsiang hsun kuo* (Wen T'ien-hsiang as a Martyr, 文天祥殉國), *Ibid.*, p. 243.
61. The Yu T'ien drama troupe was founded by a group of radical journalists to carry on the work left by 'Ts'ai Nan Ko'. It was soon superseded by the 'Chen T'ien Sheng' after about two years' existence. *Ibid.*, pp. 242-44.
62. In November 1907, a troupe in Kuala Lumpur performed a play entitled *Hsu Hsi-lin* which portrayed his revolutionary deed in the Anching Uprising. The same play was performed in 1908 in Singapore by another two troupes, 'Yung Shou Nien' (永壽年) and 'Tan Shan Feng' (丹山鳳). See *Chong Shing Yit Pao*, 13 December 1907, p. 2.
63. In June 1908, a serious flood broke out in Southern Kwangtung, more than eight districts were affected. A flood relief organization named 'Committee for Flood Relief for the Eight Districts' was established in Hong Kong. 'Chen T'ien Sheng' was sent by this

- organization to Southeast Asia for fund-raising. See *The Union Times*, 3 July 1908, p. 1; Feng Tzu-yu, *i-shih-hua*, Vol. 2, p. 245.
64. Feng Tzu-yu, *tsu-chih shih-hua*, p. 168.
 65. *Chong Shing Yit Pao*, 20 February 1909, p. 1, 27 February 1909, p. 1, 17 March 1909, p. 1, 18 March 1909, p. 2.
 66. 'Letter from Dr Sun Yat-sen to Chuang Yin-an (庄银安, in Burma) dated 8th March 1909', in Chang Ch'i-yuen (ed.), *Kuo-fu chuan-shu* (*Complete Works of Dr Sun Yat-sen*, thereafter KFCs) (Taipei, 1966), p. 414.
 67. These well-known local revolutionary activists were Wang Pang-chieh (王邦杰), Cheng P'in-t'ing (郑聘廷), Lin Hang-wei and Wei Hsu-t'ung (魏请同). See *Chong Shing Yit Pao*, 25 March 1909, p. 2.
 68. *The Sun Poo*, 28 October 1909, p. 2, 29 October 1909, p. 2.
 69. The troupe sponsored two night shows on 30 and 31 October 1909 at the New Stage, Beancurd Street, Singapore. S\$4,973.10 was raised. See the *Sun Poo*, 12 November 1909, p. 3.
 70. See the public notice of the Fan Ai Pan, *Lat Pau*, 26 October 1909, p. 6.
 71. After accepting Lin's proposal of setting up a drama troupe for raising funds for the forthcoming anti-opium conference, the Singapore Anti-Opium Society set up a working committee to put the proposal into practice. Twenty-six out of fifty-one members of the committee were also the members of the Singapore T'ung Meng Hui. From this we know that the committee was well under the influence of the revolutionaries. See *Sun Poo*, 28 December 1909, p. 3; Lim Ngee-soon, 'Chung-hua min-kuo k'ai-kuo ko-ming shih chih i yeh' (A Chapter of Revolutionary History of the Founding of the Chinese Republic, in which a list of T'ung Meng Hui members in Singapore was provided). (Original text kept in the KMT Archives in Taichung, Taiwan).
 72. *The Sun Poo*, 28 December 1909, p. 3.
 73. This can be seen from the fact that in the inaugural ceremony which took place on 28 December 1909, 18 out of 31 ornamental banners (Ts'ai Ch'i 彩旗) were presented by the revolutionaries and their affiliated organizations. *Ibid.*, 29 December 1909, p. 3; 30 December 1909, p. 3.
 74. See Yen Ching-hwang, 'Chinese Revolutionary Movement in Singapore and Malaya, 1900-1911' (an unpublished Ph.D. thesis of the Australian National University, Canberra), Vol. 1, pp. 134-35.
 75. *Ibid.*
 76. See *The Union Times*, 18 June 1910, p. 2; the *Sun Poo*, 28 December 1909, p. 2, 24 January 1910, p. 6.
 77. This was the most popular play during that time. It was frequently performed by the Yung Shou Nien troupe, Tan Shan Feng troupe and Ch'iuung Shan Yu troupe (琼山玉班) in Singapore between 1908 and 1909; by Ching Shih Pan in January 1910 in Penang; and by Min To She in August 1910 in Pontianak of Dutch Borneo. See *Chong Shing Yit Pao*, 24 February 1908, p. 4, 21 March 1908, p. 4, 31 December 1909, p. 2; the *Sun Poo*, 24 January 1910, p. 6, 29 August 1910, p. 7.

78. Hsung was a hero of the Sung dynasty who resisted the Mongol conquest in Kwang-tung Province, and fought to death at the Liu Hua Pagoda in Tung Kuan district (东莞县). See *Lat Pau*, 18 March 1909, p. 6, the *Sun Pao*, 28 September 1909, p. 4.
79. Ch'iu Chin is a well-known heroine in modern Chinese history. She was born in Fukien Province, and was partly educated in Japan. Kindled by patriotism, she joined the Tung Meng Hui in Tokyo in 1905 and was a leader of the Kiangsu-Cheking group of the revolutionary movement. After returning to Cheking, she fervently engaged in revolutionary activities. Running a girls school and an athletic association as a disguise, she organized 10,000 troops named *Kuang-fu chun* (Restoration Army) to prepare an armed revolt in Chekiang in conjunction with Hsu Hsi-lin in Anhwei Province. After Hsu's failure in the Anching Uprising in July 1907, Ch'iu was caught and executed on 14th of the same month. See Ch'en Ch'i-ping, 'Chien-hu nu-hsia Ch'iu-chin chuan' (A Biography of Ch'iu Chin), in *HHKM*, pp. 184-86. Ch'ing's documents about Ch'iu Chin's revolutionary activities can be found in *HHKM*, Vol. 3, pp. 187-214, and Lo Chia-lun (ed.), *Ko-ming wen-hsien*, Vol. 1, pp. 98-140.
80. *Chong Shing Yit Pao*, 24 November 1909, p. 2.
81. All these plays were mainly performed by the Min To She and the Kuala Lumpur Anti-Opium Drama Troupe. See *The Union Times*, 18 June 1909, p. 2; the *Sun Pao*, 1 March 1910, p. 3, 23 June 1910, p. 3, 29 July 1910, p. 6, 29 August 1910, p. 7.
82. Hsu was born into a scholar-gentry family in Chekiang in 1873. Well-versed in classics he passed his prefectural examination and made himself known among local official circles. Like other Chinese youth of his time, he was inspired by patriotism and anti-Manchu feeling arising from the government's failure to meet foreign encroachment. In 1903, he went to Japan and acquainted many radicals. He became a leader of the Kuang Fu Hui (Restoration Society) which consisted mainly of radicals from Chekiang and Kiangsu Provinces. After returning to his home district, Shao Hsing (绍兴), in 1907, Hsu founded a school and an athletic body as disguise for revolutionary activities. But the disadvantageous position of Chekiang in overall revolutionary situation forced him to give up the activities. He then shifted his activities to Anhwei Province which is a neighbouring province of Chekiang. He purchased an official position in the government and soon acquired confidence of the Governor En Ming. He became deputy superintendent of police and principal of the police school. He fully used these positions to preach revolution and to recruit followers. A revolt was planned in 1907 in Anhwei in conjunction with uprising in Chekiang. Although Hsu succeeded in shooting the Governor, the revolt failed and Hsu was executed. See 'Hsu Hsi-lin chuan' (Biography of Hsu Hsi-lin), in *Ko-ming hsien-lien hsien-chin chuan* (Biographies of Revolutionary Martyrs and Pioneers, Taipei, 1965), pp. 57-70. Ch'ing documents relating to the Hsu's uprising are contained in *HHKM*, Vol. 3, pp. 112-77.
83. The famous play *The Bell After the Dream* described vividly the disaster brought to a family of addicts of opium-smoking and superstition. See *Lat Pau*, 15 March 1909, p. 6; *Chong Shing Yit Pao*, 27 December 1909, p. 1.
84. Teo Eng-hock, *chuang-li min-kuo*, p. 74.
85. The editorial of the *Sun Pao*, 28 December 1909, p. 2.

CHAPTER 11

Penang Chinese and the 1911 Chinese Revolution*

The Penang Chinese community stood out quite distinctively in its relationship with the 1911 Revolution. It had surpassed many overseas Chinese communities in its contribution to the overthrow of the Manchus and the establishment of the Republic. The 'Penang Conference' which had led directly to the famous revolt in Canton in April 1911, occupied an important place in the history of the 1911 Revolution. This article seeks to examine the relationship between Penang Chinese and the Chinese revolutionary movement overseas prior to the abdication of the Manchu Emperor on 12 February 1912, and to assess the contribution of the Penang Chinese to the 1911 Revolution.

Penang Chinese and the Ch'ing China

The Penang Chinese community existed after the founding of the settlement of Penang in 1786. The new settlement, with its enlightened policy, attracted a number of Chinese to trade and settle. In 1794, 8 years after the founding of the settlement, there were at least 3,000 Chinese in Penang pursuing different types of occupation such as traders, planters, shopkeepers, carpenters, masons and smiths.¹ The Chinese population in the island grew steadily throughout the nineteenth century. In 1881, the Penang island alone had a Chinese population of 45,135,² while the Province Wellesley had 22,219 Chinese.³ With a total population of 67,354, the Chinese community in Penang and Province Wellesley became the second largest in Singapore and Malaya.⁴

The existence of a substantial and thriving Chinese community in Penang did not seem to have attracted the attention of the Manchu government until the last decade of the nineteenth century. The founding of the Ch'ing consulate in Singapore in 1877,⁵ was the first of its kind in overseas Chinese communities in the world.⁶ At that time, the Ch'ing consul was restricted to the protection of the Chinese in the Singapore island; the Penang Chinese together with other Chinese in Malaya, had been ignored by Ch'ing officialdom. Although Penang was one of the Southeast Asian ports visited by a famous Chinese fact-finding mission in 1886,⁷ the Penang Chinese community was not yet accorded with the recognition by the Manchu court. No consulate was established in Penang as a result of this visit.

The appointment of the first Chinese Vice-Consul in Penang in March 1893 marked the beginning of a new chapter between the Penang Chinese and Ch'ing China.⁸ It was a recognition of the importance of the Penang Chinese in Ch'ing overall consular expansion in overseas Chinese communities.⁹ Ironically this recognition was brought about not by the merits of the Penang Chinese, but rather by the need of protection against any ill-treatment of the Chinese in that island. The man who championed for the consular expansion in overseas Chinese communities was Hsueh Fu-ch'eng, the new Chinese Minister to Britain, France, Italy and Belgium. Hsueh was a man of vision, a political reformer and an ardent advocate for the change of China's traditionally hostile policy towards overseas Chinese.¹⁰ He saw overseas Chinese as a significant force in helping China in its quest for wealth and power; he fitted them into the role of merchants in the Western expansion to the East.¹¹ He therefore saw the protection as the premium for gaining support of overseas Chinese. Prompted by Admiral Ting Ju-ch'ang's proposal of establishing vice-consulates in Penang, Malacca, Johore, Selangor and Perak,¹² Hsueh entered into serious negotiations with the British government on the issue of consular establishments. The result of which was the acquisition of the right to establish consulates in British dominions.¹³ The establishment of the Vice-Consulate in Penang in March was part of this expansion.

The founding of the Chinese Vice-Consulate in 1893 brought the Penang Chinese closer to the Ch'ing government. The Vice-Consulate was a very small establishment consisting of a Vice Consul and two other staff members – an interpreter and a secretary.¹⁴ Nevertheless, it strengthened the relationship between the Penang Chinese and the Ch'ing bureaucracy. To the Penang Chinese, the establishment of the Vice-Consulate was a special imperial grace which was the first of its kind in Southeast Asian Chinese

communities.¹⁵ Although there was an absence of a genuine mandarin sent directly from Peking, Chang Pi-shih, a wealthy merchant in their midst who became the first Vice-Consul still commanded prestige and respect. The establishment of the Vice-Consulate, in retrospect, facilitated Penang Chinese contacts with their home districts in China. With the introduction of the new emigration policy in China after August 1893,¹⁶ the Vice-Consulate was to assume a greater role than before in the administration of the empire's overseas subjects in the island. It was to issue visas of different grades and other documents to the local Chinese who intended to visit their home districts or to return there for good.¹⁷ The Penang Chinese must have appreciated this new facility which could have otherwise compelled them to make a trip to Singapore for the same purpose.

But what excited the Penang Chinese most was the new channel of communication with the Ch'ing government. Any grievances could be aired through the Vice-Consulate; any complaints against Chinese officials in their home districts could also go through the Vice-Consul and reach the Chinese Minister in London, from whom their voices could be heard at the highest level of the bureaucracy and the Court.¹⁸ At the same time, any new decrees from the Court affecting overseas Chinese could also filter through this new channel to reach the Penang Chinese.

From another perspective, the establishment of the Vice-Consulate was not just another step of the Ch'ing government's protection of overseas Chinese,¹⁹ it was also an integral part of a plan for trade expansion to foreign countries. This was clearly revealed in the reports of the Penang Chinese Vice-Consulate in which Penang's trade with China became the main focus.²⁰ Hidden behind the protection of overseas Chinese and the promotion of trade was the political motive. The Vice-Consul was to cultivate the loyalty of local Chinese towards the dynasty, and to spy on and report the activities of the anti-Manchu elements in the community.²¹ It was these political works of the Ch'ing Vice-Consul that had retarded the development of the Chinese revolutionary movement in Penang.

Early Chinese Revolutionary Activities in Penang

Early Revolutionary Contacts

Dr Sun Yat-sen, the leader of the Chinese revolutionary movement, might have heard of Penang and its thriving Chinese community in 1895 when he founded a Hsing Chung Hui branch in Hong Kong. This was possible because his co-leader in the branch, Yang Ch'ü-yun, had known something

about Penang where Yang's father was born.²² But Sun's knowledge of Penang and Penang Chinese must have been limited, for he had not yet visited any overseas Chinese community in Southeast Asia. When Sun visited Singapore in 1900 in an attempt to rescue his Japanese friends from jail,²³ he was brought closer to Penang. Apart from the success in rescuing his friends, his greatest achievement in this trip was the gathering of information about the Chinese in Singapore and Malaya through his friends, Dr Lim Boon Keng and Huang Nai-shang.²⁴ This, of course, included the information about the Chinese of Penang. At that time, Dr Sun might not have yet realized the potential of the port which was later destined to become one of the most important revolutionary bases in Southeast Asia.

Dr Sun did not come to Singapore and Malayan region again until 1905 after the founding of the T'ung Meng Hui in Tokyo. But during these years, seeds of revolution had already been sown by revolutionary refugees who took sanctuary in Singapore and Malaya. Soon after the failure of the Waichow Revolt at the end of 1900, some leaders fled China and took refuge in Singapore. They were Teng Tzu-yu, Huang Yao-t'ing and Sung Shao-tung.²⁵ Following their footsteps to Singapore was Yu Lieh, an important revolutionary leader. Yu was a close friend of Dr Sun and the principal leader of the Chung Ho T'ang, a front organization of Hsing Chung Hui.²⁶ Using Singapore as his base, Yu toured the Malay Peninsula extensively, and founded Chung Ho T'ang branches in Kuala Lumpur, Perak, Penang, Seremban and Johore.²⁷ Among the Chung Ho T'ang branches in Malaya, the Kuala Lumpur branch was most active. It publicly promoted anti-Manchuism and republicanism, and even hoisted the revolutionary flag of 'blue sky, white sun and red earth' in its building.²⁸

Very little was known about the Penang branch of the Chung Ho T'ang. It was probably founded between 1902 and 1905. The fact that it was unknown at the time implies that it was rather insignificant. This was probably due to the fact that Penang was a stronghold of pro-Ch'ing elements in the Malay Peninsula, and any open activities would be extremely difficult if not impossible.

The Founding of the T'ung Meng Hui Branch in Penang in 1906

As part of the expansion of the T'ung Meng Hui networks in Southeast Asia, the Penang branch of T'ung Meng Hui was founded at the end of 1906. Since its inception in 1905, the T'ung Meng Hui expanded rapidly in Southeast Asia where the Chinese appeared to be most receptive to revolutionary ideas. Dr Sun, who planned a series of revolts in the southwest

provinces of China, looked to the Southeast Asian Chinese for strong financial support. In addition, geographical proximity to southwest China made Southeast Asian Chinese communities excellent sanctuaries for revolutionary refugees should the revolts fail. With these aims in mind, Dr Sun arrived in Singapore in early April 1906 to found the first T'ung Meng Hui branch in the region, and then proceeded to the Malay Peninsula.²⁹ He set up another important branch in Kuala Lumpur in August 1906.³⁰ But he failed to establish a branch in Ipoh where he met a strong opposition from the supporters of the reformists.³¹ This forced him to return to Singapore.

Sun had to go back to Tokyo on some urgent matters, and his unfinished task of setting up more branches in the Malay Peninsula was given to his trusted supporters of the Singapore branch, Tan Chor-nam and Lim Ngee-soon. A letter of introduction from Dr Sun to a revolutionary supporter in Penang, Goh Say Eng, paved the way for the founding of the Penang branch.³² Revolutionary supporters in the island were contacted, and a meeting was called for the founding of the branch. Members were required to take an oath in the presence of Tan and Lim who represented Dr Sun Yat-sen. Goh Say Eng was elected unanimously as the chairman of the branch, and Ng Kim Keng, a wealthy merchant, was elected as his deputy.³³

The founding of the T'ung Meng Hui branch was a landmark in the history of the Chinese revolutionary movement in Penang. For the first time, the revolutionaries in the island had a modern organization which was integrated into a global network of the T'ung Meng Hui. It is notable that the majority of the early members of the Penang branch were southern Hokkiens. They included Goh Say Eng, Ng Kim Keng, Ch'en Hsin-cheng, Koh Leap Teng, Ch'iu Ming-ch'ang, Hsiung Yu-shan, Ch'iu Yu-mei and others.³⁴ This provides a contrast to the Kuala Lumpur branch which was dominated by Cantonese speakers.³⁵ The reasons for this Hokkien domination was partly the natural result of predominant Hokkien population of Penang; partly connected with the influence of Goh Say Eng and Ng Kim Keng; and partly due to the reaction against a pro-Ch'ing conservative group consisting mostly of Hakka merchants.³⁶ Whatever the reasons, the Hokkien dominance in the Penang branch provided additional cohesion for the revolutionaries.

The founding of the T'ung Meng Hui branch also introduced an element of social conflict in the local Chinese community. The conflict was no longer based on economic gains and dialect difference but on political belief.³⁷ This led to three way splits in the Chinese community between pro-Ch'ing conservatives, the revolutionaries, and the reformists.

Revolutionary Activities in Penang, 1907-1911

The Founding of the Penang Philomatic Society, December 1908

With the opposition of the Pro-Ch'ing conservatives and reformists, the revolutionaries had a difficult task in gaining political allegiance of the Penang Chinese. The Penang T'ung Meng Hui experienced threat and sabotage from its opponents. To facilitate its activities, an important front organization such as Penang Philomatic Society (Pin-ch'eng yueh-shu pao-she) was founded in December 1908.³⁸

The idea of founding the Society had gained the support of national revolutionary leaders. Wang Ching-wei had drafted the constitution for the Society, and Dr Sun Yat-sen had given his blessing as well as selecting an English name for the Society. The founding of the Society was preceded with a public meeting called at the Chinese Town Hall. The meeting was designed to give a public endorsement of the Society. As a revolutionary front organization, the Society was most concerned with its image and legitimacy in the community. This was revealed in the notice of the public meeting, in which it emphasized the approval of the meeting by the Chinese Protector in Penang.³⁹ An approval of the Protector of Chinese was considered to be a blessing of the British colonial authorities in the island, and helped to allay the suspicion of the general public towards the proposed Society.

The public meeting took place on the 6 December 1908 (13th day of 11th moon of Wu Shen year) at the Penang Chinese Town Hall, and a committee of 24 members was established, and the key office bearers were also elected on the spot. Obviously, the new Society was controlled by the revolutionaries. This can be seen from the fact that most committee members were the members of the T'ung Meng Hui branch in Penang. Goh Say Eng and Ng Kim Keng, the top leaders of the branch, were made the chairman and deputy chairman of the Society.⁴⁰ After the committee was formed, a bungalow at 94 Kan Chai Yuan owned by Ng Kim Keng was used as the venue of the Society, and the Society was inaugurated on 31 January 1909.⁴¹

As a Reading Club, the Penang Philomatic Society was to provide a cultural focus for the community, and a vital link between the T'ung Meng Hui and the general public. With its books, magazines, newspapers and other cultural activities such as public talks, the Society effectively disseminated revolutionary messages and inculcated revolutionary ideas into the minds of readers.⁴² The Penang Philomatic Society also acted as a recruitment centre for the Penang branch of the T'ung Meng Hui. Those readers who had

shown enthusiasm towards the revolution were encouraged to join the T'ung Meng Hui. This smooth recruitment process, which the T'ung Meng Hui would have had difficulty operating openly, was responsible for the growth of revolutionary strength in Penang. With the shift of the T'ung Meng Hui's Southeast Asian headquarters from Singapore to Penang in August 1910, the Penang Philomatic Society emerged to become the most important revolutionary front organizations in Singapore and Malaya.

Lifting the Status of the Penang T'ung Meng Hui Branch to the Headquarters of the T'ung Meng Hui in Southeast Asia, August 1910

When the Penang T'ung Meng Hui was growing in strength, the revolutionary activities in Singapore and Malaya ebbed. This was due to several factors: the disappointment over the defeats of revolts in the Southwest of China during 1907 and 1908 period; the financial problems of the revolutionaries due to economic recession in Malaya; and the internal strife within the T'ung Meng Hui.⁴³ The decline of revolutionary activities in Singapore and Malaya except those in Penang provided justification for the uplifting of status of the Penang branch. But the shifting of the T'ung Meng Hui Southeast Asian headquarters from Singapore to Penang was more than just for local reasons, it was also broadly connected with the changing circumstances of the Chinese revolutionary movement overseas. Dr Sun Yat-sen, dismayed by the factional struggle within his T'ung Meng Hui ranks, undertook a re-organization campaign in 1909. He succeeded in reforming the T'ung Meng Hui branches in North America,⁴⁴ and needed a stronghold in Southeast Asia where he could plan his next move of revolt. Penang, not only surpassed other branches in Singapore and Malaya in terms of revolutionary enthusiasm, but was also well-located in the Northern part of the Malay Peninsula, and equipped with modern communication facilities. It was the best alternative to Singapore as the location for the T'ung Meng Hui headquarters in the Southeast Asian region.⁴⁵

As Penang became the headquarters, Dr Sun began to re-organize the T'ung Meng Hui branches in the region, and to tighten his personal control over the party. A new statute was adopted, and a new standing committee was established. His two most trusted supporters, Goh Say Eng and Ng Kim Keng were appointed by Sun to take charge of the new headquarters. The new statute provided new life and vigour for the party. In its 20-point rules, it clearly defined the power and responsibility of each department. For instance, Articles 15 and 18 stipulated that both the Investigation and the Education Departments were mainly responsible for the checking of the

behaviour of the members and the study of new propaganda methods, and the seventh and eighth Articles stipulated that the heads of the seven departments should meet once a month to discuss all matters with which they were concerned, and that a consensus must be arrived among them before any instruction was given to the branches in Southeast Asia.⁴⁶ The new standing committee consisted of seven departments: the Executive, Finance, Secretariat, External Affairs, Education, Investigation and Social Function. Each department comprised five to thirteen persons.⁴⁷ A tightly-knit structure with clearly defined roles made the party machinery more effective and responsive.

Sun Yat-sen also re-organized the rank and file of the party. Realizing laxity and disorganization were the two main weaknesses of the Tung Meng Hui membership, Sun set about to organize them along military lines. He divided the members of the Penang branch into *P'ai* and *Le*. Each *P'ai* consisted of 8 members, and each *Le* consisted of 4 *P'ai*, including a head, with a total of 33 persons. The heads of the *P'ai* and *Le*, and the heads of various departments of the Standing Committee liaised closely. Thus, these organizational cells served as direct links between the top-level leaders and the ordinary members of the party. Instructions from the top were quickly transmitted to the rank and file, and conversely, the opinions and criticism from grassroots could reach the top.⁴⁸

Another step taken by Dr Sun Yat-sen was to re-register the membership of the party. His success in reforming the party in North America stimulated him to do the same in Southeast Asia. He had to weed out dissentients from the party structure, and discipline those waverers. Only those who firmly supported the revolutionary cause were re-registered, and they were required to swear and sign a new oath in front of Dr Sun as a token of acceptance of his leadership. Whenever Sun tried to justify his action of re-registration,⁴⁹ his desire of gaining an absolute control of the party is clear. He wanted to eliminate the influence of his opponents among the overseas Chinese in Southeast Asia, and to prepare the way for his plan for further revolts in South and Southwest China.

Publishing a Revolutionary Newspaper – the Kwong Wah Yit Poh, 20 December 1910

The idea of publishing the *Kwong Wah Yit Poh* can be traced back to 1907. The need for a revolutionary organ for the northern part of the Malay Peninsula was felt soon after the founding of the Tung Meng Hui branch in Penang. This need was further felt by the sacking of Ch'en Meng-t'ao from

the *Penang Sin Pao*, a conservative Chinese newspaper in the island. Ch'en was a editor of the paper, and had published some articles expressing his sympathy for the revolution. His sacking deprived the revolutionaries any outlet of expression in the media. Steps were therefore taken to prepare publishing a revolutionary newspaper. But due to the fall of tin prices in 1908, funds were not forthcoming. This was why the proposed *Kwong Wah Yit Poh* did not eventuate.⁵⁰ But the proposed newspaper was later published in Rangoon by the revolutionaries in Burma. By 1910, the Rangoon *Kwong Wah Yit Poh* ran into difficulty with the local government because of its radical stand. It was ordered to close down.⁵¹

The closing of the Rangoon *Kwong Wah Yit Poh* provided the revolutionaries in Penang an opportunity to realize an unfulfilled wish. The need for a revolutionary organ was especially felt after the Penang branch had been lifted to the status of the headquarters in Southeast Asia. With the arrival in Penang of the leader of the T'ung Meng Hui Rangoon branch, Chuang Yin-an, a committee consisting of six members was established to found the proposed newspaper. Funds were raised, and the acquisition of the old printing machine of the former *Chang Ch'uan Jih Pao* (*The Chang Chou and Ch'uan Chou Daily*) of Amoy which was left behind in a private home in Penang, facilitated the birth of the *Kwong Wah Yit Poh* in Penang on 20 December 1910.⁵²

The publishing of the *Kwong Wah Yit Poh* provided the revolutionaries in Penang with an effective organ to express their views and to promote revolutionary activities, it also provided them with an effective weapon to counter attack the *Penang Sin Pao*, an organ for the reformists and conservatives in Penang. It further strengthened the status of Penang as the T'ung Meng Hui headquarters in Southeast Asia. The headquarters would have been extremely difficult to coordinate activities in the region without an organ. The newspaper also provided temporary jobs for professional revolutionary writers who moved from one place to another to spread the revolutionary message.⁵³ The newspaper had also taken over the role of the *Chang Shing Yit Pao* as the main crusader against the Manchu government and the reformists in Southeast Asia.⁵⁴ *Chang Shing* which was located in Singapore, was forced to close down in 1910 due to financial difficulties.⁵⁵ The demise of the *Chang Shing* created a vacuum in revolutionary journalism in Southeast Asia, and the failure in filling this vacuum would result in the decline of revolutionary propaganda activities in the region. The appearance of the *Kwong Wah Yit Poh*, in this context, boosted the revolutionary propaganda movement in Southeast Asia.

Contributions of Penang Chinese to the 1911 Revolution

The Penang Conference, 13 November 1910

In a broad historical perspective, the Wuchang Uprising on the 10 October 1911, which led to the overthrow of the Manchus, was the culmination of a process of revolutionary activities starting in 1894. The Canton 3rd Moon 29th Uprising (27 April 1911) or known as the Huang Hua Kang Uprising, was the major revolt which had prepared the ground for the Wuchang Uprising. The Penang Conference which had directly led to the Canton 3rd Moon 29th Uprising, placed the Penang Chinese in the limelight of the Chinese revolution. The Conference was called at Dr Sun Yat-sen's initiative, and as a part of his reassertion over the T'ung Meng Hui, and as a crucial test of his leadership. The idea of planning a large-scale revolt in Canton again can be traced back to February 1910 after the defeat of the 'New Army Uprising in Canton'. Sun was at that time touring North America and reorganizing T'ung Meng Hui branches there. Later, his success in reforming the party in America and Southeast Asia gave him considerable confidence to plan another revolt in Canton with massive overseas Chinese support. On 13 October 1910, Sun gathered his trusted followers at his residence in Penang (No. 400 Dato Kramat) to thrash out the details. Those present were Huang Hsing, a leader of the Hunan-Hupei faction within the T'ung Meng Hui; Hu Han-min, an important leader of Sun's hardcore Cantonese faction, Chao Sheng, a leader of the New Army with immense military experience; Goh Say Eng and Ng Kim Keng, the two top leaders of the T'ung Meng Hui Southeast Asian headquarters in Penang, Hsiung Yu-shan and Lin Shih-an, another two representatives of the Penang headquarters. Representatives from outside the Penang area were Teng Tse-ju, the Chairman of the Kuala Pilah branch and a most faithful follower of Dr Sun;⁵⁶ Li Hau-cheong, a leader of the Ipoh branch; and Li I-hsia, a leader of the Pontianak branch of T'ung Meng Hui, Borneo.⁵⁷

The choice of the participants and the manner in which the Conference was called reflects Dr Sun Yat-sen's determination to carry out a major revolt in his own way. The Conference was called without the knowledge of the T'ung Meng Hui Headquarters in Tokyo, and the branches in Southeast Asian region which were controlled or influenced by his opponents, such as those in Singapore, Kuala Lumpur, Batavia, Semarang and Banka,⁵⁸ were not invited to send representatives.

Dr Sun chaired the Conference which was initially clouded with pessimism. Sun again demonstrated his skills of persuasion. He convinced the delegates that a large-scale revolt in Canton can be done and should

be done. He analysed that the main cause of previous failures was insufficient preparation, and emphasized that a careful plan would lead to a successful revolt in Canton.⁵⁹ He further gave his followers hope by stating that revolutionary spirit had already permeated the overseas Chinese communities, and they would succeed in the proposed attempt if they had the courage and right methods.⁶⁰

The Penang Conference adopted some important decisions. Canton was to be the target of the planned revolt; at least S\$100,000 was to be raised among overseas Chinese, the new army of Kwangtung Province would become the main supporting force for the uprising, and that 500 revolutionary cadres were to be recruited to become the vanguards of the uprising.

The success of the Penang Conference was a personal victory for Dr Sun Yat-sen. He again proved to his opponents that he had commanded considerable support among overseas Chinese, and he was capable of organizing a major revolt with the support of his followers alone.

The Response of Penang Chinese to the Wuchang Uprising, 10 October 1911–12 February 1912

In spite of the great zeal which was demonstrated in the fund-raising campaign for the Canton 3rd Moon 29th Uprising, the failure of the revolt came as a great shock to the revolutionaries in Penang, particularly to those who had cherished the greatest hope of success. The feeling was worse than a big loss in a gambling den. Many wept at the news of defeat.⁶¹ A gathering was held at the T'ung Meng Hui Southeast Asian headquarters in Penang to mourn the revolutionary martyrs. At the meeting, the revolutionary refugees who had a narrow escape in the abortive uprising presented a report explaining why the revolt failed, and their pledges for further revolutionary action gave little comfort to those who were present and did little to dispel the feeling of despair.⁶² The news of the death of Chao Sheng, a main figure in the uprising and the best military brain of the party, further demoralized the Penang revolutionaries.⁶³ Thus the period between the defeat of the Canton 3rd Moon 29th Uprising in April and the Wuchang Uprising in October 1911 was the low ebb of the revolutionary movement in the Malay Peninsula.

The news of the outbreak of the Wuchang Uprising was received with surprise and excitement by the revolutionaries in Penang. Most of them did not expect a major revolt to occur so soon following the defeat of the Canton Uprising. Although the Wuchang Uprising was planned and executed by T'ung Meng Hui dissentients and their associates, this did not prevent the

supporters of Dr Sun and Penang Chinese from supporting the revolt. The prospect of success of the revolt aroused considerable enthusiasm among the Penang revolutionaries. As soon as the Tung Meng Hui Southeast Asian headquarters in Penang had received telegrams from Wuchang and Shanghai on 11 October 1911,⁶⁴ a sum of S\$20,000 was immediately cabled to Shanghai to meet the urgent needs. Stimulated by the favourable revolutionary situation which had developed in China, all departments of the Southeast Asian headquarters in Penang worked very hard for the revolution. Some leaders at the headquarters were said to have given up their business temporarily in order to devote themselves wholeheartedly to the cause from dawn till dusk.⁶⁵ All the cables and telegrams received by the headquarters were immediately transmitted to the branches throughout Southeast Asia. Exciting news of victories of the revolutionary armies were made public by circulars and newspapers and the programmes for raising funds were planned and carried out by the headquarters and other important branches.

The sustained victories of the revolutionary forces in China boosted the revolutionary activities in Singapore and Malaya. It united the fragmented camp and even won over some reformists and pro-Ch'ing conservatives. It re-activated many Tung Meng Hui branches in Singapore and Malaya which were affected by anti-Sun dissentients. The new revolutionary situation in China provided excellent opportunities for the revolutionaries in Singapore and Malaya to broaden their base for support. Patriotism was greatly aroused among Chinese in Singapore and Malaya, and it was carefully channelled towards anti-Manchus, and the support for the revolutionary armies in China. At this crucial juncture, money was badly needed to support the on-going revolution. Large-scale fund raising campaigns were mounted in Ipoh, Singapore and Penang. Public meetings were called on 2 and 10 November respectively in Ipoh and Singapore for the purpose of fund-raising, and well-organized committees were formed to mobilize support in the Chinese communities.⁶⁶ In Penang, a similar public meeting was called by the leaders of the Southeast Asian headquarters at the Chinese Town Hall (P'ing Chang Kung Kuan) on 11 November. More than 1,000 people from all walks of life attended the meeting. The organizers appealed strongly for donations, and a committee of 103 members comprising representatives of every street in Penang was set up to organize a house-to-house collection.⁶⁷ Through this mechanism, the revolutionaries in Penang had successfully created a situation under which the ordinary Chinese in the island were obliged to support the revolution financially.

Financial Contribution of the Penang Chinese to the 1911 Revolution

Since the founding of the T'ung Meng Hui branch in Penang at the end of 1906, the revolutionaries had continuously raised funds to support the running of the branch and its front organizations, including the Penang Philomatic Society and the Kwong Wah Yit Poh. The maintenance for revolutionary refugees and visiting leaders imposed a heavy burden on local revolutionaries. For instance, when Dr Sun Yat-sen spent a few months in Penang in 1910 for the re-organization of the party and the planning of the Canton revolt, the expenses for Dr Sun and his family (wife and two daughters) mounted to S\$120 to S\$130 a month. This burden was shared by 11 members of the branch.⁶⁸ In addition to maintenance, the Penang Chinese revolutionaries, like revolutionaries in other parts of Singapore and Malaya, supported various uprisings organized by the T'ung Meng Hui during 1906–1909 period. The money spent on revolutionary activities and uprisings before 1910 must have amounted to tens of thousands of dollars.

The financial burden on the Chinese revolutionaries in Penang must have increased substantially after the Penang branch of the T'ung Meng Hui had been lifted to the status of the headquarters in Southeast Asia in August 1910, for it had to initiate and coordinate activities in branches throughout the region. The hosting of the Penang Conference involved some cost. For the actual financial contribution to the Canton revolt itself, the Chinese in Penang had donated a sum of S\$11,500 which was about a quarter of the total amount contributed by the Chinese in Singapore and Malaya (S\$47,633).⁶⁹ Soon after the outbreak of the Wuchang Uprising, a sum of S\$20,000 was sent to Shanghai to support the unstable revolutionary government by the Penang T'ung Meng Hui Southeast Asian Headquarters.⁷⁰ From the outbreak of the Wuchang Uprising on 10 October 1911 till the abdication of the Manchu Emperor on 12 February 1912, an estimated sum of S\$870,000 was contributed by the Chinese in Singapore and Malaya,⁷¹ and most of this money came from Singapore, Selangor, Perak and Penang.⁷² In this sense, the Penang Chinese had contributed quite substantially to financing of the 1911 Revolution.

Endnotes

- * First published in the *Journal of the South Seas Society*, Vol. 41, Pts. 1 & 2 (South Seas Society, 1986), pp. 63–78.
- 1. See 'Notices of Penang', in *Journal of the Indian Archipelago and Eastern Asia*, Vol. 5 (1851), p. 9.

2. See Table IV, 'Return of the Chinese Population, Showing the Different Tribes to Which They Belong - Penang', in 'Census of Penang, Province Wellesley and Dindings 1881', Straits Settlements Legislative Council Proceedings 1881, Appendix No. 29A.
3. See Table IV, 'Return of the Chinese Population, Showing the Different Tribes to Which They Belong - Province Wellesley', in 'Census of Penang, Province Wellesley and Dindings 1881', *ibid.*
4. In Perak, the Chinese population in 1879 only numbered to 20,373. See The Perak Government Gazette, 1890, p. 723; in 1881, Malacca had a Chinese population of 19,741. See 'Census of Malacca 1881', in Straits Settlements Legislative Council Proceedings 1881, Appendix No. 29B; in 1883, the total Chinese population in Selangor was estimated at 29,155. See 'Annual Financial Report on the State of Selangor for the year 1883', in Straits Settlements Legislative Council Proceedings 1884, Appendix No. 9.
5. On the establishment of the Ch'ing consulate in Singapore in 1877, see Wen Chung-chi, 'The Nineteenth-Century Imperial Chinese Consulate in the Straits Settlements' (an unpublished M.A. thesis, University of Singapore, 1964).
6. For a discussion of the establishment of the Singapore Ch'ing consulate as the first of its kind throughout all overseas Chinese communities, see Yen Ching-hwang, *Coolies and Mandarins: China's Protection of Overseas Chinese during the Late Ch'ing Period* (Singapore University Press, 1985), pp. 140-44.
7. See Chang Chih-tung, 'Memorial to the Court Relating to the Proposed Protection to Overseas Chinese after the Fact-finding Mission Tour to Southeast Asia Dated 24th day of 10th moon of 13th year of Kuang-hsu (8 December 1887)' in Chang Chih-tung, Chang Wen-hsiang kung ch'uan-chi, Vol. 23, tsou-i, pp. 9a-9b.
8. The first Chinese Vice-Consul, Chang Pi-shih, was appointed by Hsueh Fu-ch'eng in March 1893. See Hsueh Fu-ch'eng, 'Despatch to the Tsungli Yamen Relating to the Appointment of the Vice-Consul in Penang dated 20th day of 1st moon of 19th year of Kuang-hsu (8th March, 1893), in Hsueh Fu-ch'eng, Ch'u-shih kung-tu, tsou-shu (Correspondence of My Diplomatic Mission to England and My Memorials to the Court) (Taipei, n.d.), Vol. 2, tz'u-wen, pp. 25a-25b.
9. For a discussion of Ch'ing consular expansion in overseas Chinese communities, see Yen Ching-hwang, *Coolies and Mandarins*, pp. 135-203.
10. On Hsueh Fu-ch'eng's role in the change of Ch'ing traditional policy towards overseas Chinese in 1893, see *ibid.*, pp. 253-66.
11. *Ibid.*, p. 155.
12. See Ting's report to the Tsungli Yamen quoted in Hsueh Fu-ch'eng's correspondence with the Yamen dated 25th day of 8th moon of 16th year of Kuang-hsu (8 October 1890), in Hsueh Fu-ch'eng, Ch'u-shih kung-tu, Vol. 1, pp. 3a-5b.
13. See F.O.17/1104, p. 77; Hsueh Fu-ch'eng, Despatch to the Tsungli Yamen and the Commissioner of Northern Ports relating to the British approval of establishment of additional consulates dated 1st day of 11th moon of 16th year of Kuang-hsu (12 December 1890), in Hsueh Fu-ch'eng, Ch'u-shih kung-tu, Vol. 1, tz'u-wen, pp. 11a-12a.
14. See 'Tsungli Yamen Archives', clean file, 'The Mission of Li Ching-fang, 2nd year of Hsuan-t'ung (1910)'.

15. The Penang Vice-Consulate was the first Chinese Vice-Consulate in Southeast Asia. Of course, the first Chinese Consulate was established in Singapore in 1877. See Yen Ching-hwang, *Coolies and Mandarins*, pp. 140-44, 168-203.
16. For the abolition of traditional prohibitive emigration policy and the introduction of a new one, see Yen Ching-hwang, *Coolies and Mandarins*, Chapter 6.
17. Chinese in Penang and nearby areas can obtain visas from the Chinese Vice-Consulate in Penang. See the notice issued by the Consul-General Huang Tsun-hsien dated 1st day of fourth moon of twentieth year of Kuang-hsu (5 May 1894), published in *Sing Po*, 2 June 1894, p. 4.
18. See for instance, in 1903, the Penang Chinese together with the Chinese in Singapore and Luzon petitioned the Ch'ing government for protection of returned Chinese merchants to Fukien Province. The petition must have gone through the Penang Vice-Consulate, the Consulate-General in Singapore, the London Chinese Legation, and then to the Ministry of Commerce in Peking. See Kuang-hsu ch'ao tung-hua lu (The Tung-hua Records of Kuang-hsu Reign) (compiled by Chu Shou-p'eng) (Peking, 1958), Vol. 5, p. 129.
19. See Yen Ching-hwang, *Coolies and Mandarins*, pp. 170-71.
20. See 'Report of Liang T'ing-fang, the Acting Chinese Vice-Consul in Penang, to the Minister of Commerce dated 25th day of 10th moon of 30th year of Kuang-hsu (1 December 1904)', in 'Ch'ing-ch'ao Pin-lang-yu ling-shih-kuan tang-an' (The Penang Chinese Vice Consulate Archives) (manuscript), Vol. 1, pp. 13-31.
21. In December 1908, the Chinese Vice-Consul in Penang received instruction from the Chinese minister in London to spy and report the activities of the revolutionaries and reformists in Penang. See 'The Despatch of Li Ching-fang to Tai Ch'un-yung (Hsin-jan) dated 2nd day of 12th moon of 34th year of Kuang-hsu (24 December 1908)', quoted in K'uang Kuo-hsiang, *Pin-ch'eng san-chi*, p. 131.
22. See Feng Tzu-yu, *Ko-ming i-shih* (Taipei, 1965), Vol. 5, pp. 8-15.
23. In 1900, the Hsing Chung Hui planned a revolt in South China. Dr Sun's Japanese friend Miyazaki Torazo proposed to have an alliance with the reformists led by K'ang Yu-wei. Miyazaki promised to approach K'ang in Singapore. Miyazaki and his friends Kiyofuji and Uchida arrived in Singapore in June 1900. Contact was extended to K'ang for the proposed alliance. But K'ang suspected these Japanese were sent by the Manchu government for his assassination and had them arrested by the Government of the Straits Settlements. See Pai-lang t'ao-t'ien (Miyazaki Torazo), *San-shih san-nien lo-hua meng* (Taipei, 1952), pp. 68-78; 'J.A. Swettenham to Chamberlain dated 26 July 1900', in CO 273/257; *Thien Nan Shin Pao*, 7 September 1900.
24. See Yen Ching-hwang, *The Overseas Chinese and the 1911 Revolution: With Special Reference to Singapore and Malaya* (Oxford University Press: Kuala Lumpur, 1976), p. 40.
25. See Feng Tzu-yu, *Ko-ming i-shih*, Vol. 3, p. 59; Kuei Yun-chang, 'Teng Tzu-yu chuan', in *Ko-ming hsien-lieh hsien-chin chuan* (Biographies of Revolutionary Pioneers and Martyrs) (Taipei, 1965), pp. 625-26.
26. See Feng Tzu-yu, *Hua-ch'ao ko-ming k'ai-kuo shih* (Taipei, 1953), pp. 44-5.
27. See Hsien Chiang, *Yu Lieh shih-lieh* (Hong Kong, 1951), pp. 15-6.

28. See Ch'an Chan-mooi, 'Tu Nan Hsien-sheng shih-lueh' (A Short Biography of Mr Too Nam), in Ch'an Chan-mooi (ed.), *Tu Nan hsien-sheng ai-ssu lu* (Obituaries on Mr Too Nam) (Kuala Lumpur, 1940), p. 9; Feng Tzu-yu, *Hua-ch'iao ko-ming k'ai-kuo shih*, p. 73.
29. For details of the founding of the Singapore Tung Meng Hui and the discrepancy about the founding date, see Yen Ching-hwang, *The Overseas Chinese and the 1911 Revolution*, pp. 91-4, 129-30.
30. *Ibid.*, pp. 96-8.
31. See Teo Eng-hock, *Nanyang yu ch'uang-li min-kuo* (Nanyang and the Founding of the Chinese Republic) (Shanghai, 1933), pp. 15-6.
32. See Wu Tee-jen, 'Tao-nien hui-chia shu-nan te Wu Shih-yung lao tung-chih' (In Memory of an Old Comrade - Goh Say Eng) (manuscript), p. 3.
33. See Feng Tzu-yu, *Hua-ch'iao ko-ming k'ai-kuo shih*, p. 87.
34. Goh Say Eng, Ch'iu Ming-ch'ang and Koh Leap Teng were from H'ai Ch'eng district of Chang Chow prefecture; Ng Kim Keng from Tung An district, and Ch'en Hsin-cheng from Amoy. See Cheng Yung-mei, 'Ping-chang hsien-hsien lich-chuan' (Biographies of the Leaders of the Penang Chinese Town Hall), in Liu Wen-chu & Tan Kim Hong (eds.), *Pin-chou hua-jen ta-hui-t'ang ch'ing-chu ch'eng-li i-pai chou-nien hsin-hsa lo-ch'eng k'ai-mu chi-nien t'e-k'an* (Commemorative Publication of Centenary Celebrations and Inauguration of New Building of the Penang Chinese Town Hall) (Penang, 1983), pp. 175, 179; Yen Ching-hwang, *The Overseas Chinese and the 1911 Revolution*, p. 271; Wu Tee-jen, 'A Short Biographical Note on Ch'en Hsin-cheng', in Ch'en Hsin-cheng, 'Hua-ch'iao ko-ming hsiao-shih' (manuscript) (copied by Wu Tee-jen, and kept by Yen Ching-hwang), Feng Tzu-yu, *Hua-ch'iao ko-ming k'ai-kuo shih*, p. 87.
35. For a discussion of Cantonese domination of the Tung Meng Hui branch in Kuala Lumpur, see Yen Ching-hwang, *The Overseas Chinese and the 1911 Revolution*, p. 98.
36. The Pro-Ch'ing group was led by Chang Pi-shih, and members of the group included Hsieh Yung-kuang, Liang Pi-ju, and Tye Kee Yoon. Both Chang Pi-shih and Tye Kee Yoon were Hakka of Ta P'u district, while Hsieh Yung-kuang and Liang Pi-ju were Hakka of Chia Ying prefecture. All of them had been the Ch'ing Vice-Consul of Penang. See Yen Ching-hwang, *The Overseas Chinese and the 1911 Revolution*, pp. 272-73; K'uang Kuo-hsiang, *Pin-ch'eng san-chi* (Anecdotal History of Penang) (Hong Kong, 1958), pp. 90-107.
37. For a discussion of social conflict in the Chinese community in Penang, particularly relating to the Penang Riot of 1867, see Yen Ching-hwang, *A Social History of the Chinese in Singapore and Malaya, 1800-1911* (Oxford University Press: Singapore and New York, 1986) pp. 198-202.
38. See Yang Han-hsiang, 'Chung-hua min-kuo k'ai-kuo ch'ien-hou chih pen-she ko-ming shih', in Yang Han-hsiang (ed.), *Pin-ch'eng yueh-shu pao-she nien-ssu chou-nien chi-nien t'e-k'an* (The Souvenir of the 24th Anniversary of the Penang Philomatic Society) (Penang, n.d.), p. 8.
39. See the public notice dated 11th day of 11th moon of Wu Shen year (4 December, 1908), reproduced in Yang Han-hsiang (ed.), *Pin-ch'eng yueh-shu pao-she nien-ssu chou-nien chi-nien t'e-k'an*, pp. 7-8.

40. *Ibid.*, p. 8.
41. The Souvenir Magazine of the 24th Anniversary of the Penang Philomatic Society made an error by stating the inauguration day as the 10th day of 1st moon of Wu Shen year. It should be the 10th day of 1st moon of the Chi Yu year. Presumably the editor of the magazine confused this because he overlooked it. *Ibid.*
42. For a discussion of the functions of revolutionary Reading Clubs in Singapore and Malaya, see Yen Ching-hwang, *The Overseas Chinese and the 1911 Revolution*, pp. 113–14.
43. *Ibid.*, p. 220.
44. For Sun's re-organization campaign in the United States, see Sun's correspondence with various supporters from October 1909 to January 1910, in *Kuo-fu ch'uan-shu* (Collected Works of Dr Sun Yat-sen) (edited by Chang Ch'i-yun) (Taipei, 1960), pp. 419–24; Feng Tzu-yu, *Hua-ch'iao ko-ming k'ai-kuo shih*, pp. 34–8, 62–3, 67–8; Mei Ch'iao-lin & Li I-an (eds.), 'K'ai-kuo ch'ien Mei-chou hua-ch'iao ko-ming shih-lueh' (A Concise History of the American Chinese Involvement in the Revolution before the Founding of the Republic (the original copy kept in the Kuomintang Archives, Taipei, Taiwan), also published in the *Chung-hua min-kuo k'ai-kuo ch'ien wu-shih nien wen-hsien*, Vol. 1, pt. 12 (Taipei, 1963), pp. 442–43.
45. For a more detailed discussion of the circumstances which led to the upgrading of the Penang branch as the Tung Meng Hui Headquarters in Southeast Asia, see Yen Ching-hwang, *The Overseas Chinese and the 1911 Revolution*, pp. 228–29.
46. See the new statute of the Tung Meng Hui Southeast Asian headquarters in Penang, reproduced in Yang Han-hsiang, 'Chung-hua min-kuo k'ai-kuo ch'ien-hou chih pen-she ko-ming shih' (The Revolutionary History of the Penang Philomatic Society before and after the Founding of the Republic), in Yang Han-hsiang (ed.), *Pin-ch'eng yueh-shu pao-she nien-ssu chou-nien chi-nien t'e-k'an* (Souvenir Magazine of the 24th Anniversary Celebration of the Penang Philomatic Society) (Penang, n.d.), p. 22.
47. *Ibid.*
48. See Yen Ching-hwang, *The Overseas Chinese and the 1911 Revolution*, p. 230.
49. See 'Letter from Dr. Sun Yat-sen to Teng Tse-ju dated 24 August, 1910', in Teng Tse-ju (ed.), *Sun Chung-shan hsien-sheng nien-nien lai shou-cha* (Correspondence of Dr Sun Yat-sen for the Last Twenty Years) (Canton, 1927), Vol. 2, pp. 46–7; see also *Kuo-fu ch'uan-shu*, p. 428.
50. See Yang Han-hsiang, *op. cit.*, p. 19.
51. See Hsu Shih-yun, 'Mien-tien chung-kuo t'ung-meng-hui k'ai-kuo ko-ming shih' (The Revolutionary History of the Tung Meng Hui in Burma), in *Chung-hua min-kuo k'ai-kuo wu-shih-nien wen-hsien*, Vol. 1, pt. 12, pp. 690–91.
52. See Hsu Yun-ts'iao, 'Chin-hsi sheng-tien hua pao-t'an ch'ang-shuang: wu-shih nien-lai te Ma-lai-ya hua-wen pao-yeh' (Fifth Years of the Chinese Newspapers in Malaya), in Liu Wen-chu (ed.), *Che Pan-ke shih-chi: Kuang-hua jih-pao chin-hsi chi-nien tseng-k'an* (This Half Century: The Supplementary Souvenir Magazine of the Golden Jubilee Celebrating of the Kwong Wah Yit Poh) (Penang, 1960), p. 175; Yang Han-hsiang, *op. cit.*, p. 20.

53. See for instance, professional revolutionary writers such as T'ien T'ung, Wang Fu, Lui T'ieh-yai were moving around in overseas Chinese communities. T'ien worked in the *People's Tribune* (*Min Pao*) and founded the *Fu Pao* in Tokyo, and he worked in the *Chong Shing Yit Pao* in Singapore and the *Ssu Pin Jih Pao* in Surabaya. Wang Fu worked as a editor of the *Chong Shing Yit Pao* in Singapore and the *Hua Hsien Jih Pao* in Thailand. Lui T'ieh-yai worked in *Fu Pao* in Tokyo and the *Kwong Wah Yit Poh* in Penang. See Feng Tzu-yu, *ko-ming i-shih* (*Reminiscences of the Revolution*) (Taipei, 1965), Vol. 2, pp. 159-70; Feng Tzu-yu, *Hua-ch'iao ko-ming k'ai-kuo shih*, pp. 52, 94; Liu Wen-chu (ed.), *Che pan-ke shih-chi: Kuang-hua jih-pao chin-hsi chi-nien tseng-k'an*, p. 283, the photograph.
54. For details of *Chong Shing Yit Pao's* attacks on the Manchu Government and reformists, see Yen Chin-hwang, *The Overseas Chinese and the 1911 Revolution*, pp. 102-06, 187-201.
55. See Chui Kwei-chiang, 'Chung-hsing jih-pao: Hsin-chia-po t'ung-meng-hui te h'ou-she' (*Chong Shing Yit Pao: The Revolutionary Organ of the Tung Meng Hui in Singapore*) (paper presented to the International Conference on the 'Nanyang Chinese and the 1911 Revolution' held in Taipei, 17-19 February 1986), p. 19.
56. Teng, throughout his life, proved to be one of the most faithful followers of Dr Sun Yat-sen. See Tan Hui-ch'uan, 'A Brief Biography of Teng Tse-ju', in *Ko-ming hsien-chieh hsien-chin chuan* (*Biographies of Revolutionary Pioneers and Martyrs*) (Taipei, 1965), pp. 811-12; Teng Tse-ju, *Chung-kuo kuo-ming-tang erh-shih nien shih-chi* (*Twenty Years' Historical Sketches of the Kuomintang*) (Taipei, 1948), pp. 1-2; Lu Fang-shang, 'Teng Tse-ju yu hsin-h'ai ko-ming' (Teng Tse-ju and the 1911 Revolution), (paper presented to the International Conference on 'Nanyang Chinese and the 1911 Revolution' held in Taipei, 17-19 February 1986), pp. 2-6.
57. See Tsou Lu, *Kuang-chou san-yueh nien-chiu ko-ming shih* (*A History of the Canton 3rd Moon 29th Uprising*) (Hong Kong, 1939), p. 3; Yang Han-hsiang, 'Chung-hua min-kuo k'ai-kuo ch'ien-h'ou chih pen-she ko-ming shih', *op. cit.*, pp. 32-3.
58. For the influence of Sun's opponents over the branches of Tung Meng Hui in Southeast Asia, see Yen Ching-hwang, *The Overseas Chinese and the 1911 Revolution*, pp. 212-19.
59. See 'The Speech of Dr Sun Yat-sen to the Comrades in Penang', in *Ko-fu ch'uan-shu*, p. 482.
60. *Ibid.*
61. See Teh Lay-seng (Cheng Lo-sheng), 'Hua-ch'iao ko-ming chih ch'ien-yin hou-ko' (The Causes and Consequences of the Overseas Chinese involvement in the Chinese Revolution), in Huang Ching-wan (ed.), *Nan-yang p'i-li hua-ch'iao ko-ming shih-chi* (*Revolutionary Records of the Overseas Chinese in Southeast Asia*) (Shanghai, 1933), p. 5.
62. Yang Han-hsiang, 'Chung-hua min-kuo k'ai-kuo ch'ien-hou chih pen-she ko-ming shih', p. 61.
63. *Ibid.*
64. The cable from Shanghai was sent by Ch'en Ch'i-mei who urged for urgent financial help. See Yang Han-hsiang, *op. cit.*, p. 62; Ch'en Hsin-cheng, 'Hua-ch'iao ko-ming hsiao-shih' (*A Short History of Overseas Chinese and the Revolution*) manuscript kept by the

- author), p. 32; Ch'en Hsin-cheng, 'Hua-ch'iao ko-ming shih' (A History of Overseas Chinese and the Revolution), in *Ch'en Hsin-cheng i-chi* (Works of Ch'en Hsin-cheng) (copy kept in the Kuomintang Archives in Taipei, Taiwan), Vol. 2, pp. 15-6.
65. Yang Han-hsiang, *op. cit.*, p. 62.
66. In the public meeting in Ipoh, about 400 people attended the function. There was an estimated 1,000 participants for the Singapore public meeting. See *Nam Kew Poo*, 7 November 1911, p. 9, 13 November 1911, p. 5.
67. See *Penang Sin Pao*, 13 November 1911, p. 3, 14 November 1911, p. 3.
68. See Ch'en Hsin-cheng, 'Hua-ch'iao ko-ming hsiao-shih' (manuscript), p. 22.
69. See Yen Ching-hwang, *The Overseas Chinese and the 1911 Revolution*, p. 312.
70. See Liu Wei-ming and Wang Ch'i-yu (eds.), *Pin-ch'eng yueh-shu pao-she san-shih chou-nien ch-nien t'e-k'an* (The Souvenir of the 30th Anniversary of the Penang Philomatic Society) (Penang, 1938), p. 29.
71. See Yen Ching-hwang, *op. cit.*, p. 314, Table 7.
72. *Ibid.*, p. 13.

CHAPTER 12

The Response of the Chinese in Singapore and Malaya to the Tsinan Incident, 1928*

Overseas Chinese Nationalism

The deepening crisis in China since 1915 as the result of growing pressure from Japanese imperialism aroused outcry among Chinese nationalists at home and abroad. The Chinese in Singapore and Malaya who were at the forefront of nationalist movements on various historical occasions,¹ once again mobilized themselves in support of China against Japanese invasion in Shantung in the famous Tsinan incident occurred in May 1928.

The active response of the Chinese on Singapore and Malaya to the Tsinan incident, in retrospect, was mainly the result of the continuous upsurge of overseas Chinese nationalism and the growing impatience of the overseas Chinese nationalists.

The overseas Chinese nationalism in Singapore and Malaya arose in early 1880,² and reached its climax around 1911. Tens of thousands of dollars were raised to support the revolutionary activities in China, and thousands of Chinese returned to China to fight against the Manchus during the post-Wuchang period.³ As China after 1915 came under the increased pressure of Japanese imperialism, the Chinese in Singapore and Malaya expressed their intense nationalistic feelings in the form of anti-Japanism. In 1915, in reacting against the Japanese Twenty-One Demands which would have effectively reduced China to a Japanese colony, they launched a boycott movement which greatly damaged the Japanese trade in the Straits Settlements and created inconvenience for local Japanese nationals.⁴ The anti-Japanese feeling reached a new height in 1919 following the famous May Fourth

Movement. Reacting against Japanese action over the control of Shantung, the Chinese in Singapore and Malaya demonstrated their hatred for Japanese by staging mass demonstrations, boycotting Japanese goods, ransacking Japanese shops, factories and violence against Japanese nationals.⁵ The upsurge of overseas Chinese nationalism continued into 1920s and beyond, and reached another climax in the Tsinan Incident in 1928.

The birth of the Chinese Republic in early 1912 heralded a new era of a close relationship between overseas Chinese and China. This was especially true to the Chinese in Singapore and Malaya. The active revolutionary activities in the region prior to the 1911 Revolution enabled the local Chinese to establish close personal relationships with many revolutionary leaders such as Dr Sun Yat-sen, Huang Hsing, Wang Ching-wei and Hu Han-min.⁶ This gave them special emotional attachment to China. At the same time, an overseas Chinese representative from Southeast Asia was elected to sit in the Provisional National Parliament in Nanking at the beginning of 1912, and for the first time the voice of overseas Chinese was heard in a national policy-making body.⁷ This gave overseas Chinese nationalists a strong sense of belonging and a feeling of involvement in the destiny of the new Republic. In a mood of joy, the abdication of the Manchu emperor on the 12 February 1912 was jubilantly celebrated with a high hope that China would regain its greatness once the Republican government was installed and working. But this high hope was shattered by the failure of the Second Revolution in 1913, the ascendancy of Yuan Shih-k'ai's dictatorship,⁸ and the degeneration of China into warlord rule.⁹ In addition to this general feeling of despair over the events in China, the overseas Chinese nationalists suffered further frustration in Singapore and Malaya. Their main organization – Kuomintang – was banned in 1925, their activities curtailed, and their expressions of nationalistic feelings were under close watch.¹⁰

The Shantung Disaster Relief Fund-raising Movement

The news of Tsinan massacre came like a bolt of thunder, which reached Singapore in early May 1928. Some of the impatient overseas Chinese nationalists reacted swiftly as an expression of outrage. Anti-Japanese leaflets were widely distributed calling upon Chinese to boycott Japanese goods.¹¹ Some took the issue to the streets by making public speeches agitating for radical actions against the Japanese.¹² The anti-Japanese feelings were running high which could explode into violence and riots. Perceiving the danger of the situation, the Chinese Consul-General in Singapore issued a press statement calling upon Chinese not to resort to violence, but to express

their indignation by peaceful means.¹³ The message of the Consul-General helped change the direction of the response of the Chinese in Singapore and Malaya. Any violence against Japanese nationals or rioting in the streets would invite the intervention of the local government, or even bring about confrontation between the Chinese community and the British colonial authorities. Alternatively, the movement could be positively guided into a concerted effort of raising funds for the relief of victims in China. The majority of the impatient overseas Chinese nationalists seem to have been convinced by the view of the Consul-General, and were to launch a large-scale fund-raising movement in Singapore and Malaya.

At the time when the Tsinan incident occurred in May 1928, the Chinese in Singapore and Malaya had already accumulated considerable experience in fund-raising. A successful fund-raising movement in response to the Wuchang Uprising in early 1912 provided useful experience in organization and strategy.¹⁴ The continuity of that experience was hinged upon persons such as Tan Kah Kee, the acknowledged leader of the Shantung Disaster Relief Fund-Raising movement.

The main stream of the overseas Chinese nationalists, represented by the Tan Kah Kee group moved quickly to act. On the 10 May, in the name of Ee Ho Hean Club, Tan Kah Kee and his supporters sent out notices to all Chinese associations inviting them to attend a meeting on 17 May at the Chinese Chamber of Commerce.¹⁵

The meeting was a great success. It was packed with more than 1,000 people.¹⁶ More importantly, about 100 organizations representing a cross-section of dialects, kinship groups, occupations and schools attended the gathering.¹⁷ Tan Kah Kee was unanimously elected Chairman. His speech was firm and emphatic. His accusation of Japanese barbaric action in Shantung and his analysis of what could be done in Singapore under political constraint from the local government gained tremendous support. A peaceful fund-raising for the relief of the Tsinan victims was the consensus. Towards the end of his speech, he sounded a warning of disunity which would undermine the solidarity of the proposed movement. The meeting officially established an organization with the name of Singapore Shantung Disaster Relief Fund-Raising Society, and confirmed Tan Kah Kee's leadership. A deputy chairman and 32 executives were also elected.¹⁸

The main achievement of the meeting was the creation of a structure which was capable of organizing a large-scale fund-raising movement. The election of the executives based on *pang* affiliation,¹⁹ guaranteed certain solidarity among different dialect groups. With a sound structure and a united community behind it, the fund-raising movement had a flying start.

The movement quickly gained momentum. Continuous reports about Japanese atrocities and the suffering of Chinese victims aroused hatred for the Japanese and sympathy for the sufferers. Capturing the mood of the general public, the Singapore Shantung Disaster Relief Fund-Raising Society went all out to collect donations. Appeals for generous donations constantly appeared in the Chinese newspapers,²⁰ leaflets and handbills were widely distributed. Donations also took a variety of forms: straight donations at meetings or public rallies, fixed donations by deducting from monthly salaries,²¹ extra levy on export and import commodities such as rubber, tin, pineapples, rice and sugar, etc.,²² donation of food by hawkers,²³ and donation of services by prostitutes.²⁴ The money collected from all walks of life was remitted to the Nanking Government for the relief of the Tsinan victims.

Judging from the amount of money raised, the Shantung Disaster Relief Fund-Raising movement was a great success. In less than a year, about 1.3 million Straits dollars had been raised, and the bulk of it had been remitted to China.²⁵ Given the fact that the income of a teacher was about \$60 a month,²⁶ the amount raised was the result of a colossal effort.

The key to the success of the fund-raising movement was the creation of a strong collective leadership and a centralized but broadly-based structure. This success depended very much on the foresight, experience and social skill of the top leaders like Tan Kah Kee. Tan and his close associates skilfully used Ee Ho Hean to lead other organizations. Ee Ho Hean was a richman's club which had cut across dialect lines.²⁷ Tan Kah Kee's use of the Ee Ho Hean rather than the Hokkien Association was a shrewd move to avoid any jealousy or hostility from other dialect groups. With the initiatives taken by the Ee Ho Hean, 101 associations were prepared to be the sponsors for the general meeting held on the 17 May at the Chinese Chamber of Commerce. It is noteworthy that 17 out of the 101 sponsors were dialect organizations in Singapore ranging from Hokkien, Cantonese, Teochew to Hakka.²⁸ But the powerful Hokkien Association was not listed as a sponsor. The reason for the absence of the Hokkien Association in the sponsorship can be interpreted as a deliberate move by Tan Kah Kee and other Hokkien leaders to show that they had no intention of controlling the running of the entire fund-raising movement.

The proportional representation in the election of executives to the Singapore Shantung Disaster Relief Fund-Raising Society confirmed a formula of distribution of community power acceptable to all dialect groups. It helped alleviate the fear of Hokkien monopoly of the leadership, and the suspicion of using the proposed movement for the benefit of a particular dialect group. As *pang* identity and loyalty were strong in the Chinese

community in Singapore and Malaya since the nineteenth century,²⁹ the harmonious relationship created among different dialect groups was important to the success of the fund-raising movement.

The 32 executives together with the President and the Vice President were responsible for policy-making, accounting and remitting of funds. The actual collection of money at the grass-root level required a broadly-based structure. A working committee (Kan Shih Hui) consisting of 112 members was established.³⁰ Members of the committee were appointed by the sponsoring organizations. As a sponsoring organization usually had its members and friends, the involvement of its representative in the working committee meant the commitment of the entire organization to the work of fund-raising. It was to coordinate fund-raising activities among its supporters.

In addition to the working committee, a separate committee for women was established to tap the resources of this under-represented area. The status of women in the Chinese community in Singapore and Malaya had been lifted since the introduction of education for girls at the end of the nineteenth century.³¹ The role of women outside the home had increasingly been accepted after 1919 in the wake of the impact of the May Fourth movement.³² It appeared that most of the executives felt that women should play a role in the fund-raising movement. Besides, women had more time to spend than their husbands in charitable work. At the second meeting held on 27 May 1928, the executives agreed to ask Mrs Lim Boon Keng and Mrs Lee Choon Guan to organize the committee for women.³³ Both ladies were well-known personalities among the circle of Chinese women in Singapore. Their husbands, Dr Lim Boon Keng and Mr Lee Choon Guan, were well-known community leaders. They commanded a great deal of influence in the community.³⁴ A public meeting of Chinese women was quickly organized, at the Nanyang Girl School on 31 May 1928.³⁵ More than 80 women attended the meeting. It was probably the first time that the Singapore Chinese women had ever held a public meeting for the purpose of fund-raising for the relief of war victims in China. Reassuring women's new role in the society, Mrs Lim Boon Keng kindled the representatives to their responsibility to the new Republic.³⁶ The result of the public meeting was the formation of the committee of women as a part of the Singapore Shantung Disaster Relief Fund-Raising Society under the leadership of both Mrs Lim and Mrs Lee. A formal structure was also established with five sub-committees ranging from Secretariat (*Wen Tu*), Finance (*Ch'ai Wu*), General Management (*Shu Wu*) to Auditing (*Shen Ch'a*) and Fund-Raising (*Ch'ien Chian*).³⁷ The committee further recruited active or respectable

women to their rank.³⁸ The committee of women though attached to the Society, possessed a high degree of independence. It had the power to work out policies for fund-raising, recruitment, collection of donations and accounting. It only subjected to the control of the Society the remittance of funds to China and any public notices to the media.³⁹

The broadening of the social base provided the Singapore Shantung Disaster Relief Fund-Raising Society a valuable linkage to the masses from whom the funds were to be collected. It also provided initiatives from below. Undoubtedly, this well-organized, broadly-based movement with a strong leadership had every chance to succeed.

The spontaneity of response by the masses added a new dimension to the success story of the fund-raising movement. Large donations made by Tan Kah Kee and Yap Geok Twee, each of them donated S\$10,000,⁴⁰ only aroused admiration for their generosity, but the story of donation of \$1,000 from a worker, Lin T'ien-hsi became most moving.⁴¹ Lin was a foreman of the Hsieh T'ai Ch'ang factory, and had given all his savings to the Shantung relief fund.⁴² Lin's example was capitalized by the fund-raising organizers who had his portrait and a brief biography published in the newspaper.⁴³

Of course, there were more moving stories of this kind made known to the general public. A Hakka old woman, named Lai Luan-niang, gave all her jewellery which she had accumulated throughout her life.⁴⁴ A Hokkien old lady named Wen Ch'iang-niang donated \$8 which was her savings from egg peddling for many weeks; she told the officer of the Relief Society that she was aware of the war between China and Japan, and was only fulfilling her duty as a Chinese.⁴⁵ An old crippled Hokkien beggar named Ch'iu Ping also donated \$3.18 to the relief fund which represented much of his savings.⁴⁶

The spontaneity of the response to the fund-raising movement reflects a burgeoning nationalism. A sense of love for China which was no longer confined narrowly to a particular district or province, emerged. The spontaneity can be taken also as an indication of success of the propaganda mounted by the Singapore Shantung Disaster Relief Fund-Raising Society. The news of Japanese atrocities in Tsinan and the anti-Japanese message had filtered through to the lowest stratum of the overseas Chinese community. The conversation between the egg peddler Wen Ch'iang-niang and the officer of the Society testifies to that success.⁴⁷ But the spontaneity was the result of a spur by the unfolding events in China, it would subside very quickly once the initial stage of burning enthusiasm was over. Realizing this danger, the Society adopted a shrewd strategy of keeping the issue alive in the minds of the general public by a constant barrage of reports and

advertisements. This strategy was facilitated by the fact that Tan Kah Kee was the proprietor of the *Nanyang Siang Pau*,⁴⁸ the leading Chinese newspaper in Singapore, and Tan was able to direct the editors and reporters of how to publicize the fund-raising. Therefore, for the next two months during May and June 1928, the fund-raising movement was given extensive coverage. This ranged from reports of the activities of the Society, spontaneous fund-raising activities and donations to public acknowledgements and notices issued by the Society.⁴⁹ The constant barrage was not only designed to keep the issue alive, but also to serve as an efficient communication between the Society on the one hand, and the supporting organizations and the general public on the other. In addition to this, the Society also published the figure of the total collection every day so as to excite the general public into action.⁵⁰

Boycott of Japanese Goods

Boycott was a powerful weapon used by Chinese nationalists both in China and abroad. It was to crush the enemy economically and reaped enormous economic and political benefits. When the American Chinese first discovered and used this weapon in 1905 as a retaliation against American prohibition of Chinese immigrants,⁵¹ the Chinese in Singapore and Malaya responded vigorously to the call for the boycott of American goods.⁵² It was then repeatedly used against Japanese in 1908, 1915 and 1919.⁵³ Therefore what might be expected was that a large-scale boycott movement would be mounted against Japanese following the Tsinan Incident.

Yet, throughout the whole process of response of the Chinese in Singapore and Malaya to the Incident, boycott of Japanese goods became a less salient aspect of the overall movement. Unlike the fund-raising, it was primarily carried out underground. The reason for this was the hostile attitude of the British colonial governments in the Straits Settlements and the Federated Malay States. The British colonial authorities were extremely concerned with the maintenance of law and order in the colonies. The rioting in the streets of Singapore as the result of boycotting Japanese goods following the May Fourth movement in 1919,⁵⁴ prompted government intervention, and a martial law was proclaimed and a number of instigators were arrested.⁵⁵ The persistence of the boycott and rioting after the martial law greatly alarmed the British colonial authorities.⁵⁶ What the British had learnt from that event was greatly reflected in their tough attitude towards the Chinese response to the Tsinan Incident in 1928. A policy of discouraging boycott was adopted.⁵⁷ It was to nip the violence in the bud. All

demonstrations against Japanese were banned,⁵⁸ and overseas Chinese leaders and the Chinese Consul-General in Singapore were warned of potential violence.⁵⁹ The first public meeting held on 17 May 1928 at the Singapore Chinese Chamber of Commerce for fund-raising was under the watchful eyes of the police.⁶⁰ Under such political constraint, the boycott movement was forced underground. There was no public burning of Japanese goods, nor were there any physical violence against Japanese nationals and shop proprietors who sold Japanese goods. What was mounted was a boycott movement which involved peaceful actions of stopping imports, distribution, sale and consumption of Japanese goods; and of terminating transactions with Japanese companies and withdrawing accounts from Japanese banks.⁶¹ To avoid the government's intervention, Chinese merchants who supported the boycott found a convenient excuse to stop importing goods from Japan under the pretext that business was bad. A good example was an advertisement by 14 Chinese shops in Singapore published in the *Nanyang Siang Pau* on 21 May 1928, stating that they had to stop importing goods from Japan because of downturn in business.⁶² They also stated that they had instructed their business counterparts in Japan to stop sending goods to Singapore, and any goods which arrived from Japan after 8 June 1928 would not be received.⁶³ It is interesting to note that all the 14 shops were located in the High Street (Shui Hsien Men) where was known of shops selling foreign goods (*Yang Huo*). There is no way to ascertain what types of goods did these shops exactly import from Japan. What can be certain is that these shops did import some Japanese goods such as textile, silk and ceramics,⁶⁴ which could be replaced by similar products from China or other countries.

To piece together fragmentary information from the newspaper, one would get the feeling that the boycott movement had some cross-section support in the Chinese community in Singapore and Malaya. The report about Chinese grocers in Taiping, Perak, to stop importing goods from Japan,⁶⁵ the advertisement of seven Chinese bicycle shops in Malacca to stop the import of bicycles and spare parts from Japan,⁶⁶ and the report on Chinese bicycle merchants in Ipoh, Perak, to stop import and sale of Japanese goods,⁶⁷ created an impression that the Chinese business community had taken some action, and the boycott movement was on. A report on a Chinese fish wholesaler, Ts'ai Sha-shui, who had lost more than S\$300 a day because he stopped dealing in fresh fish from Japanese fishing boats in Singapore,⁶⁸ had deeply touched the hearts of many Chinese in Singapore and Malaya. The non-business community appeared to have responded to the call of boycott even more enthusiastically. The Chinese doctors and herbalists of the Thong Chai Medical Institution (T'ung Chi I Yuan) of

Singapore pledged not to buy Japanese goods for life in addition to their donation of ten per cent of their monthly salaries to the relief fund.⁶⁹ The members of the Nan Lu Alumni Association (Nan Lu Hsueh Yu Hui)⁷⁰ in a special meeting pledged not to give in until Japanese succumbed, and declared that they were determined to sever any economic relationship with the Japanese.⁷¹ But the most touching was the support shown by many primary school students. Under the influence of their teachers, many students pledged not to consume Japanese goods for life. For example, the pupils of the Shu Jen school in Singapore pledged not to visit Japanese shops and not to purchase Japanese goods;⁷² the students of the P'ei Feng school, Malacca, pledged not to buy Japanese goods for their life in a solemn ceremony,⁷³ and similar pledges were also made by the students of the Chung Hua school, Jelebu, Negri Sembilan.⁷⁴

The more active response of the non-business section of the Chinese community can be interpreted in socio-economic terms. Doctors, herbalists, alumni members and students had nothing to lose economically, and were more free to respond to the call of boycott. They could find substitutes for Japanese goods which they consumed. On the other hand, the business community had to bear the brunt of the boycott. Some businessmen had their business ruined by the boycott, and their livelihood threatened.

Who were the people behind this underground movement? What tactics did they use to achieve their objectives? What can be gathered from sketchy newspaper reports was that some radical Chinese organized themselves into different groups with names such as 'Patriotic Corps' (Ai Kuo T'uan),⁷⁵ 'National Salvation Corps' (Chiu Kuo T'uan),⁷⁶ 'Eliminating Traitors Corps' (Ch'u Chian Tuan),⁷⁷ and 'The South Sea Anti-Japanese Alliance' (Nan-yang K'ang Jih T'ung Meng).⁷⁸ Government sources confirmed that these secret bodies were responsible for a considerable amount of intimidation in the boycott movement.⁷⁹ The members of these groups were probably hot-blooded, impatient young men with working class or intellectual backgrounds, and they were more determined than merchants and shopkeepers to take drastic actions against the Japanese. The boycott action seemed to have suited them.

Although government sources implicated both the Communist Party and the Kuomintang in the boycott movement, it nevertheless failed to detect who were the leaders of the secret bodies behind the threats. The failure of the government's detection can be seen as the success of clandestine activities of these bodies. If the status of these secret bodies was unclear, and the fact that both the Communist Party and the Kuomintang had been involved in this boycott movement, it would be reasonable to

suggest that these secret bodies were the product of compromise between the two parties on the Tsinan issue. A certain degree of cooperation was agreed upon by both sides on an issue of national importance. On the other hand, both parties wanted to increase their respective influence in the Chinese community.⁸⁰ The boycott of Japanese goods thus became one of the best mechanisms to reach masses. But beneath the temporary cooperation, there was competition and rivalry between them which had probably weakened the movement.

The tactics used by the secret bodies to achieve their objectives were coercion and intimidation. Of course, these tactics were not new in the Chinese community. They had been used in previous anti-Japanese movements in Singapore and Malaya.⁸¹ As the main thrust of the boycott movement was to stop the sale of Japanese goods in the Chinese community in Singapore and Malaya, Chinese importers and distributors of Japanese goods had to be persuaded or intimidated to cooperate. Apart from giving a public warning in the newspaper for observing the boycott,⁸² members of the secret bodies sent out intimidation letters to shops and companies which they considered to have failed the observation. However, accurate information about the violations were sometimes difficult to obtain, and this had resulted in mistakes or victimizations. Frequent public notices to defend their positions by the accused reflected the inadequacy of the boycott movement.⁸³ One main area of dispute between the boycott enforcers and the accused was the time span under which the boycott should take effect. Should goods ordered before the boycott be reprieved? If so, it may provide a convenient excuse for some unscrupulous businessmen to defy the boycott order. Many accused saw a great injustice done to them because they had been penalized for receiving Japanese goods which they had ordered long before the boycott.⁸⁴

Another strategy adopted by the boycott crusaders was character assassination of Japanese goods. Japanese goods were labelled as 'inferior goods' (*Lieh Huo*).⁸⁵ Of course the crusaders did not explain the criterion for classifying Japanese goods as 'inferior goods'. Was the conclusion drawn on the basis of comparison of Japanese goods to the goods of Germany, Britain and the United States? Or was it compared with the native Chinese goods? This question was never clearly explained, nor was it intended to have a clear answer in the minds of overseas Chinese. What they wished to do was to discredit the Japanese goods among vast overseas Chinese consumers, and to justify their actions of eliminating inferior goods from market. Further, by condemning Japanese goods without mentioning the word 'Japanese' was to protect the movement against local government's intervention.

The boycott movement appeared to have achieved reasonable success. Newspaper reports suggested that Japanese goods suffered great losses in Singapore and Malaya, this included textiles, matches, chemical materials, bicycles, bicycle spare parts and tyres, salted and dried fish, cement, earthenware and porcelain, glassware, wheat flour, pharmaceutical products and paint.⁸⁶ Japanese trading companies, banks and shipping companies in Singapore also suffered losses of business;⁸⁷ and many local Japanese hawkers and fishermen lost their jobs.⁸⁸ Newspaper reports also claimed that Japanese goods were wiped out from towns in Perak and Kelantan where boycott crusaders had vigorously enforced the ban.⁸⁹ The success of the boycott was confirmed by a report prepared by the Japanese merchants in Singapore in July 1928 which clearly stated that the import of Japanese goods into Singapore had dropped from S\$2,944,808 in April to S\$2,254,738 in May 1928, and it expected a more severe loss for the month of July (around 2 million Straits dollars) after the full impact of the boycott was felt.⁹⁰ The report also claimed that Japanese small businessmen, professionals, hawkers and fishermen suffered severe hardship as a result of the boycott. Most of the 20 Japanese grocery shops in Singapore lost two-thirds of their business; Japanese doctors, dentists, barbers, fishermen, hotel and studio proprietors experienced hardship because of the loss of Chinese customers.⁹¹

What can be established from these reports is that the movement had achieved reasonable success in the period of the Chinese response to the Tsinan Incident (from May to December 1928). It succeeded in wiping out Japanese goods from some towns in Malaya, it greatly reduced the volume of Japanese imports into Singapore and Malaya, and it inflicted hardship on Japanese nationals in the region. But the movement did not achieve its ultimate goal of wiping out Japanese goods completely from Singapore and Malaya. Causes of this limited success are not difficult to find. Firstly, the British colonial government's ban on the boycott prevented an open and large-scale movement to take place. It discouraged many Chinese from supporting the boycott,⁹² and encouraged those unscrupulous Chinese businessmen to defy the boycott because they knew the government was on their side. Secondly, the boycott lacked unity and a long-term plan. The division among the boycott crusaders weakened the movement. The lack of a long-term plan led the movement to concentrate on immediate and short-term gains. Once the initial stage of enthusiasm was over, the movement declined. An analysis of repeated failure of Chinese boycotts against Japanese goods in China since 1908 verifies this point.⁹³ Thirdly, the main attention of Chinese response to the Tsinan Incident was attracted to the fund-raising movement, and the boycott was not in any way placed in the

limelight. It faded away quietly from the attention of the general public. Fourthly, the boycott movement failed to find suitable substitutes for Japanese goods. Native Chinese goods were unable to replace the cheap and reasonably good quality Japanese products. The problems in supply and pricing of native Chinese products failed to meet the demand of overseas Chinese consumers.⁹⁴ While the European substitutes were generally more expensive than Japanese goods and were beyond the reach of many overseas Chinese.

Promoting Native Chinese Goods

The boycott of Japanese goods was aimed at undermining the economy of the enemy. It was in a sense negative, for it did not benefit China directly. In a broad perspective, positive actions to resolve China's long-term problems were to strengthen China both economically and militarily. The promotion of native Chinese goods provided Chinese industry a needed stimulus to develop vis-à-vis foreign competition.

Chinese capitalists in China faced keen competition from foreign capitalists in 1920s. The return of the foreign capitalists in the treaty ports after the First World War impinged upon the territories gained by the Chinese capitalists during the wartime. However, the Chinese capitalists did not retreat and surrender, instead they fought tenaciously by flexing their newly gained political muscle. The Chinese capitalists, represented mainly by the capitalists in Shanghai, found a useful ally in the Nationalist government in Nanking which was established in April 1927.⁹⁵

The Tsinan Massacre and its ensuing anti-Japanese sentiment gave Chinese capitalists an excellent opportunity to push back Japanese economic advancement in China. Their inspiration of promoting native Chinese goods as a means of combating Japanese economic imperialism found echo among some sympathetic nationalist ministers. In May 1928, Mr Hsueh To-pi, the Minister of Home Affairs presented a five-point memorial to the government for action. Hsueh championed the cause of the Chinese capitalists by recounting their old and new grievances. He urged the government to protect native industry, to work out an overall plan for developing Chinese industry, to instruct government and school authorities to use native products, and to promote consumption of Chinese goods nation-wide.⁹⁶ Capturing the growing mood for consuming Chinese products, a Native Chinese Goods Maintenance Society (*Kuo-huo wei-ch'ih hui*) was quickly organized by the Shanghai capitalists to coordinate a national movement. By early June 1928, the Society had produced a long-term plan

to push the movement ahead. The plan included intensive publicity in newspapers, pamphlets, posters, banners and public gatherings to promote the use of native products; encouragement to establish more Native Chinese Goods Maintenance Society in cities, provinces, districts and villages; requesting the government to proclaim rules and regulations for encouraging native industry; organizing exhibitions of native goods; identifying and monitoring the genuine native goods to eliminate imitations; and a concerted effort of manufacturers and distributors of Chinese goods in achieving a uniform low price.⁹⁷

Echoing the sentiment for promoting native Chinese goods in China was a group of Chinese merchants in Singapore who began to organize an exhibition of Chinese goods at the end of May 1928. A committee named 'The Exhibition of Native Chinese Goods and to Raise Funds for Shantung Disaster Relief' (Kuo-huo chan-lan Chi-an ts'ou chen hui) was established on the 28 May 1928.⁹⁸ The twin aims of the exhibition were to promote native Chinese products as well as raising money for the relief of the Tsinan victims.⁹⁹ A study of the names of the sponsors reveals that the majority of them were representatives or distributors of native Chinese products from China. The representatives of the Kwang Ho National Products Company of Shanghai, and the Cheng Hsing Arts Company of Shanghai were in fact the branch managers of that two companies in Singapore.¹⁰⁰ While the representatives of Wan Hsing National Products Company, Chung Hua Native Products Company, Shanghai Departmental Stores, Chiu Fu Company, Chung Nan Trading Company and Chung Yang Company were the distributors of native Chinese products from China.¹⁰¹ Undoubtedly all these merchants had vested interest in promoting native Chinese goods. Some of them saw the excellent opportunity to capture for their products the market which was previously dominated by Japanese. The Cheng Hsing Arts Company, for instance, lamented the control of printing market in Singapore by Japanese, and called upon Chinese business community to use it for printing trade labels, pamphlets, calendars and other commercial art works.¹⁰² But among sponsors were also representatives of Chinese bookshops and Chinese newspapers.¹⁰³ It would be difficult to suggest that these bookshops and newspapers had substantial gains by directly involving in promoting native Chinese goods. They were probably prompted by their belief that the promotion of Chinese products would be good for China on the long-term basis.

The exhibition took place between 15 and 25 June 1928, at the Singapore Chinese Chamber of Commerce building. There were 26 companies participating in the exhibition.¹⁰⁴ It was officially opened by the Chinese

Consul-General in Singapore amid the packed crowd with token nationalistic ritual of bowing to the Chinese national flag and the portrait of Dr Sun Yat-sen, and the recital of Sun Yat-sen's famous will to the nation.¹⁰⁵ The exhibition was claimed to be a success. It was estimated that about 2,000 Chinese had attended the first day, and the participating companies had made a reasonable sale of their goods in the ten days of the exhibition. Two native Chinese products sold well were cigarettes and soap. The former was the produce of the Nanyang Brothers' Tobacco Company.¹⁰⁶ The company originated from Hong Kong and Southeast Asia in 1905.¹⁰⁷ After 1918, it operated mainly in China with its head-office in Shanghai, and was the largest Chinese tobacco company in China.¹⁰⁸ The latter was the produce of Ho Hong Soap Company which was a part of the Ho Hong Group of Companies in Singapore.¹⁰⁹ The exhibition had attracted at least 10,000 people to view a variety of Chinese products.¹¹⁰ It had also sold about \$10,000 worth of goods of which about \$2,000 was donated to the Shantung relief fund.¹¹¹

It was the first time that so many varieties of native Chinese goods from China and Singapore were concentrated together for display and sale. The visual impact was great. Many Chinese had established their confidence in native Chinese goods after seeing the products with their own eyes. At the same time, they spread the message to the wider circles in the Chinese community.

Despite the success of the exhibition, the promoters of the native Chinese goods did not seem to have sustained their initial enthusiasm. There was no organized large-scale movement, no intensive newspapers publicity, nor was there any public gathering to promote the use of Chinese products. What we can gather from the newspaper are sketchy reports and advertisements of some individual companies which tried to promote their products in the Chinese community in Singapore and Malaya. One notable product promoted in the newspaper was Chinese matches produced in China and Macao which tried to capture part of the overseas Chinese market.¹¹² Although there was a suggestion of organizing a larger exhibition of native Chinese goods to include all Chinese communities in Southeast Asia in the wake of the success of the exhibition, no concrete action was taken. Like the anti-Japanese boycott movement, the campaign for promoting native Chinese goods scaled down and faded away. What amazed the observers of this campaign was its failure in obtaining the support of many local Chinese manufacturers. Tan Kah Kee, the largest Chinese manufacturer in Singapore did not seem to have involved.¹¹³ His company, Tan Kah Kee Company, was neither a sponsor nor a participant in the exhibition.¹¹⁴ Aw Boon Haw, another leading Chinese manufacturer in Singapore who was famous for his

pharmaceutical products, was also not involved.¹¹⁵ The absence of these leading Chinese manufacturers suggests the lack of strong support for the movement, and this was probably a main factor for the limited success of the promotion. Perhaps another reason to explain why the campaign ran out of steam was the shortage of supply from China. As the boycott and promotion movements were carried out more vigorously throughout China,¹¹⁶ native Chinese goods were in great demand. The result of which was the reduction of supply to overseas markets except few items such as cigarettes and matches. If there was a shortage of supply in Singapore, the promoters would have felt pointless to promote Chinese goods when no large quantity were available in the market. This explains why their enthusiasm for pushing the sales faded away quietly.

Conclusion

The response of the Chinese in Singapore and Malaya to the Tsinan Incident in 1928 was another high tide of overseas Chinese nationalism. The overseas Chinese nationalism in Singapore and Malaya arose at the end of the nineteenth century, and went through different stages of development. The response to the Tsinan Incident linked the events between the May Fourth of 1919 and the Double Seven (Marco Polo Bridge) Incident of 1937.¹¹⁷ It inherited the pattern and skill of mass mobilization from the May fourth response and passed on to the Double Seven event. In this movement, the mental horizon of the Chinese in Singapore and Malaya had been broadened to include all parts of China. They were no longer just talking about raising money to relieve their kith and kins in home districts and provinces, but also to help relieve the victims of the Shantung Province which was physically far away from the provinces they came from.

The main focus of the response was the fund-raising for the relief of the victims in the Tsinan Incident. In the course of action, a strong sense of love for China was inculcated into the minds of overseas Chinese masses. By participating in the movement, many ordinary overseas Chinese for the first time realized how much they could contribute if they were determined to do it. The fund-raising movement, which was based on non-religious and non-sectarian basis helped to strengthen inter-dialect group relationships, and paved the way for the success of the similar movements in Singapore and Malaya during the Sino-Japanese War, 1937–1945.

The movement of boycotting Japanese goods, which was an integral part of the response to the Tsinan Incident, was less successful because of the hostile attitude of the British colonial government and the lack of well-

organized structure; the division among the boycott crusaders was also responsible for the limited success. The campaign for promoting native Chinese goods had some success, particularly in making people aware of a wide range of products that Chinese manufacturers could produce, and enhanced the consumers' confidence in Chinese goods. At the same time, some products such as cigarettes, soap and matches gained some useful ground in the overseas Chinese market. But again, the limited success on this front was due to the disunity between the distributors of China's goods and the local Chinese manufacturers in Singapore. The inherent problem of Chinese manufacturers in China of how to produce a large volume of goods with reasonably good quality and low price to meet the demand in both home and overseas markets had its toll in the campaign for promoting native Chinese goods in Singapore and Malaya.

Endnotes

- * First published in the *Journal of the South Seas Society*, Vol. 43 (South Seas Society, 1988), pp. 1-22.
- 1. See Yen Ching-hwang, *The Overseas Chinese and the 1911 Revolution: With Special Reference to Singapore and Malaya* (Oxford University Press, Kuala Lumpur and New York, 1976); Yoji Akashi, *The Nanyang Chinese National Salvation Movement, 1937-1941* (The University of Kansas, 1970); Stephen M.Y. Leong, 'Sources, Agencies and Manifestations of Overseas Chinese Nationalism in Malaya, 1937-1941' (Ph.D. dissertation, University of California, Los Angeles, 1976).
- 2. See Yen Ching-hwang, 'Overseas Chinese Nationalism in Singapore and Malaya, 1877-1912', in *Modern Asian Studies Journal*, Vol. 16, No. 3 (1982), p. 401.
- 3. See Yen Ching-hwang, *The Overseas Chinese and the 1911 Revolution*, pp. 238-43, 285, 308-18.
- 4. See Yoji Akashi, 'The Nanyang Chinese Anti-Japanese and Boycott Movement, 1908-1928 - A Study of Nanyang Chinese Nationalism', in *Journal of the South Seas Society*, Vol. 23, Pts. 1 and 2 (1968), pp. 71-3.
- 5. For the anti-Japanese boycott and violence among the Chinese in Singapore and Malaya during the May Fourth period, see Chui Kuei-ch'iang, 'Hai-hsia chih-min-ti te hua-jen tui wu-su yun-tung te fan-hsiang' (The Response of the Chinese in the Straits Settlements to the May Fourth Movement), in Chui Kuei-ch'iang, *Hsing Ma shih lun-t's'ung* (Essays on the History of Singapore and Malaya) (South Seas Society, 1977), pp. 62-76. See also the same article in the *Journal of the South Seas Society*, Vol. 20, Pts. 1 & 2, pp. 13-8.
- 6. See Teo Eng-hock, *Nan-yang yu ch'uang-li min-kuo* (Nanyang and the Founding of the Chinese Republic) (Shanghai, 1933); Tan Chor-nam, 'Wan-ch'ing-yuan yu chung-kuo ko-ming shih-lueh' (Wan-ch'ing-yuan and the Chinese Revolution) (original copy kept in the Kuomintang Archives in Taipei).
- 7. The first overseas Chinese representative from Southeast Asia was Goh Say Eng who

- attended the first Provisional National Parliament in Nanking in January 1912. The Provisional Parliament agreed to have six seats for overseas Chinese representatives. See Yang Han-hsiang, *Pm-ch'eng yueh-shu pao-she nien-ssu chou-nien chi-nien t'e-k'an* (*The Souvenir Magazine of the 24th Anniversary of the Penang Philomatic Society*) (Penang, n.d.) pp. 65-8; Wu Tee-jen, 'Tao-nien hui-chia shu-nan te Wu Shih-yung lao t'ung-chih' (In Memory of an Old Comrade - Goh Say Eng) (manuscript kept by Yen Ching-hwang), pp. 6-7.
8. For the failure of the Second Revolution and the rise of Yuan's dictatorship, see Li Chien-nung, *Wu-shu i-hou san-shih-nien Chung-kuo cheng-chih shih* (*The Political History of China in the last Thirty Years After The Hundred Days' Reform*) (Peking, 1980); Jerome Chen, *Yuang-shih-k'ai* (London, 1961); and Ernest P. Young, *The Presidency of Yuan Shih-k'ai 1859-1916* (U. of Michigan Press, Ann Arbor, 1977).
 9. For excellent works on the warlord rule in China, see Lucian W. Pye, *Warlord Politics: Conflict and Coalition in the Modernization of Republican China* (Praeger, New York, 1971); Hsi-sheng Ch'i, *Warlord Politics in China, 1916-1928* (Stanford, 1976); James E. Sheridan, *Chinese Warlord: The Career of Feng Yu-hsiang* (Stanford, 1966); and Gavan McCormack, *Chang Tso-lin in Northeast China, 1911-1928* (Stanford, 1978).
 10. For the British control and eventual suppression of the Kuomintang in Singapore and Malaya between 1919 and 1925, see C.F. Yong and R.B. McKenna, 'The Kuomintang Movement in Malaya and Singapore', in *Journal of Southeast Asian Studies*, Vol. 12, No. 1 (March 1981), pp. 126-32. See also Png Poh Seng, 'The Kuomintang in Malaya, 1912-1941', in *Journal of Southeast Asian History*, Vol. 2, No. 1 (March, 1961), pp. 19-20.
 11. See *Nanyang Siang Pao*, 10 May 1928, p. 3.
 12. *Nanyang Siang Pao*, 12 May 1928, p. 3.
 13. *Nanyang Siang Pao*, 9 May 1928, p. 3.
 14. See Yen Ching-hwang, *The Overseas Chinese and the 1911 Revolution*, p. 241.
 15. See 'I Ho Hsian chin-jih fa-ch'u chih chung-yau ch'uan-tan' (Important leaflet distributed by the Ee Ho Hean Club), in *Nanyang Siang Pao*, 11 May 1928, p. 3.
 16. See 'Ts'ou-chen Shantung ch'an-huo ch'uan-ch'iao ta-hui' (Chinese Community Meeting for the Relief of Shantung Disaster), in *Nanyang Siang Pao*, 18 May 1928, p. 3.
 17. See C.F. Yong, *Chan-ch'ien Hsing-hua she-hui chieh-ko yu ling-tao ch'en ch'u-t'an* (*Chinese Community Structure and Leadership in Pre-War Singapore*) (South Seas Society, 1977), p. 156.
 18. See *Nanyang Siang Pao*, 18 May 1928, p. 3.
 19. This followed the practice of the Singapore Chinese Chamber of Commerce. The result of which was that 12 were elected from Hokkien pang, 10 from Teochew pang, 5 from Cantonese pang, 2 each from Hainanese and Chia Ying Hakka pangs, and 1 from Ta P'u Hakka pang. *Ibid.* for the Pang representation on the board of the Singapore Chinese Chamber of Commerce, see 'Hsin-chia-po chung-hua shang-wu tsung-hui teng-chi i-shih pu' (Minutes of the Singapore Chinese Chamber of Commerce) (manuscript), Vol. 1 (1906-1909).

20. See *Nanyang Siang Pao*, 21 May 1928, p. 9, 24 May 1928, p. 5, 25 May 1928, p. 4, 25 May 1928, p. 5.
21. See for instance, the teachers of the 12 Chinese schools in Singapore who decided to donate 10 per cent of their monthly salaries to the fund, and the teachers of the Overseas Chinese High School led the way. The workers of three pineapple canning factories in Singapore, the Johore Pineapple Canning, the Hsin Hsing and Hsin Chi Ch'eng, had decided to donate 10 per cent of their monthly wages to the Shantung Relief Fund. See *Nanyang Siang Pao*, 23 May 1928, p. 5, 25 May 1928, p. 4.
22. The Rubber Traders' Association of Singapore decided to collect levy on rubber for the funds. See *Nanyang Siang Pao*, 24 May 1928, p. 4. The Chinese in Muar, Johore, decided to collect \$1 levy on every ton of rubber exported, \$0.12 on every bag of copra and pinang exported, \$0.10 on every bag of sago exported. \$0.30 on every bag of rice, sugar and beans imported. See *Nanyang Siang Pao*, 30 May 1928, p. 20.
23. An elderly hawker named Mai Hsiu who sold Lien-hsi cakes for his living, donated \$8.86 to the funds. The amount represented savings for many months. Another hawker who sold herbal tea for 4 nights and raised \$15 which was donated to the funds. See *Nanyang Siang Pao*, 28 May 1928, p. 3.
24. Fifty brothels in North Bridge Road, Singapore, decided to donate the collection of one night to the funds. See *Nanyang Siang Pao*, 29 May 1928, p. 3.
25. According to the report of the Singapore Shantung Disaster Relief Fund-Raising Society on 28 January 1929, the actual amount collected to date was S\$1,174,311 and about S\$100,000 were to be collected. This would bring the aggregate to 1.27 million dollars. See *Nanyang Siang Pao*, 29 January 1929, p. 3. At that time, a total of S\$1,073,125 (equivalent to 1.25 million Chinese dollars) had been remitted to the Nanking government. *Ibid*; Tan Kah Kee claimed that more than 1.3 million dollars (Chinese currency) was raised in 2 to 3 months in the fund-raising movement for the relief of the Tsinan victims. See Tan Kah Kee, *Nan-ch'iao hui-i lu* (*The Memoir of Tan Kah Kee*) (Singapore, 1946), Vol. 1, p. 22.
26. See for instance, the P'ei Cheng School of Segamat, Johore, advertised to employ two teachers with monthly salary of \$60, meals provided. See *Nanyang Siang Pao*, 13 July 1928, p. 6: The Ch'un Ying School of Titi, Seremban, Negri Sembilan, offered \$55 per month with meals for a teacher. See *Nanyang Siang Pao*, 12 January 1929, p. 4.
27. For a discussion of Ee Ho Hean club and the Chinese society in Singapore, see C.F. Yong, *Chinese Community Structure and Leadership in Pre-War Singapore*, Chapter 5.
28. Hokkien dialect associations were Nan An, Foochow, Chin Men, An Hsi, Chin Chiang and Yung Ch'un; Cantonese associations were Kaochow, Nan Shun, Chao Ch'ing, Hsiang Shan, Tung An and P'an Yu; Hakka associations were Yung ting, Ch'a Yang, Ying Ho and Huichou. Only one Teochew association, Ch'ao Yang, was listed. See 'Fa-ch'i Shan-tung ch'an-huo ts'ou-chen ta-hui huan-yen' (*The Declaration of the Sponsors for the Proposed General Meeting for the Shantung Disaster Relief Fund-Raising*), in *Nanyang Siang Pao*, 15 May 1928, p. 4.
29. For discussion of dialect segregation and Pang identity in the Chinese community in Singapore and Malaya in the nineteenth century, see Yen Ching-hwang, *A Social*

History of the Chinese in Singapore and Malaya, 1800-1911 (Oxford University Press: Singapore and New York, 1986), chapter 6.

30. See the advertisement of the Singapore Shantung Disaster Relief Fund-Raising Society announcing 112 names of the working committee members, in *Nanyang Siang Pao*, 24 May 1928, p. 5, 25 May 1928, p. 5.
31. The Singapore Chinese Girls' School was founded in 1899. One of the promoters of the female education in Singapore was Khoo Seok Wan, a well-known reformist who donated S\$3,000 towards the funds for starting the school. See Song Ong Siang, *One Hundred Years' History of the Chinese in Singapore* (University of Malaya Press, Singapore, 1967), p. 101.
32. This is my impression gained after reading the *Nanyang Siang Pao* continuously from 1923 to 1928.
33. See *Nanyang Siang Pao*, 28 May 1928, p. 3.
34. See Song Ong Siang, *op. cit.*, pp. 534, 541-42.
35. See the report of the meeting published in *Nanyang Siang Pao*, 1 June 1928, p. 3.
36. Mrs Lim Boon Keng (Madam Yin Pi-hsia) emphasized that women had equal responsibility with men to the society and nation. See *Nanyang Siang Pao*, 1 June 1928, p. 3, 2 June 1928, p. 6.
37. See *Nanyang Siang Pao*, 2 June 1928, p. 6; for the functions of the various sub-committees of the women committee, see 'Hsin-chia-po Shan tung ch'an-huo ts'ou-chen-hui fu-nu-pu ch'i-shih' (The Public Notice of the Women Committee of the Singapore Shantung Disaster Relief Fund-Raising Society), in *Nanyang Siang Pao*, 16 June 1928, p. 5.
38. See *Nanyang Siang Pao*, 4 June 1928, p. 6.
39. See *Nanyang Siang Pao*, 2 June 1928, p. 6.
40. See 'Hsin-chia-po Shantung Ch'an-huo ch'ou-chen-hui chien-k'uan ming-hsueh ti-i chih' (The First Acknowledgement of Donations by the Singapore Shantung Disaster Relief Fund-Raising Society), in *Nanyang Siang Pao*, 22 May 1928, p. 5.
41. See *Nanyang Siang Pao*, 28 May 1928, p. 4.
42. See *Nanyang Siang Pao*, 24 May 1928, p. 4.
43. *Ibid.*
44. The jewellery included two gold bangles, two gold ear-rings, two gold rings and one gold hair-pin. They were estimated to be worth more than S\$100. See *Nanyang Siang Pao*, 22 May 1928, p. 3.
45. See *Nanyang Siang Pao*, 9 June 1928, p. 4.
46. See *Nanyang Siang Pao*, 26 June 1928, p. 4.
47. See *Nanyang Siang Pao*, 9 June 1928, p. 4.
48. See C.F. Yong, *Tan Kah-kee: The Making of an Overseas Chinese Legend* (Oxford University Press, Singapore, 1987), p. 56.
49. See *Nanyang Siang Pao*, 1 May 1928 to 30 June 1928.

50. The announcement of an impressive figure of S\$63,372 as the total collection for the first day (21 May 1928) undoubtedly stimulated further response. See 'Hsin-chia-po Shantung ch'an-huo ts'ou-chen hui pao-kao ti-i jih shou-chian tsung-shu' (The Report on the Total Figure of the First Day's Collection by the Singapore Shantung Disaster Relief Fund-Raising Society), in *Nanyang Siang Pao*, 25 May 1928, p. 11.
51. For the Chinese discovery of boycott as a weapon against the Americans, see Yen Ching-hwang, *Coolies and Mandarins: China's Protection of Overseas Chinese during the Late Ch'ing period, 1850-1911* (Singapore University Press, 1985), pp. 322-25; for the whole episode of the boycott in America, see Chang Ts'un-wu, *Kuang-hsu san-i-nien chung mei kuang-yueh feng-ch'ao* (The 1905 Sino-American Dispute over the Exclusion Law) (Taipei, 1965); D.L. McKee, *Chinese Exclusion Versus the Open Door Policy 1900-1906* (Detroit, 1977).
52. For the response of the Chinese in Singapore and Malaya to the boycott of American goods, see Yen Ching-hwang, *The Overseas Chinese and the 1911 Revolution: With Special Reference to Singapore and Malaya*, pp. 64-5.
53. See Yoji Akashi, 'The Nanyang Chinese Anti-Japanese and Boycott Movement, 1908-1928: A Study of Nanyang Chinese Nationalism', in *Journal of the South Seas Society*, Vol. 23 Pts. 1 & 2 (1968), pp. 70-4.
54. See Chui Kuei-ch'iang, 'Hai-hsia chih-min-ti te hua-jen tui wu-ssu yun-tung te fan-hsiang' (The Response of the Chinese in the Straits Settlements to the May Fourth Movement), in Chui Kuei-ch'iang, *Hsing Ma shih lun-ts'ung* (Essays on the History of Singapore and Malaya), pp. 62-76.
55. See Yoji Akashi, *op. cit.*, in *Journal of South Seas Society*, Vol. 23, pts. 1 & 2 (1968), p. 74.
56. *Ibid.*
57. There was no clear statement of a policy of suppression of the boycott. But from the reading of the report of the Acting Secretary for Chinese Affairs of the Straits Settlements, one can gather an impression of a hostile British attitude towards boycott and attempted to discourage it by all means. See 'Report on Kuo Min Tang and Other Societies in Malaya, July-September 1928' by Acting Secretary for Chinese Affairs, Straits Settlements, R. Ingham dated 23 October 1928, in CO 273/542.
58. Two public demonstrations planned on 3 August and 3 October 1928, as being the third and fifth monthly commemorations of the Tsinan Incident, were suppressed. See R. Ingham's report dated 23 October 1928, p. 7. *Ibid.*
59. This can be gathered from the speeches made by the leaders of the Shantung Disaster Relief Fund-Raising movement. For example, Tan Kah Kee in his speech to the first public meeting on the 17 May, called on the Chinese to observe the local law in relation to the boycott. See *Nanyang Siang Pao*, 18 May 1928, p. 3; the warning to the Chinese Consul-General can be gathered from the public notice issued by the Consul-General on the 8 May 1928, in which he urged the Chinese not to take any action which would violate the law of the local government. See 'Tsung ling-shih kuan Tsi-nan ch'an-an t'ung-kao' (The Public Notice of the Chinese Consulate-General on the Tsinan Massacre), in *Nanyang Siang Pao*, 9 May 1928, p. 3.

60. In the name of maintaining order, more than ten constables under a captain were present at the meeting. See *Nanyang Siang Pao*, 18 May 1928, p. 3.
61. See *Nanyang Siang Pao*, 19 May 1928, p. 4.
62. The 14 shops were Wu Han hsing Lung Chi Co., Hua Fu Co., Yung Hsing Lung Co., Ch'ien Ho Hsing Chi Co., Ch'ang Fa Pte., Yu T'ai Co., Tung I Hsing Co., Teh Hsing Co., Tung Sheng Co., Li Sheng Yuan Ch'eng Chi., Chi I Pte., Lien Hsing Fa Chi Pte., Wu Ching Ch'iu Co., T'ai An Pte. See *Nanyang Siang Pao*, 21 May 1928, p. 11.
63. *Ibid.*
64. The main import of Japanese goods into Singapore was textiles. Presumably Japanese textiles were very popular among the Chinese in Singapore and Malaya because of its cheaper price than English textile. See *Nanyang Siang Pao*, 19 May 1928, p. 4.
65. See *Nanyang Siang Pao*, 26 May 1928, p. 20.
66. The seven shops were Hsin Ho Hsing, Ta Yeh Co., Yuan Ho Co., Jui Ch'un Pte. Fu Lung Hsing, Fu Yu Hsing and Jui Hsing Pte. See *Nanyang Siang Pao*, 28 May 1928, p. 16.
67. See *Nanyang Siang Pao*, 7 June 1928, p. 20.
68. See 'Wei-kuo hsi-sheng' (Sacrifices for the Nation), in *Nanyang Siang Pao*, 26 May 1928, p. 4.
69. See *Nanyang Siang Pao*, 19 May 1928, p. 4.
70. The Nan Lu Alumni Association was formed by the alumni of the Tao Nan School in Singapore which had been in existence for more than ten years. See *Nanyang Siang Pao*, 4 September 1928, p. 3.
71. See *Nanyang Siang Pao*, 19 May 1928, p. 4.
72. *Nanyang Siang Pao*, 21 May 1928, p. 4.
73. *Nanyang Siang Pao*, 21 May 1928, p. 20.
74. *Nanyang Siang Pao*, 2 June 1928, p. 20.
75. See *Nanyang Siang Pao*, 31 May 1928, p. 6.
76. See the public statement of Chop Chih Li of Singapore, in *Nanyang Siang Pao*, 26 June 1928, p. 6.
77. See the joint statement of the Singapore Shantung Disaster Relief Fund-Raising Society and the Hui An Association of Singapore, in *Nanyang Siang Pao*, 13 June 1928, p. 3.
78. See the public statement of the Tan Kah Kee Company, in *Nanyang Siang Pao*, 18 June 1928, p. 2.
79. See 'Report on Kuo Min Tang and Other Societies in Malaya, July-September 1928' by the Acting Secretary for Chinese Affairs, Straits Settlements, R. Ingham dated 23 October 1928, in CO 273/542.
80. Government sources claimed that the Tsinan Incident had been used by the Communist Party for the purpose of furthering their propaganda. See R. Ingham's Report, *ibid.*, p. 7.
81. See for instance, the intimidation letters sent to Chinese shops and companies which sold or imported Japanese goods. See Chui Kuei-ch'iang, 'Hai-hsia chih-min-ti te hua-

jen tui wu-ssu yung-tung te fan-hsiang', in Chui Kuei-ch'iang, *Hsing Ma shih lun-ts'ung*, p. 64.

82. See for instance, in the form of letters to the editor, boycott enforcers urged all Chinese to sever economic relationship with Japan, and warned the so-called 'traitor merchants' (*chien shang*) not to take advantage of the situation to benefit themselves. See *Nanyang Siang Pao*, 26 May 1928, p. 6.
83. See for instance, Chop Ch'eng Shun put an advertisement in the newspaper to clarify its position, in *Nanyang Siang Pao*, 28 May 1928, p. 6; similar clarifications were made by Huang Kuang Ch'ang and Chin I Company, Chiu Fu Company, Ting Lung Company, Chop Heng Hsing, Tan Kah Kee Company and Chop Chih Li. All these companies and shops were from Singapore. See *Nanyang Siang Pao*, 31 May 1928, p. 6, 2 June 1928, p. 6, 9 June 1928, p. 6, 16 June 1928, p. 3, 18 June 1928, p. 2, 26 June 1928, p. 6.
84. For instances, the clarifications of Ting Lung Company, Tan Kah Kee Company and Chih Li Company had argued on this line. See *Nanyang Siang Pao*, 9 June 1928, p. 6, 18 June 1928, p. 2; 26 June 1928, p. 6.
85. This term was used to refer to Japanese goods throughout the period from May to December, 1928. See *Nanyang Siang Pao*, May to December 1928.
86. See *Nanyang Siang Pao*, 19 May 1928, p. 4, 19 January 1929, p. 4.
87. It was claimed that Japanese trading companies in Singapore and Malaya suffered the loss of business because Chinese rubber and tin merchants stopped dealing with them. Chinese also stopped using Japanese ships to transport vegetables and food-stuff from China. It also claimed that Chinese consumers substituted Japanese matches with Swedish matches. See *Nanyang Siang Pao*, 19 May 1928, p. 4.
88. See *Nanyang Siang Pao*, 6 June 1928, p. 3.
89. It was claimed that Japanese goods were wiped out from Kuala Kangsa and Taiping in the state of Perak, and from Kelantan. See *Nanyang Siang Pao*, 9 July 1928, p. 20, 12 July 1928, p. 20, 29 August 1928, p. 20.
90. This Japanese report was translated into Chinese by a journalist and was published in the *Nanyang Siang Pao* in January 1929. See *Nanyang Siang Pao*, 19 January 1929, p. 4.
91. See *Nanyang Siang Pao*, 19 January 1929, p. 4, 21 January 1929, p. 4.
92. This can be detected from the statements made by individuals and organizations. For instance, in the declaration for raising funds for the Tsinan victims, three Chinese organizations in Mersing, Johore, called for public support, but at the same time urged the Chinese to observe local law. See *Nanyang Siang Pao*, 28 May 1928, p. 8.
93. See an article entitled 'Ti-chih yu t'i-ch'ang' (Boycott and Promotion) by Tzu Ming, published in *Nanyang Siang Pao*, 29 June 1928, p. 11, 'Economy' column.
94. See 'Fan huo sheng chung tseng to Jih huo chih nei-mu' (The Inside Story of How the Sale of Japanese Goods Increased in the Light of Anti-Japanese Boycott Movement), in *Nanyang Siang Pao*, 13 July 1928, p. 9.
95. For the use of their influence over the Nationalist government, see Parks M. Coble, Jr., *The Shanghai Capitalists and the Nationalist Government, 1927-1937* (Harvard University Press, Cambridge, Massachusetts, 1980), chapters 2 and 3.

96. See 'Hsueh nei-chang t'i-ch'ang kuo-huo' (The Promotion of Native Chinese Products by the Home Affairs Minister Hsueh), in *Nanyang Siang Pao*, 24 May 1928, p. 11, 'Economy' Column.
97. See *Nanyang Siang Pao*, 6 June 1928, p. 9.
98. See the public notice of the Committee dated 28 May 1928, published in *Nanyang Siang Pao*, 6 June 1928, p. 23.
99. See 'Kuo-huo chan-lan ts'ou-chen hui yen-ch'i' (The Declaration of the Committee of the Exhibition of Native Chinese Goods and to Raise Funds for Shantung Disaster Relief), in *Nanyang Siang Pao*, 19 May 1928, p. 5.
100. *Nanyang Siang Pao*, 19 May 1928, p. 5, 6 June 1928, p. 23.
101. *Ibid.*
102. See the advertisement put out by the branch manager of the Cheng Hsing Arts Company in Singapore, Chou Hsing-ch'u. Chou stated that many big Chinese companies in Singapore had their commercial printing works done in Japan. His company's head-office in Shanghai was able to produce good quality colour prints. He also promised that ten per cent of the income from commercial art prints would go to the funds for Shantung relief. See *Nanyang Siang Pao*, 19 May 1928, p. 5.
103. The three bookshops involved were Shang Wu Book Company, Chung Hua Book Company and Hsing Chou Book Store. The three newspapers were the *Nanyang Siang Pao*, the *Lat Pau* and the *Hsin Kuo Min Jih Pao*. See *Nanyang Siang Pao*, 19 May 1928, p. 5, 6 June 1928, p. 23.
104. See *Nanyang Siang Pao*, 19 June 1928, p. 12.
105. See *Nanyang Siang Pao*, 15 June 1928, p. 3.
106. See *Nanyang Siang Pao*, 19 June 1928, p. 12, 26 June 1928, p. 18.
107. In 1905, Chien Chao-nan brothers collected a capital of \$100,000 from his kinsmen in Hong Kong and Southeast Asia, and founded the first Chinese cigarette company with the name of Nanyang Brothers' Tobacco Company. For a short history of the company see *Nanyang hsiang-ti yen-ch'ao kung-ssu shih-liao* (Documentary Materials of the Nanyang Brothers' Tobacco Company) (Shanghai, 1958), pp. 1-2.
108. See Y.C. Wang, 'Free Enterprise in China: The Case of Cigarette Concern, 1905-1953', in *Pacific Historical Review*, Vol. 29 (1960), p. 396; Parks M. Coble, Jr., *The Shanghai Capitalists and the Nationalist Government*, p. 231; Lin Chin-Chih, *Chin-tai hua-ch'iao t'ou-chih kuo-nei ch'i-yeh shih yen-chiu* (A Study of Overseas Chinese Enterprises in Modern China) (Foochow, 1983), p. 110.
109. See an advertisement of introducing Ho Hong soap to general public by Aw Boon Haw, in which Aw mentioned that Ho Hong Soap Company belonged to Lim Peng Siang who headed the Ho Hong Group of Companies. See *Nanyang Siang Pao*, 4 May 1928, p. 5. Yong Ching Fatt, 'Min-tsu tzu-pen-chia Lin Peng-siang yu Ho Hong kung-ssu' (National Capitalist Lin Peng-siang and the Ho Hong Company), in C.F. Yong, *Chinese Community Structure and Leadership in Pre-War Singapore* (in Chinese), pp. 103-16.
110. Reports on the first four days suggest that the place was packed. If we take average 1,000 people per day, more than 10,000 people should have viewed the exhibition. See *Nanyang Siang Pao*, 16 June 1928, p. 6, 18 June 1928, p. 3, 19 June 1928, p. 4.

111. At the end of the exhibition, a sum of \$1,868 was donated to the Shantung Relief Funds. The sum represented 20 per cent of the total sale which amounted to \$9,340. See *Nanyang Siang Pao*, 11 July 1928, p. 3.
112. See the reports about Chinese matches advertised and promoted in Singapore and Malaya by the manufacturers in Shanghai, Kwangtung and Macao. These included the Yu Ch'ang Matches Company of Shanghai, Chung Hua Matches Company of Kwangtung and the Ta Kuang Matches Company of Macao. See *Nanyang Siang Pao*, 14 July 1928, p. 3, 31 July 1928, p. 4, 30 August 1928, p. 20.
113. Tan Kah Kee Company in Singapore manufactured many varieties of goods, including canned pineapple, biscuits, hats, shoes, soap, tyres and many kinds of rubber products. See *The Straits Times*, 14 June 1928; see also C.F. Yong, *Tan Kah Kee: The Making of an Overseas Chinese Legend* (Oxford University Press, Singapore, 1987) p. 57.
114. Checking through the list of sponsors and the list of participating companies, Tan Kah Kee Company was not there. See *Nanyang Siang Pao*, 19 May 1928, p. 5, 7 June 1928, p. 23, 19 June 1928, p. 12, 26 June 1928, p. 18.
115. See the same lists of sponsors and participating companies. *Ibid.*
116. See for instance, reports about Promoting Native Chinese Goods' week, and the mass rallies for promoting native products in Shanghai. See *Nanyang Siang Pao*, 7 July 1928, p. 3, 26 July 1928, p. 24, 31 July 1928, p. 9.
117. For the details of study of Chinese response to the May Fourth movement in China, see Chui Kuei-ch'iang, 'Hai-hsia chih-min-ti te hua-jen tui wu-ssu yun-tung te fan-hsiang', in Chui Kuei-ch'iang, *Hsing Ma shih lun-ts'ung*, pp. 62-76; for details of Chinese response to the Double-Seventh Incident, see Pang Wing Seng, 'The Double-Seventh Incident, 1937: Singapore Chinese Response to the Outbreak of the Sino-Japanese War', in *Journal of Southeast Asian Studies*, Vol. 4, No. 2 (September, 1973), pp. 269-99.

Glossary

- Ahyas 潮州人
 Ai Kuo Tuan 爱国团
 Ang (Hung) 洪
 Ang Chun (Eng Chun) 永春
 Aw Boon Haw 胡文虎
 Banka 文岛
 Batavia 巴达维亚
 Bukit China 三宝山
 C.S. Wong 黄存桑
 Cantonese Pang 粤帮
 Ch'a Yang Association
 茶阳会馆
 Ch'ai Wu 财务
 Ch'ang Fa Pte. 长发号
 Ch'ao Chou prefecture 潮州府
 Ch'en Ch'i-mei 陈其美
 Ch'en Chih-p'ing 陈支平
 Ch'en Hsin-cheng 陈新政
 Ch'en Meng-t'ao 陈梦桃
 Ch'ien Ho Hsing Chi Co.
 谦和兴记公司
 Ch'iu Ming-ch'ang 丘明昶
 Ch'iu Ping 邱炳
 Ch'iu Yu-mei 丘有美
 Ch'iu-chi 秋祭
 Ch'u Chian T'uan 除奸团
 Ch'uan-chou 泉州
 Ch'un-chi 春祭
 Chang Ch'uan Jih Pao 漳泉日报
 Chang Chou 漳州
 Chang Chow prefecture 漳州
 Chang Pi-shih 张弼士
 Chang Shao-k'uan 张少宽
 Changchou 漳州
 Chao Ah-pin (Tio Apiang)
 赵亚彬
 Chao Sheng 赵声
 Chen Ching-ho 陈荆和
 Chen Sang (Tseng Ch'eng)
 增城
 Chen Tieh Fan 陈铁凡
 Cheng Hoon Teng 青云亭
 Cheng Hsing Arts Company of
 Shanghai 上海正兴美术公司
 Cheng T'ai-sung (Tjang Tay Sion)
 郑泰嵩
 Chi I Pte. 集益
 Chia-ch'ing reign 嘉庆朝
 Chia Ying Hakka Pang 嘉应帮
 Chia-ying Chou Kongsì
 嘉应州公司
 Chia-ying Hakkas 嘉应客
 Chian Shang 奸商
 Chiangchew 漳州
 Chieh 谢
 Chien Chao-nan 简照南
 Chih Chih 自治
 Chih Li Company 智利公司
 Chin I Co. 锦怡公司
 Chinchew 漳州
 Chiu Fu Co. 九福公司

- Chiu Kuo Tuan 救国团
 Chng, David K.Y. 庄钦永
 Chong Shing Yit Pao 中兴日报
 Chop Ch'eng Shun 成顺号
 Chop Heng Hsing 恒兴号
 Chou Hsing-ch'u 周星衢
 Chu Ah-hsin (Tjoi Atjin) 朱亚辛
 Chua 蔡
 Chuang Yin-an 庄银安
 Chui Kuei-ch'iang 崔贵强
 Chung Chiao 钟娇
 Chung Ho T'ang 中和堂
 Chung Hua Book Company
 中华书局
 Chung Hua Matches Company
 中华火柴厂
 Chung Hua Native Products
 Company 中华土产公司
 Chung Hua School 中华学校
 Chung Nan Trading Company
 中南贸易公司
 Chung Shih-chieh 钟士杰
 Chung Yang Company 中央公司
 Chung-hui kung 忠惠公
 Double Dragon Hill 双龙山
 Education Department 教育部
 Ee Ho Hean 怡和轩
 Eng Chuan Tong Tan Clan
 颍川堂陈氏
 Executive Department 庶务科
 External Affairs Department
 外交科
 Feng Shun 丰顺
 Finance Department 财政科
 Franke, Wolfgang 傅吾康
 Fukienese 福建人
 Fu Lung Hsing 福隆兴
 Fu Pao 复报
 Fu Shang-chang 傅上璋
 Fu Teh temple 福德祠
 Fu Yu Hsing 福裕兴
 Ghee Hin 义兴
 Ghee Hock 义福
 Goh Say Eng 吴世荣
 H'ai Ch'eng district 海澄县
 Hai San 海山
 Hai Shan Kongsí 海山公司
 Hailam 海南
 Hainanese Pang 琼帮
 Hainanese 海南人
 Hakkas 客家人
 Heng Shan T'ing 恒山亭
 Ho Hong Soap Company
 和丰肥皂厂
 Hokkien 福建人
 Hokkien Pang 闽帮
 Hsiang Shan 香山
 Hsieh T'ai Ch'ang 协泰昌
 Hsieh Yung-kuang 谢荣光
 Hsieh-shih shih-t'ang shih-teh-
 t'ang 谢氏石塘世德堂
 Hsin Chi Ch'eng 新记成
 Hsin Ho Hsing 新和兴
 Hsin Hsing Pineapple Canning
 新兴黄梨罐头厂
 Hsin Kuo Min Jih Pao 新国民日报

Hsing Chou Book Store 星洲书局
 Hsiung Yu-shan 熊玉珊
 Hsu Yun-tiao 许云樵
 Hsueh Fu-ch'eng 薛福成
 Hsueh To-pi 薛笃弼
 Hu Han-min 胡汉民
 Hu Kuan-ch'en 胡观臣
 Hua Fu Co. 华福公司
 Hua Hsien Jih Pao 华暹日报
 Huang Fu-yung 黄福荣
 Huang Hsiao-shan 黄峭山
 Huang Hsing 黄兴
 Huang Hua Kang Uprising
 黄花岗起义
 Huang Kuang Ch'ang 黄广昌
 Huang Nai Shang 黄乃裳
 Huang Wen-t'ien 黄文添
 Huang Yao-t'ing 黄耀廷
 Hui An Association 惠安公会
 Hui Ch'un Kuan (Recuperation
 Centre) 回春馆
 Hui Chou Kongsì 惠州公司
 Hui Min School 惠民学校
 Huichew Hakkas 惠州客
 Huichew Kongsì 惠州公司
 Imahori Sei'ichi 今堀诚二
 Investigation Department 调查科
 Ipoh 怡保
 Jao Tsung-i 饶宗颐
 Jelebu 日叻务
 Johore Pineapple Canning
 柔佛黄梨罐头厂
 Jui Ch'un Pte 瑞春号

Jui Hsing Pte. 瑞兴号
 K'uang Kuo-hsiang 广国祥
 Kampong Melayu 甘榜马来
 (即甘光于汝)
 Kan Chai Yuan 柑仔园
 Kan Shih Hui 干事会
 Kehs 客家人
 Kelantan 吉兰丹
 Kew Leong Tong 九龙堂
 Khoo Hock Siew 邱福寿
 Khoo Seok Wan 邱菽园
 Koe Yang Tong Society
 许氏高阳堂
 Koh Lay Huan 辜礼欢
 Koh Leap Teng 辜立亭
 Kok 郭
 Kongsì 公司
 Kua Bak Lim 柯木林
 Kuala Kangsa 江沙
 Kuan Ch'in-feng 关钦凤
 Kuan Kung 关公
 Kuan Ti Sheng Chun 关帝圣君
 Kuan Ti 关帝
 Kuan Yu 关羽
 Kuan 官
 Kuang Fu Kung 广福宫
 Kuo-huo Chan-lan Chi-an Ts'ou-
 chen hui 国货展览济案筹赈会
 Kuo-huo wei-ch'ih hui
 国货维持会
 Kwang Chao Association
 广肇会馆
 Kwang Ho National Products
 Company of Shanghai
 上海广和国货公司

Kwong Wah Yit Poh 光华日报

Lai Luan-niang 赖暖娘

Lan-Fang Ta Tsung-chih

兰芳大总制

Lat Pau 叻报

Lau Jen Hui 老人会

Le 列

Leong San Tong Khoo Kongsi

龙山堂邱公司

Li Ah-fa 李亚发

Li Ah-liu 李阿六

Li Chen-fa 李振发

Li Ching-fang 李经方

Li Hau-cheong 李孝章

Li Hsing 李兴

Li I-chih 李奕智

Li I-hsia 李义侠

Li Ping-kuan (Lie Pian Kwaan)

李炳观或李丙观

Li Sheng Yuan Ch'eng Chi

利生源成记

Li Ts'ai-yu 李采瑜

Liang Pi-ju 梁碧如

Liang T'ing-fang 梁廷芳

Lie Pian Kwaan (Li Ping-kuan)

李炳观或李丙观

Lieh Huo 劣货

Lien Hsing Fa Chi Pte. 联兴发记

Lim Boon Keng 林文庆

Lim How Seng 林孝胜

Lim Kongsi Toon Pun Tong

林公司敦本堂

Lim Ngee-soon 林义顺

Lim Peng Siong

Lim Sz Bian Soot Tong

林氏勉述堂

Lim 林

Lin T'ien-hsi 林天喜

Lin Chih-kao 林志皋

Lin Chin-chih 林金枝

Lin Ping-siang 林秉祥

Lin Shih-an 林世安

Liu Kuo-yin 刘果因

Liu Lun-teh 刘德润

Liu Wen-chi 刘问渠

Lo Hsiang-lin 罗香林

Lo Tao-yun 罗道云

Long Say Tong 陇西堂

Lu-chu 炉主

Lu-chu t'ou-chia 炉主头家

Lui Ti'eh-yai 雷铁崖

Mai Hsiu 麦秀

Mak Lau Fong 麦留芳

Malacca Sultanate 马六甲王朝

Malacca 马六甲

Mei Chou Tsung Chi Kongsi

梅州众记公司

Mersing 丰盛港

Miyazaki Torazo 宫崎寅藏

Moy Tjoi Tjong Gie Kongsee

梅州众记公司

Mrs Lee Choon Guan

李俊源夫人

Mrs Lim Boon Keng

林文庆夫人

Muar 麻坡

Nam Kew Poo 南侨报
 Nan Fang Kongsì 兰芳公司
 Nan Hu 南湖
 Nan Lu Hsueh Yu Hui 南户学友会
 Nan-yang K'ang Jih T'ung Meng
 南洋抗日同盟
 Nanyang Siang Pao 南洋商报
 Negri Sembilan 森美兰
 New Army 新军
 Ng Kim Keng 黄金庆
 Ngo Ch'eng Kuan 鹅城馆
 Ngo Sang Association 鹅城会馆
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 North Bridge Road 小坡
 Ong 王
 Ong Chih Huai Tong 王植槐堂
 Ong Eu Hai 王友海
 Overseas Chinese High School
 华侨中学
 P'ai 排
 P'ei Cheng School 培正学校
 P'ei Feng School 培风学校
 P'ing Chang Kung Kuan 平章公馆
 Pai-lang t'ao-ti'en 白浪滔天
 Pang 帮
 Penang Conference
 庇能(檳城)会议
 Penang Sin Pao 檳城新报
 People's Tribune (Min Pao) 民报
 Perak 吡叻
 Pin-ch'eng yueh-shu pao-she
 檳城阅书报社
 Png Poh Seng 方宝成

Po-chia-keng Tan clan temple
 保赤宫陈氏宗祠
 Pontianak 坤甸
 Pui Shin Tong 培善堂
 Puntai (Cantonese)
 本地(广府人)
 Rhio 廖内
 Sam Quay Tong Kongsì
 三魁堂公司
 San Pao Mount 三宝山
 San Tu Village 三都村
 San-kuo yen-i 三国演义
 Seah Eu Chin (Siah U Chin)
 余有进
 Secretariat Department 文业科
 Segamat 昔加巴
 Selangor Ch'a Yang Kongsì
 雪兰莪茶阳会馆
 Selangor Yung Ch'un Kung So
 雪兰莪永春公司
 Semarang 三宝瓏
 Seremban 芙蓉
 Shang Wu Book Company
 商务印书馆
 Shanghai Departmental Stores
 上海百货商店
 She Kung temple 社公庙
 Shen Ch'a 审查
 Shih-t'ang Village 石塘村
 Shou-shih t'ou-chia 首事头家
 Shu Wu 庶务
 Shun Teh District 顺德县
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 Relief Fund-Raising Society
 新加坡山东惨祸筹赈委员会
 Social Function Department
 招待科
 Song Ong Siang 宋旺相
 Su Hsiao-hsien 苏孝先
 Sung Shao-tung 宋少东
 Ta Kuang Matches Company of
 Macao 澳门大光火柴厂
 Ta P'u district 大埔县
 Ta P'u Hakka Pang 大埔帮
 Ta P'u Hakkas 大埔客
 Ta Yeh Co. 大冶公司
 T'ai An Pte 泰安号
 Tai Ch'un-yung (Hsin-jan)
 戴春荣 (欣然)
 Tai Hsin-jan 戴欣然
 Taiping 太平
 Taiping Fukien Association
 太平福建会馆
 Tan 陈
 Tan Beng Swee 陈明水
 Tan Chor-nam 陈楚楠
 Tan Eng Chuan Tong 陈颖川堂
 Tan Kah Kee 陈嘉庚
 Tan Kim Ching 陈金钟
 Tan Kim Hong 陈剑虹
 Tan Sang 陈送
 Tan Tock Seng 陈笃生
 Tan Yeok Seong 陈育崧
 Tanjong Pagar 丹戎巴葛
 Tao Nan School 道南学校
 Teh Hsing Co. 德兴公司
 Teh Lay-seng 郑螺生
 Teng Kuo-jui 邓国瑞
 Teng Tse-ju 邓泽如
 Teng Tzu-yu 邓子瑜
 Tengchow Association of Penang
 檳城汀州会馆
 Tengchow prefecture 汀州
 Teo Eng-hock 张永福
 Teochew Pang 潮帮
 Teochews 潮州人
 The Canton 3rd Moon 29th
 Uprising 广州三月廿九起义
 Thong Chai Medical Institution
 同济医院
 Thye Guan Tong Ong Kongsi
 太原堂王公司
 T'ien Fu Kung 天福宫
 T'ien H'ou 天后
 T'ien T'ung 田桐
 T'ien Ti Hui 天地会
 Ting Ju-ch'ang 丁汝昌
 Ting Lung Company 鼎隆公司
 Tio Apiang (Chao Ah-pin)
 赵亚彬
 Titi 知知港
 Tjang Tay Sion (Cheng Tai-sung)
 郑泰嵩
 Tjoi Atjin (Chu Ah-ksin)
 朱亚辛

Toh Peh Kong 大伯公
 T'ou-chia 头家
 Triad 三合会
 Ts'ai Sha-shui 蔡沙水
 Tsinan Incident 济南惨案
 Tsungli Yamen 总理衙门
 Tua Sai Yah 大使爷
 Tung An district 同安县
 Tung Chi I Yuan 同济医院
 Tung I Hsing Co. 同益兴公司
 Tung Sheng Co. 东声公司
 Tye Kee Yoon 戴喜云
 Tzu Ming 子明
 Wah Sang Society 华生党
 Waichow Revolt 惠州起义
 Wan Hsing National Products
 Company 万兴国货公司
 Wang Fu 王斧
 Wang Tai Peng 王大鹏
 Wen Ch'iang-niang 温姜娘
 Wen Tu 文牒
 Wu Ching Ch'iu Co. 吴镜秋公司
 Wu Han Hsing Lung Chi Co.
 吴汉兴隆记公司
 Wu Hao 吴浩
 Wu Hua 吴华
 Wu I-jo 吴以若

Wu Shen year 戊申年
 Wu Tee-jen 吴休仁
 Wu-an wang 武安王
 Wuchang Uprising 武昌起义
 Yan Woh Kongsì 仁和公司
 Yang Chu-yun 杨衢云
 Yang Huo 洋货
 Yap Geok Twee 叶玉堆
 Yeh Ho-h'e 叶和合
 Yeh Hua Fen 叶华芬
 Yen Ching-hwang 颜清湟
 Yeoh 杨
 Yeoh Kongsì 杨公司
 Yin Pi-hsia 殷碧霞
 Ying Ho Association 应和会馆
 Ying Ho Kongsì 应和公司
 Ying-ho Kuan 应和馆
 Yong Ching Fatt 杨进发
 Yu Ch'ang Matches Company of
 Shanghai 上海裕昌火柴厂
 Yu Lieh 尤列
 Yu T'ai Co. 裕泰公司
 Yuan Ho Co. 源和公司
 Yueh Kang (Port Moon) 月港
 Yueh Shui 叶水
 Yung Hsing Lung Co. 永兴隆公司
 Yung Ting 永定

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