Philip A. Kuhn

Chinese Among Others

Emigration in Modern Times

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For
Anthony, Lisa, and Debby

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Contents

Dialect Groups and Their Mandarin Referents

Dialect Group	*Mandarin Referent*
Wenzhou	Wenzhou (prefecture)
Hokkien	Fujian (province, southern part)
Hokchiu	Fuzhou (city, prefecture)
Hokchia	Fuqing (county)
Henghua	Xinghua (prefecture)
Teochiu	Chaozhou (city, prefecture)
Hakka	Kejia (migrant group, S and SE provinces)
Cantonese	Guangdong (province)
Hailam	Hainan (historically part of Guangdong province)

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understanding and pleasure. Of course, none of the above is responsible for errors and misconceptions that remain in this book.

Philip A. Kuhn
Cambridge, Massachusetts
May 2009

Introduction

Some years ago on a wintry Sunday afternoon, my wife, daughter, and I happened to be touring Louis XIV's palace at Versailles. Ejected promptly at the 4:00 closing time into the dark deserted streets of the town, we urgently needed a warm café in which to refresh ourselves. After trudging past many shuttered establishments, we sighted through the gloom some grateful ideographs in red neon: "Jade Palace." Hot Chinese soup-noodles! Scanning the menu, my wife (who had taught in Laos) remarked, "This doesn't look like Chinese food. More like Southeast Asian." I made my way over to the *patron*, a sturdy-looking gentleman suited in black, standing near the bar, and in my best field-trip Mandarin asked his honorable surname and old hometown. It turned out, however, that our only common language was French. Our host was an assimilated Sino-Cambodian who spoke no Chinese and did not know his Chinese surname. At least one set of his grandparents hailed from somewhere on the China coast. Evidently, he had escaped the Khmer Rouge and made his way to France, Cambodia's former colonial overlord. Luckily, one Chinese attribute bequeathed to him was some knowledge of Chinese cuisine. That, plus the French language, amounted to enough cultural capital to begin life anew. And here he was, using that capital to adapt to new circumstances, as migrants have done throughout human history. And the soup was good. How revealing is this man's experience about the history of Chinese emigration? Clearly, he represents one pattern of refugee-remigrants who had found security and livelihood far from home. But such particulars add up to a whole picture only if compared with other patterns.

A five-century, worldwide history of Chinese emigration cannot mention, much less cover, every venue of migration or every pattern of experience. Indeed, given the variety and scale of the process under study, "coverage" is out of the question, and I shall not attempt it. Around the year 1990, some 37 million people who claim Chinese ancestry or are classed by others as Chinese lived outside the People's Republic of China and Taiwan in 136 countries worldwide.[1] More than 70 percent of the total were located in Southeast Asia ("Nanyang"), the venue of emigrant Chinese for millennia. And of the whole 37 million, about half lived in just three Southeast Asian countries: Indonesia, Thailand, and Malaysia.

Southeast Asia, then, is the numerical heart of the story, but numbers are not the main issue. To understand emigrant life in its many varieties, we need comparisons in which the main descriptor is the ecological difference from one venue to another. "Ecology" is used here as "the way a population copes with its environment." In place of coverage, I have tried to describe the major variants of the Chinese emigrant experience as it was lived in certain characteristic environments and historical periods. The axes of variation include time as well as place. A population in a particular natural, social, and economic environment, at a historic time, works out an ecology of immigrant life: patterns of livelihoods, technologies, and social institutions by which it makes its way from generation to generation. Describing this long, worldwide process requires that we explore how various ecologies, developed in response to place, time, and circumstance, have characterized migrant life.[2]

Readers will have differing views of where the main ecologies have emerged and of how they differ from one another. It seems to me that three distinct environments are 1) the tropical and subtropical colonial regimes of Asia and the Americas and of their postcolonial successor states; 2) the settler societies of the New World and Australasia, peopled largely by European immigrants; and 3) the colonial and postcolonial metropoles, mostly in Europe, to which overseas Chinese minorities (such as our Versailles restaurateur)

remigrated at times of crisis. All these venues have seen a new and somewhat different Chinese migration since the 1960s. In each of them, immigrant populations have found or created (whether by choice, chance, or compulsion) ecological niches in which they can survive and even prosper. These niches are tested in practice by how well they fit the capabilities and resources of the immigrants and by how effectively they can be shielded from competition with other immigrant subpopulations, with indigenous peoples, and with foreign powers.

The time span for this study is the five centuries during which China became inexorably connected to the outside world, a process in which migrants played a significant role and sometimes a decisive one. The "modern times" mentioned in the title begin (symbolically) with the year 1567, when a long-standing imperial ban on private maritime trade (a ban long ineffectual) was formally lifted. Along with that private trade went a gradual increase in emigration. For the end of the narrative (obviously not the end of the story), I have chosen the last few decades of the twentieth century, when the immersion of mainland China in the world economy became irreversible.

As major epochs and turning points in this five-century process, we can point to events in Chinese history, in world history, and sometimes in both. The spread of colonialism (from the late 1400s) and imperialism (from the early 1800s) involved the agency of many nationalities, not all of them European. In the formation of colonial regimes in Southeast Asia, Chinese were essential coadjutors. The mechanisms and effects of colonialism, of imperialism, and, at length, of Asian resistance affected the lives and fortunes of Chinese emigrants, changing their relations to indigenous peoples, to the homeland of China, and to the world market. Equally important, they affected their visions of social and national identity.

Central to the process of emigration was China in its successive avatars: dynastic empire, embattled republic, socialist-revolutionary nation-state, and capitalist autocracy. In all these contexts, Chinese emigration was a subset of a vaster

scene of human movement of which the major part was internal migration. Internal and external migration are joined by the life strategies and social institutions that underlie both. Migration to escape persecution (or prosecution) is a long-term historical theme, and coerced migration of various sorts is another. But voluntary labor export, seasonal sojourning, and the spatially dispersed family are the dominant features of migration, both within China and to venues abroad. Describing internal and external migration as variants of a larger process will clarify how migratory institutions and cultural orientations evolved over time.

A further concern of this study is the "others" whom Chinese have found themselves "among." It is hard to understand the experiences of Chinese overseas without examining the lives, traditions, and attitudes of non-Chinese among whom they settled. However inadequately, and with a second caveat about "coverage," I shall try to represent "other" voices fairly.

Both strictly and colloquially, the English word "emigrant" means "one who removes from his own land to settle (permanently) in another." The Chinese have no exact equivalent.[3] Although hard to prove, it is apparent that, until recently, the intentions of most Chinese "emigrants" were not to settle (permanently) outside China but to work abroad for a while and then return to their homes and communities.[4] Furthermore, many millions of "emigrants" actually have done so—a practice known as "sojourning." The spatially dispersed model of the Chinese family, with its long-practiced strategy of exporting labor and remitting money back home, shows that we are looking at *a system of labor distribution* that assumes a continuous connection between migrants and their home communities (*qiaoxiang*—"a sojourner's hometown"). The essence of the matter is *not the separation but the connection*. That many emigrants did in fact establish adopted homes outside China did not diminish the importance of the original context: most were not definitively "leaving China" so much as expanding the spatial dimension of the ties between worker and family. Although this generalization does not work for all periods or for all social classes, I suggest that it puts Chinese

emigration in a context rather different from that of a people who have been impelled by want or oppression to exile themselves from their homeland and to transfer their family bases permanently to foreign lands.

Finally, emigration has been inseparable from China's modern history. The revolution that overthrew the empire was partly generated among overseas Chinese and supported by them at crucial moments. Since the 1500s, China's economic growth has been furthered by their activities. In return, the politics and economics of China—particularly reformist and revolutionary approaches toward building a modern nation-state—have had substantial effects (though not always beneficial ones) on the lives of Chinese overseas. And the policies of various Chinese national regimes toward the outer world (their openness or autarky) have affected overseas Chinese communities everywhere. At least for the period since the 1500s, I suggest that neither Chinese history lacking emigration nor emigration lacking the history of China is a self-sufficient field of study.

Notes

1. Poston et al. (1994), 636–41. As of Poston's date of publication, Hong Kong and Macao were still outside China. Without them, the total would have been about 6 million less. Poston's numbers also include about 2.3 million in North America, .8 million in Europe, .4 million in Oceania (including Australasia), and .1 million in Africa.

2. In Kuhn (2006), I have explored, tentatively, the human ecology of Chinese migration.

3. *The Oxford English Dictionary*, online edition. "Migrate" lacking the "outward" (e) or "inward" (in/im) prefix is noncommital about permanence. The Chinese equivalents are *qiao* 僑 (to live temporarily away from home) or *yi* 移 (to move, either transitive or intransitive), as in *yimin* 移民 (to move people, or people who move, with or without intent to remain). A narrower sense of *qiao* is to live abroad but keep one's Chinese nationality.

4. Quantitative measures indicate large-scale returns: Sugihara Kaoru's figures (from Imperial Maritime Customs and other administrative reports) show that, for example in 1890, persons departing from the port of Xiamen to Southeast Asia numbered 54,000 and that in the same year, persons arriving from Southeast Asia numbered 36,000 (rounded to the nearest hundred). In 1900, the corresponding numbers were 90,400 and 26,200. For the three ports of Xiamen, Shantou, and Hong Kong, Sugihara's overall totals are as follows:

Outflow (1869–1939): 14.7 million

Inflow (1873–1939): 11.6 million

The difference, 3.1 million, presumably includes those who sojourned so long that they either settled or died. Granted, many adventitious factors (such as the Great Depression) affected trends in each direction. We can assume that *multiple* departures and arrivals roughly canceled out. These numbers and others in Sugihara's study cast doubt on the "diaspora" model in favor of a flexible labor-distribution model in which the norm was a corridor-linked international style of life and work. Sugihara's data also show lively labor-exchange remigration among Southeast Asian ports (e.g., Singapore to Batavia) in a polycentric network. Sugihara (2005), 247–50.

CHAPTER ONE

Maritime Expansion and Chinese Migration

Soon after Columbus's expeditions to the Americas, enterprising men of two powerful civilizations met in Southeast Asia and began a joint enterprise in world trade. Chinese merchants, long involved in the region's commerce, now joined European colonialists in what proved to be a crucial step toward the modern world market. Europeans set sail on the voyages that linked Europe, Africa, Asia, and the New World. Chinese emigrants were indispensable to the commercial system that resulted.

The seaborne expansions of European and Chinese civilizations differed dramatically. European states, their warlike skills whetted by centuries of fighting one another, sent armed expeditions in search of the spices of Southeast Asia and the silks and porcelains of China and (in the case of the Catholic kingdoms of Iberia) in search of souls to save. Spurred by the greed or zeal of their national governments, European explorer-merchants established trade entrepôts by force of arms. By contrast the Chinese merchants who ventured into Southeast Asia were seldom applauded by their own government, which, when it was not overtly opposing maritime commerce, reluctantly tolerated it. Yet during the last imperial dynasties, Ming (1368–1644) and Qing (1644–1911), economic and social changes within China were generating intense pressures for maritime trade and for the emigration that went with it, pressures that prodded government toward more pragmatic outlooks. This interplay between state interests and social dynamism has been shaping Chinese emigration for five centuries.

Early Modern China and the World Economy

During the two centuries after 1400, imperial policies and merchant enterprise changed the history of Southeast Asia. The Ming emperor Yongle, a usurper who craved prestige and legitimacy, commissioned seven vast maritime expeditions (1405–1431) led by his grand admiral, Zheng He.[1] Armed fleets manned by thousands of sailors navigated Southeast Asian waters, then sailed westward across the Indian Ocean as far as the Persian Gulf. Awing foreign rulers and enrolling them as tributaries to China was the main purpose, but more important historically was the knowledge of trade routes and potential markets brought back by men of the fleet. Because migration follows trade routes, the great Ming expeditions can be seen as precursors of China's modern emigration history. But facing Mongol attacks from the north, the Ming court in the 1430s turned its back on the sea, abandoned its naval project, and tried to enforce a long-standing ban on private maritime trade by Chinese merchant-shippers. Yet the intelligence brought home by the expeditions had piqued the interest of coastal merchants, and the maritime ban was widely evaded.

Beijing banned private maritime trade because the court feared that free contact with foreigners could lead to plots against the dynasty. The seacoast seemed to them a dangerous frontier seething with piracy, smuggling, and disorder—as indeed it sometimes was. From its founding in 1368, the Ming court had sought to control relations with Southeast Asia through demonstrations of ritual superiority. Foreign rulers were to acknowledge China as a suzerain power by periodic "tribute

missions," and trade was to be kept within that framework. Thus, both imperial prestige and state profit would be served, and security threats would cease to trouble the coast.

This royal determination soon ran into the central paradox of China's late imperial history: while imperial government was growing more autocratic, society was growing more complex and dynamic. Autocracy within the governing elite was intensifying. Yet the power of commerce, along with the spatial and social mobility of the people, allowed society to grow out from under the state that governed them. The pressures for overseas trade and the fate of the trade ban are a case in point.

Given China's internal economic growth, the resurgence of private maritime enterprise could not be long in coming. Already by the late 1400s, "powerful families traded overseas with large ships. Scoundrels secretly profited from it," reads a contemporary account from the politically correct point of view, but officials could neither stem the covert trade nor tax it By the mid-1500s, "many eminent lineages" in the southern provinces were involved in it.[2] Smuggling and piracy along the coast were the trade ban's natural results. Provincial officials and local elites who knew that the prosperity of the coastal provinces depended on overseas trade acted as an informal Maritime Interest that succeeded in overturning the trade ban in 1567. There followed an upsurge in commerce with Southeast Asian ports. Private shipping was to be registered and taxed, though the trade expanded so fast that official tax collectors could scarcely keep up with it. The Manchus, who conquered China from the northeast in 1644 and established the dynastic regime known as Qing (pure), again forbade maritime trade (and even coastal residence) during the early decades of their rule and reimposed trade bans sporadically. When the bans were finally lifted in 1727 as the dynasty began to feel more secure, coastal society can be said to have won a tenuous victory, and the state's capacity to control emigration was correspondingly reduced.[3]

China's commerce with the outer world was driven by its hunger for silver. By the sixteenth century, both copper coins and bulk silver were in circulation in the southern provinces. Silver was the currency for long-distance trade and for payment of taxes, while copper coins, the everyday money of the common people, were for local retail transactions. As the Chinese economy expanded, however, China needed more silver than it could produce. Neither imported nor minted by the state but circulated primarily by merchants, silver was a currency outside state control. The large amounts of silver imported through maritime trade in exchange for Chinese goods such as silk, porcelain, and tea became the linchpin of the growing economy of the sixteenth century and the basis of the imperial fiscal system. Reliance on a currency that was not only beyond government control but also dependent on foreign trade was one more step in the growing independence of commerce from government regulation.[4]

The Southeast Asian Arena

Historically, Southeast Asia has been a meeting ground of religions, cultures, and commerce.[5] From India came Buddhism and Hinduism, both of which fused with native beliefs to become major supports for rulers and their courts and diffused among the commoners through rural temples and monasteries. These foreign religions spread throughout mainland and maritime Southeast Asia in the early centuries of the common era. From the Middle East via India spread Islam, starting in the late 1200s, primarily into those parts of Southeast Asia (such as the Malay Peninsula, Sumatra, and Java) most closely involved with maritime trade in the Indian Ocean. Foreign religions and the native traditions with which they melded gave the region a vibrant cosmopolitanism.

Contributing to Southeast Asian cosmopolitanism was international commerce. Rulers of Southeast Asian kingdoms relied on maritime trade for their revenue. To govern and tax that trade at their ocean ports, they favored foreign merchants over locals, partly because they feared challenges from rich elites of their own kingdoms and partly because foreign merchants had the cultural and commercial ties needed to carry on profitable trade with their homelands. Foreign port regulators, appointed to collect dues and maintain order, typically represented the major trading nationalities that frequented a port. As essential middlemen, these *syahbandars* did business on the margins of two realms: that of their foreign patron and that of their native lands. They made their fortunes by leveraging this marginality in two directions: to enhance their profits in each of their identities by using the force of the other.[6] Chinese merchants had been among the many trading nationalities who served in such marginal posts. Since the early 1400s, local rulers had valued the Chinese as middlemen in their dealings with the Ming dynasty, whose tribute system enhanced their own regional status and wealth.[7] After the arrival of the Europeans, such posts became disproportionately filled by Chinese.

European colonialists sought to control trade in the spices of Southeast Asia and the silks and porcelains of China. From their new base in Malacca, the Portuguese pushed into China's southern coastal region starting in 1517 and by the 1550s had planted a settlement in the Pearl River estuary, the port of Macao, which became an entrepôt for Japanese silver. Since the mid-sixteenth century, Japan had been China's main supplier of silver but began to restrict silver exports in the late 1600s. The New World subsequently became the main source.

In 1571, the Spaniards established a fortified trading port at Manila, where there was already a small population of Chinese traders. By the late 1500s, Manila had become a transshipment port on the sea route from the Spanish colonies in the New World: to Manila, Chinese junks from the Xiamen (Amoy) region of Fujian province brought silks and porcelains to exchange for Mexican silver. Spanish galleons carried the precious goods back to Acapulco, whence they eventually were brought to European markets, while the Chinese junks returned home laden with Mexican silver dollars. Dutch and Portuguese shippers also brought Mexican silver to China via Europe and India. The flow of Mexican silver into China overtook Japanese silver by 1775, thus tying China to the markets of Europe via the New World and the European port colonies in Southeast Asia. Most of the silver imported from those colonies to China came in Chinese ships. Silver imports brought both benefit and risk. As currency for an expanding domestic commerce, the growing silver supply was essential. The social changes that spurred modern emigration would not have been possible without it. The risk was that the availability of foreign silver fluctuated: a shortage in world markets or an unfavorable balance of trade, or both, could throttle China's internal commerce and compromise its fiscal system, which now depended on a reasonably stable exchange rate between silver and copper. A world market was a risky place, but, for better or worse, China was firmly connected to it as emigration entered its modern era.

The expansion of Chinese shipping into the European colonies of Southeast Asia was the precondition for Chinese emigration. As China became linked to the world market through the exchange of luxury goods for silver, commerce drew increasing numbers of Chinese rattan-sailed junks from the southeast coast into the Southeast Asian trade routes. Sojourning Chinese merchants became more numerous and widespread, particularly after the 1680s. As south China commercial interests expanded, merchant junks began to carry passengers into colonial port cities such as Manila and Batavia (Jakarta). Thus, these merchant bridgeheads became the routes through which Chinese migrants of all classes could find work and opportunity outside their crowded homeland.

Springboard for Emigrants: A Changing Society

During the early phase of its modern emigration history, China was slowly developing a synergistic relationship with the outer world. Its commercializing economy was sustained by foreign trade, and commerce in turn made it possible for rural society to support a steadily growing population. With acreage per capita growing scarcer in relation to population, migration became one of several strategies for family survival. Migrants (both within China and abroad) included laborers and sojourning merchants. Those who went abroad promoted and sustained China's foreign trade by establishing a continuous presence in Southeast Asia as essential coadjutors of Western colonialists and revenue-hungry local monarchs.

This synergy between the economies of China, Europe, and Southeast Asia has been a central theme of modern history and formed the basis of China's own form of overseas expansion: emigration. From the sixteenth century to the early nineteenth, China's relationship to the outer world was in what might be called its "evolutionary phase," in which the effects on Chinese society were slow and incremental. Beginning in the 1780s, events moved the relationship into a "revolutionary phase," starting as a rapid expansion of commerce with Britain and culminating in the disruption of China's economy by imperialism's opening wedge, the opium trade.

China's modern history of emigration started in social transformations during the late empires. By the mid-1400s, the breakdown of rigid early Ming tax and labor systems allowed families to move, to buy and sell land, and to choose their occupations more freely. Compulsory labor for the state was gradually commuted to money payments. Silver not only became the required currency for taxes but also supported the expansion of private commerce, particularly in the maritime provinces. Networks of rural markets grew denser and the economies of urban centers more dynamic. Wealthy landowners who moved into cities to enjoy more secure and elegant lives were but the top layer of a growing consumer market. The expanding money supply stimulated interregional trade: cash crops such as raw cotton or silk might be raised in one area and processed into textiles in urban centers

hundreds of miles away. In the rural hinterland, the lives of farmers became linked more firmly to local markets.

Money supply was not the only ingredient in the expansion of China's domestic economy. New World crops introduced through foreign trade (yams and peanuts, tobacco and maize) nourished a growing population and increased its fertility. Because these crops could be grown in unirrigated soil, land-short families could farm the hilly uplands as the population expanded. Tobacco became a profitable cash crop, and yams, introduced from South America through Manila, became a staple food of farm families.[8]

As the economy diversified and expanded, population expanded with it. Population increase was already gaining momentum by the fifteenth century, breaking through 200 million for the first time by the beginning of the seventeenth. The ensuing decades of civil war and natural disasters, followed by the Manchu conquest, reduced that total by around 40 percent. Once the conquest was secure and the country as a whole at peace, the demographic tide rose again. By 1700, it had recovered to 150 million, and conditions were in place for a huge increase in the eighteenth century. By 1779, the total had reached 270 million and twenty-five years later had exceeded 300 million. Early in the period of mass emigration (1850s), it had reached about 380 million.[9]

The swelling population was busy expanding its cultivated land area. Yet while population trebled from the mid-seventeenth century to the mid-nineteenth, cultivated land only doubled.[10] The social results were portentous. Comparing available figures for 1753 and 1812, land per capita nationally had shrunk 43 percent, from 0.7 acres to 0.4. Regional differences meant that the shortfall was regionally unequal. The provinces worst off were those of the South and Southeast, where mountains rising near the coast left little room for new fields. Southern Fujian, already reliant on maritime trade and overseas migration, was particularly land poor: 1766 figures show only about .3 acres per person in that province (by contrast with Jiangsu at about .5 acres or neighboring Guangdong at .8).[11]

Strategies for Family Survival

Rural families adapted to land shortage in many ways. The preferred strategy was to maintain family income, without abandoning the family's base in farming, by sending excess male labor to work elsewhere. First, there was investing labor to expand productive acreage by terracing hillsides and reclaiming alluvial land from lakes and river deltas. China's sculptured landscape today is a monument to immense labor input over centuries—turning hilly land into flat. Next was household production for market: putting women's and children's hands to work spinning and weaving, even at low marginal return, to produce cloth for sale. Household production required a nationwide spread of rural markets and an expansion of the money supply. The spread of commerce in rural China also encouraged families to grow cash crops such as tobacco or sugarcane, which brought higher returns per acre.

The final adaptive strategy was migration, whether within the country or overseas. The most common form of migration was the export of male labor: if the family's landholding was too small to absorb all the labor of its men, why not send them elsewhere to work for wages or do petty trade? The effect was not to break up the family but rather to preserve it by pooling increased resources. Wage earning might mean working for a larger landholder or a government construction project nearby or moving to a nearby city to find work. Trade could mean anything from hawking goods on shoulder poles or carts, to running a small shop, to trading goods across distances great and small. Sojourning (living temporarily away from home with the intention of returning sooner or later) thus became common in Chinese life. As the commercial economy expanded from the fifteenth century on, the cities offered more opportunities for sojourners to earn a living. In some cases, a man might seek a living overseas by boarding ship at a maritime trading port such as Guangzhou (Canton), Macao, or Xiamen. But even after the onset of mass emigration in the 1850s, sojourning abroad certainly remained rare in comparison to labor export within China itself.

Beyond male labor export and sojourning lay the migration of entire families to less crowded regions. China's great age of migration began with resettlement within the country. Pulling up stakes and moving the whole family was a more drastic step than sending male labor out to sojourn, but it was a decision made by millions of families as land shortage began to threaten their survival. Both the labor-export and family migration strategies belie the traditional image of China as a nation of stay-at-homes (a normative vision that Chinese have often applied to themselves, then passed on to Westerners).

Although families preferred to keep the household base in place, keeping it there paradoxically could require dispersing family members over space. Dispersal, however, did not imply family breakup: central to China's family system has been the principle that the family estate is not compromised by the spatial dispersion of its members. The principle of the "estate household" (Mandarin: *jia*) was that all contributed and all benefited. Male heirs inherited equally on the father's death or when the family property was divided by contract (usually on the marriage of the eldest son). The main point was that living away entailed both the moral obligation to contribute some part of one's earnings to the family back home and the assurance that one's stake in the estate did not diminish with time or distance. This system of joint family property was essential to labor export and accordingly to migration.[12]

Nevertheless, the stay-at-home myth was influential in several respects. First, the preference that farm families retain their rural base, even while engaging in manufacturing and labor export, meant that the commercialization of Chinese society since the sixteenth century did not lead to large-scale urbanization. Second, it meant that the sojourner's sense of his hometown identity led him not only to maintain ties with home folks but also to form regional associations that, as we shall see, sustained the lives—and the livelihoods—of sojourners in alien places, both within China and overseas; the regional particularism of Chinese society enabled migrants to carve out niches in regional economies far from home.

Migration in Early Modern Chinese Society

The study of modern Chinese emigration begins with the experiences of ordinary people during China's early modern era (roughly between the mid-sixteenth and the mid-eighteenth century).[13] As China became more closely linked to the world economy, both internal migration and maritime trade increased. Meanwhile, social institutions were evolving to meet the needs of a more mobile population and a more commercialized economy. The links among social change, internal migration, and external migration are a prominent theme of China's social history.

Emigration was a subset of a much larger process of human movement of which people migrating within China in search of livelihood was by far the larger component. This fact remains true in today's China, where the breakup of collective agriculture and the increasing liberation of private commerce from state control have set off a nationwide surge of internal migration in search of better family incomes.[14] At the same time, Chinese migration has emerged, once again, into the outer world, most of it now to North America, Europe, and Australasia. The ratio of internal over external migrants is immense. The official counts of both are likely to fall short, for the interest of many migrants is to stay out of government view. Although reliable numbers are impossible to come by, the official 1990 census for emigrants lists 237,000 documented departures, whereas internal migrants were estimated between 80 and 100 million.[15]

The point, however, is the connection between the two sectors of migration: not a merging of the two movements but rather institutional and cultural links—many of the same techniques, practices, and social usages underlie both. Studies of contemporary migration within China point to such familiar themes as familistic and regional links constituting the "chain" of "chain migration," the specialization of particular areas in a culture of migration (both internal and external), specialization of particular regional groups in specific niche markets for the manufacture and sale of goods, and the patron-client relationships that generate and sustain social capital within migrant communities. All these features of the migration process are to be seen in the twenty-first century as clearly as in the eighteenth. The way to maximize family income was to send people and capital where they could most profitably be employed, whether that meant near home or far away. And it is significant that one of the best recent studies of internal Chinese migration portrays a sending community (Wenzhou) that is famous historically for exporting migrants to both domestic and foreign venues.[16] We shall return to this theme in chapter 8.

Migration and the Imperial State

Over many centuries, China's rulers have approached migration from three perspectives: ideology, security, and pragmatism. The particular balance among them has colored the history of state

migration policy from imperial times down to the present day, and their fluctuations have had momentous effects on the lives and fortunes of the people.

The Ideological Perspective

Instead of looking seaward like European monarchs of the era, China's imperial rulers sought most of their wealth from the taxable fields of the interior. As lords of a centralized realm that rested on the surplus of the rural economy, they associated stable agrarianism with dynastic security; they liked people to stay in known places where they could be registered and taxed. They valued farming over commerce, which was associated with human movement and appeared a less reliable tax base. This fiscal outlook was complemented by an ideology that imputed moral and social superiority to agriculture over trade and to settled farmer over mobile merchant. But never had this ideal status order been close to reality, and the gap between theory and practice widened as the early modern period progressed.

Imperial attitudes toward internal migration were inconsistent. Historically, migration under state auspices has been a prominent part of official policy. To garrison distant borders, to fill underpopulated frontiers, or to put troublemakers out of business, Chinese regimes have moved millions from their homes. In fact, the original meaning of today's word meaning "migrant" or "migration" (*yimin*) was "to move people (by state command)." Unauthorized migration, however, alarmed the monarchy as a threat of disorder or as an implication that the state was unable to provide secure livelihoods for its people.

Emperor Yongzheng (r. 1723–1735), an assiduous rationalizer, achieved significant administrative reforms. Besides intimidating the literati to preclude challenges to Manchu legitimacy, he continued the practice of his father, Emperor Kangxi, of indoctrinating the common people in Confucian morality. The population of Sichuan province had been decimated during the Manchu conquest, and since then Beijing's policy encouraged migration to get depopulated land under cultivation. For four decades after 1667, some 1.7 million people made the trek. By Yongzheng's time, Sichuan's arable land had largely filled up. Yet migrants still came, motivated perhaps more by the "pull" of cheap land than by the "push" of poverty. Yongzheng became convinced that migration, though probably unstoppable, had to be regulated. Besides requiring migrants to apply for passes, new arrivals were to be carefully registered. And Yongzheng did not neglect the ideological side, stressing the vision of a benevolent monarch caring for his subjects as children.

Imperial Edict against Unauthorized Migration, 1728[17]

"Last year I heard that several tens of thousands of people of Hunan, Hubei, Guangdong, and Jiangxi provinces emigrated in groups to Sichuan because of poor harvests and high rice prices in their own provinces. I have ordered the governor-general and the governor of Sichuan to make suitable arrangements to keep them from being homeless. However, I am aware that last year Jiangxi had a rather good harvest. Even in Hunan, Hubei, and Guangdong, there were no real crop failures. Only lands near the rivers were somewhat inundated and suffered some loss. How could that have resulted in so many inhabitants' recklessly leaving their home villages? This situation bears careful watching.

"According to memorials by provincial officials, it was probably because there was plenty of untilled land in Sichuan, and rice was plentiful and cheap. The ignorant commoners always harbor a desire for material gain. . . . Moreover, scoundrelly local middlemen advertised that it was easy to make a living in Sichuan and that migrants could become wealthy once they had obtained Sichuan registration. They promised to send households there in return for a money payment. The ignorant people were taken in by them. Not only the poor were seduced by their wiles: those who had property also sold their holdings and went to seek their fortunes. This was generally the cause of the problem.

"But the people did not understand that the reason food was cheap in Sichuan was that the territory was vast and the population small. If many people from other places all gathered in a single province, then the demand on the food supply would be heavy. Then how could cheap prices prevail as before? Moreover, from the migrants'home villages to Sichuan is a thousand or even several thousand *li* (1 *li* = about 1/3 mile). These people abandoned their native places, holding the old by the arm and the young by the hand, to trudge over land and water. How could they have the expenses needed for traveling? In case they ran into trouble on the way, there would

be no gate at which to seek help. Either they would become bandits, or they would perish in ditches from starvation. Then it would be too late for them to repent. Would not such misery have arisen from their own reckless actions?

"Rustic people have limited understanding. They can realize the truth only when instructed by their superiors. Local officials should keep them under control at all times and should take special pains to instruct them in difficult times. They should enlighten their ignorance and relieve their poverty. Protecting them always as if they were children, officials should teach them to feel attached to their home villages and realize the disadvantages of migrating. Few of the ignorant commoners will fail to realize the truth. . . . [The emperor then calls for a greater effort to reclaim wasteland within particular provinces by giving local people incentives to develop it.]

"I labor arduously from dawn to dusk, caring constantly for the livelihood of the people. . . . Now I am issuing this edict, not in order to prohibit the people from seeking a livelihood in other places, but only because I cannot bear to see ignorant commoners, seeking material gain, be deluded by perverse talk and thereby rashly leave their homes and willingly suffer the hardships of migration. The common people, no matter where they live, are my children. If there are poor harvests in their native places, the local officials should bear in mind my concern for the people and immediately memorialize me about it. I will certainly bestow abundant benevolence [in the form of relief grain and tax remission] to enable them to survive. There is no need for them to migrate to other places to seek uncertain material gain. Let each governor-general and governor publicize this edict and give explicit instructions to the officials and people in his jurisdiction, so that all will know."

The Security Perspective

Although unauthorized internal migration raised security concerns, the imperial court felt even more threatened by migration to foreign lands. In official minds, this involved merchants trading abroad, sojourning in foreign ports to do business, and perhaps staying indefinitely. Even at times when private foreign trade was not categorically banned, the court decreed harsh penalties for anyone who stayed abroad more than two years (an interval that merchants reasonably might need to conduct their business in a foreign port). "Most traders who travel overseas are not law-abiding subjects," warned Yongzheng in 1727. If they stay abroad a long time and then try to return, they may even "have some scheme for secret collaboration with foreigners."[18] Emigration was labeled a political act not practiced by honest folk.

Besides reflecting stereotyped Confucian mistrust of merchants, this conviction arose from bitter experience of coastal disorder since the sixteenth century and again during the dynastic transition from Ming to Qing in the mid-seventeenth. Taiwan was held first by a Dutch garrison and then by the Ming loyalist Zheng Chenggong, who expelled the Dutch in 1661. Thus, Taiwan and the Fujianese coastline were considered a first-class security threat by the newly installed Manchu conquerors. From 1656 until 1683, when Zheng's regime was demolished by Qing forces, a draconian maritime ban was clamped on the southeast coast. An imperial decree of 1656 warned that it was "forbidden for merchants to set out to sea." Any official who permitted a ship to weigh anchor was to be cashiered and severely punished. Summary execution awaited anyone, whether civilian or military, caught trading food or other goods to the enemy, basically using military law to break off communication between land and sea. In 1661, the entire southeastern littoral was depopulated by imperial order, the inhabitants forcibly moved inland in order to starve the Zheng regime of supplies and recruits.[19]

The Pragmatic Perspective

Although the coastal security crises of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries affected official policy toward the maritime frontier for generations, officialdom still had to face the economic realities of coastal China: maritime trade—both along the coast and across the sea—continued to sustain survival. The pragmatic perspective is seen in Emperor Kangxi's reversal of the maritime ban in 1684 once the menacing Zheng regime had been destroyed. Overriding official cautions, Kangxi insisted that the maritime ban be rescinded immediately for the sake of popular livelihood, to enhance state revenue from merchant profits, and for the economic prosperity of Fujian and Guangdong provinces, which would benefit the whole realm. His edict of 1684 shows that imperial pragmatism recognized not only the social and fiscal benefits of commerce but also the historical ecologies of the coastal provinces and their relevance to the regime as a whole.

> If the resources of these two provinces are plentiful, and if wealth circulates freely, all provinces will benefit. To the extent that there is profitable commerce, wealthy merchants can be taxed, the little people will not be burdened, and the military expenses of the coastal provinces will be met without the trouble of transferring funds from the interior provinces. Thus the interior treasuries will be in surplus, and the commoners will have enough to sustain them. Therefore We are ordering the resumption of maritime trade.[20]

Free of ideological cant, Kangxi's pragmatism has been regarded by historians as the foundation for China's eighteenth-century expansion of maritime trade and emigration.[21] Yet as we shall see in the next chapter, ideology and security were not so easily expunged from the state agenda where migration was concerned.

State Control of Migration

Whatever the current imperial policy, migration could always seep through the cracks in the system because of the superficiality of government control. Although the imperial state ruled a society of subcontinental scale, it lacked the modern state's ambition to manage every nook and cranny of it. A single legal code and a single administrative system extended over the length and breadth of the empire. Yet the imperial state's static framework of administration ruled an ever larger, more complex and dynamic society, and much day-to-day management of community affairs was left to local elites. In the coastal provinces, these elites had long-standing interests in maritime trade.

Elites included both scholar literati and wealthy merchants. Literati (sometimes called "gentry" in Western writings by analogy with the British squirearchy), who held degrees from the civil service examination system, either had not obtained official posts or had retired from them. The government turned to them for many forms of local management, including local-level public works, charity relief, local defense, and education. Their power and wealth lay partly in landholding, though in greater proportion in connections and eligibility for government office. Through family ties or intermediaries, many of them were also involved in commerce. As the pool from which the bureaucracy was drawn, these elites were a potent ruling stratum on the local level: well connected in official circles and arbiters of local affairs (though, unlike the British squirearchy, membership was not formally hereditary).

The orthodox cant that farming was socially more worthy than trade hardly reflected the real situation in local society, where merchants were influential and respected. Contributing to community projects such as poor relief, local defense, and temple foundations was the accepted way to transmute commercial wealth into social status. Merchants also participated in local governance by governing themselves: through their trade guilds, they organized the commercial life of cities by regulating prices, arbitrating disputes, and overseeing business practices. In some cities, management of local institutions (such as community temples) brought merchants, literati, and officials together into something resembling a joint managerial elite.[22] By the nineteenth century, a period of dynastic weakness and social turmoil, city officials delegated some urban services, such as firefighting, to merchant guilds.[23]

To protect literati preeminence and government authority from being challenged by men of mere wealth, the status of merchants was kept theoretically low. Yet their real social status and power were high, just below that of the literati elite. Cultivating official favor through gifts to public causes and joining in the management of urban services brought merchants together with the literati and the bureaucracy. Literati were demeaned if they traded on their own account, but they could and did use merchant front men or kinsmen to handle their investments, another way for merchants to partake of the status and power of the literati. Officials served as silent partners in commerce, taking their share of profits in return for protection. Marriage alliances between literati and merchant families were another link between these elites. It is not surprising that substantial merchants were accustomed to wielding local influence. Merchants were delegated certain important fiscal duties, notably farming the salt and brokerage taxes, both of which were major sources of imperial revenue. Yet in these as in other respects, they remained dependent on the patronage of the ultimate power holders, the monarchy and its literati officials. Learning to prosper in a position of derived or delegated authority was important training for Chinese merchants, some of whom would find themselves in foreign lands where political power was closely held by colonialists or local royalty and where Chinese of any class had even less chance to share it. Outside China, the headmen of local Chinese communities were not literati, who seldom emigrated, but merchants, of whom many had risen from farmer or artisan origins yet could draw on an ancient commercial culture of self-respect and social responsibility.[24]

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

Whatever the policy behind particular maritime bans, one force lay behind the eventual failure of them all: the need of families for the income from trade and migration. Historically, goods that fill basic human needs cannot long be denied through regulation. In China, evading the imperial salt monopoly was always a profitable business niche for smugglers. Similarly, there have always been profitable niches for people—including state officials—willing to ignore or even facilitate smuggling, black markets, or migration. As a result, whatever Beijing's security or ideological priorities, emigration and the maritime trade on which it depended were never fully stopped.

The Social Structure of Migration

In the early 1940s, a Japanese social scientist visited a north China village and interviewed a farmer about the Chinese system of equal inheritance within the family.[25]

> Q: If, for example, the youngest brother went to Manchuria to find work and sent home 200 yuan, with which land was bought, whose land would it be?
>
> A: The family's.
>
> Q: If the youngest brother splits off [and forms his own family unit], can he not take the land with him, saying it is his? A: He cannot.
>
> Q: Suppose there are three brothers, of whom the eldest is a hard worker and the youngest either a do-nothing or a minor. Suppose also that, before the household split, the father, with the money earned by the eldest, bought some land. Would he, as a special favor, give the land alone to the eldest?
>
> A: I have never heard of such a case.

The farmer was describing the basis of "the spatially extended family." For at least the past five centuries and probably longer, Chinese families have lived in both a continuum of space and a continuum of time. The space continuum meant that, as in the north China family just described, "living together" did not necessarily mean living in the same physical locality. Living "in" the family (in the sense of one's obligations and expectations) was not compromised because one was living 100, 1,000, or even 10,000 miles away. And living "separately" might mean living in the same compound but cooking on a separate stove.

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

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

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

With respect to migration, labor was an additional salable resource for a family with too many males and too little land. Millions left home to work for wages, whether in the next town, the next province, or more distant places. The unskilled looked for work as farmhands, as goods haulers, or as laborers on public works. Skilled workers (such as miners) were at an advantage, and many trekked into the hills to open and operate mines. Yet not all who sought work found it. Roving peddlers and beggars became a common sight on China's roads. By the 1740s, great crowds of unemployed men ("excess mouths") were gathering near public works sites where "they could be gathered by a single shout."[26] Cities were thronged by wanderers who had dropped out of the job market: "By day, they form dense crowds; by night, they know not where to shelter themselves," wrote an observer in Beijing.[27]

Not all migrants were poor, nor was leaving home always a response to land shortage. Substantial merchants moved around the empire in search of opportunities for investment and profit. Some relatively poor areas with few local opportunities specialized in the export of entrepreneurial men. For example, a mountainous prefecture in the province of Anhui was famous for weaving an empirewide network of "Huizhou merchants"—a specialized migrant group with colonies in many cities. Shanxi province exported bankers specializing in long-distance transfer of funds. Shaoxing prefecture exported clerks to government offices. Merchants sojourning in distant places and sending funds home were an important part of the migrant scene. Besides the export of male workers, migration of whole families was common by the 1700s. By then, contemporary writers recognized that China was experiencing a new sort of migration: caused not by natural disasters, war, or government oppression but by pressure of population on land.[28] As we have seen, Sichuan attracted migrants from all over south and central China. Manchuria in the northeast attracted them from Shandong and Hebei. From Fujian and Guangdong, they headed for the islands of Taiwan and Hainan and into the river valleys of Guangxi. Hundreds of thousands moved out of crowded deltas and valleys into the hills, where as "shed people" (squatters) they lived by raising yams and maize and by selling forest products.

For all these reasons—the search for new opportunities, commercial specialties, or simply to make up for land shortage—internal migration, by the turn of the eighteenth century, had become an accustomed part of Chinese life. Millions were on the move. Between 1722 and 1776, the population of Sichuan rose from 2.3 to 6.6 million, of whom some 3.4 million were immigrants. By 1776, Sichuan was a polyglot society of migrants from seven provinces. By century's end, the province had tipped from an abundance of land to a shortage.[29] The southwestern province of Yunnan had received by the early nineteenth century at least 1.3 million peasant migrants and some 1 million miners.[30]

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

In this vast migratory process, people of the southern littoral provinces were destined to play a special role. Separated from the interior by mountain ranges, these coastal dwellers' survival strategy looked not inland but outward toward the sea. The seafaring populations of the south and

southeast coast added a special dimension to the geography of migration: their regional trading systems had far-reaching spatial extensions overseas. Their hinterlands included trading ports either elsewhere on the China coast or in Southeast Asia. Instead of being a boundary, the seacoast was a connection.

Ecologies of Dialect Groups and Their Homelands

The coastal provinces of the South and Southeast were (and still are) China's epicenters of emigration. The region embraced parts of three provinces making up two physiographic zones: the Southeast Coast and Lingnan macroregions.[34] The physiographic macroregions of China (as revealed by G. William Skinner) are not congruent with administrative boundaries but instead are delimited by their landforms and market areas: girded by mountains and integrated by rivers that carried goods between regional core and periphery. The economics of macroregions dictated transport of goods by the least costly routes—usually by water—descending through river basins and converging in commercialized "core" areas, commonly surrounding fluvial junctions or deltas.[35] (See Maps 1.1, 1.2, and 1.3, which read from northeast to southwest.)

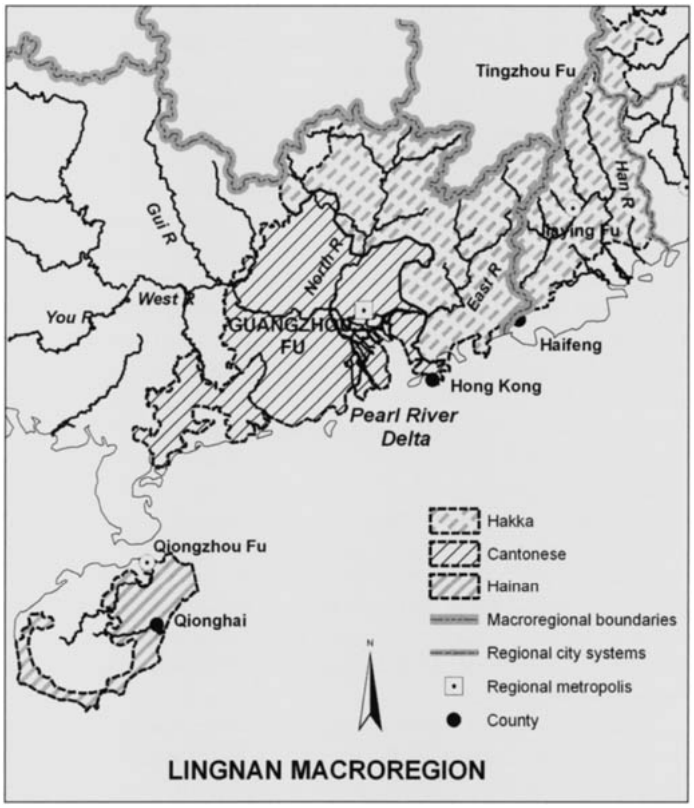
Although macroregions do not strictly determine culture and language, the commercialized cores of marketing areas nourish distinctive dialect groups much as an endogamous population delimits and perpetuates a gene pool. In this respect, commerce, by its repetitive ambits of human movement, influences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

This variety has had consequences for migration. Cohesion within dialect groups is a resource for community cohesion, mutual protection, and commercial integration. Occupationally, dialect-group members can establish economic turf, essentially cartels that resist penetration by outsiders; this capacity for guildlike commercial behavior reduces intragroup competition and thus sustains profits for particular commodities and services. Same-dialect ties also identify compatriots at a distance and facilitate business networking. And shared dialect is a vector of chain migration.

Shared dialect is historically near the root of compatriotism. As an identity marker, it is entwined with shared kinship and hometown. Historically, Chinese migrants have shared compatriot affinities (dialect and hometown) more consistently than they have national affinities as Chinese. As aspects of specific homelands, dialects have been the primary building blocks of Chinese communities overseas. Throughout the history of Chinese migration (both internal and external), dialect divisions have made their mark on social structure, status consciousness, cultural expression, occupational specialization, and civic engagement. Since the turn of the twentieth century, dialect divisions have been covered by layers of pan-Chinese nationalism and worldwide commercial integration. Covered, but not smothered: dialect divisions have not only survived but still play a part in bonding large-scale Chinese associations overseas (as we shall see in chapter 8). As the essence of group identity, dialect has wrought both community cohesion and intercommunity rivalry, even in recent times. For all these reasons, Chinese emigrant populations have conventionally been referred to by their component dialects, which correlate roughly with identifiable geographic origins.

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

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



Map 1.2. Lingnan macroregion dialect groups. Produced after Skinner (1985) and Li et al. (1988).

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

The natural and social ecologies of these emigrant-sending regions inclined their populations toward commercialization, maritime enterprise, and migration. What I shall call the "Maritime Interest" grew from their sparse soil and resourceful people. Adapting to population growth and land shortage thus involved several interlocking strategies: supplementing subsistence farming by cash cropping, manufacturing, and wage labor; supplementing agriculture by commerce; and taking advantage of sea transport to spread commerce and labor over as extensive an area as migrants could profitably exploit. Indeed, as Jennifer Cushman points out, the inhabitants of this crowded, mountainous region were creating "fields from the sea."[37] The longest-established migrant population, the Hokkien, exemplifies this special littoral ecology.

Map 1.3. Areas of detailed maps.

Minnan and the Hokkien Maritime Pioneers

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

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

Hokkien adapted to their ecology in various ways. Large, rich lineages in Minnan had vested interests in maritime trade; returns from commerce far outpaced those from agriculture. Small, poor lineages, oppressed by powerful rivals, were rack-rented or even driven off the land to seek livelihoods in towns far from home. Lineages as power holders thus contributed to emigration both by generating capital for commercial investment by the rich and by displacing crowds of the rural poor. Displacement into crafts, petty commerce, and manual labor in nearby towns was often the first stage in a migration path that ultimately reached across the sea: nearest at hand, Taiwan; if not Taiwan, then the Philippines, Java, Malaya, Borneo, or Siam.[38] Farmers driven from their villages by poverty became craftsmen and laborers in the bustling commercial towns whose trade was nourished by coined silver flowing from Japan via Portuguese Macao and from the New World via Spanish-held Manila. By the seventeenth century, southern Fujian was a vigorously commercial society in which people of all social classes learned how trade and migration could support and perpetuate their families and lineages. The rise of Xiamen ("Amoy" in Hokkien dialect) as the chief port for Chinese shipping contributed to the commercial growth of its entire hinterland region and

attracted thousands of farmers to urban centers. Minnan's population had already expanded its sights and its ambit of movement beyond the village setting.[39]

The Hokkien migration experience from the early seventeenth century was linked to the settlement of Taiwan, which became the largest receiver of farmers seeking land and opportunity. Indeed, the settlement of Taiwan, which began in earnest after Beijing lifted the coastal ban in 1684, began as a largely Hokkien enterprise.[40] By 1700, about 20 percent of people registered at Zhangzhou and Quanzhou, the prefectures near Xiamen, had actually migrated to Taiwan.[41] At the same time, smaller numbers were sailing on merchant ships to Manila (a fortified Spanish port) and to the Dutch counterpart Batavia in Java. By the mid-eighteenth century, groups of Hokkien merchants had migrated to Guangzhou to run the franchised trade agencies (*hang*) that were licensed to trade with Westerners. The diffusion of Hokkien dialect to Taiwan and throughout the South China Sea has made it a *lingua franca* throughout the region to the point where one can use Hokkien dialect to hail a taxi (successfully) in Taipei, Singapore, or Bangkok.[42]

Although Hokkien in Southeast Asia occupied every level of society, one outgrowth of their experience in long-distance shipping enterprises was their grip on large-scale trading and banking. In early colonial societies, Hokkien became the Chinese progenitors of the creolized Peranakan population in Java and of the Baba in the Straits Settlements, and their dialect formed the Chinese component of the creolized patois spoken by those groups. Just as in domestic migration, "sojourning" was the preferred mode for merchants (who could reasonably expect to return home) and perhaps for many poor laborers or craftsmen (who, however, might never acquire the resources to return).

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

Cantonese and the Ecology of the Pearl River Delta

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

Areas closest to Guangzhou, the provincial capital (known as the "three counties"—Panyu, Nanhai, and Shunde), were centers of manufacturing and trade. Foshan's iron and porcelain industries drew thousands of workers from surrounding rural areas. Seasonal labor came to the industrial towns from the more agricultural "four counties" of Taishan, Enping, Kaiping, and Xinhui, which relied on labor-intensive cash crops (including silk, sugar, and tobacco). Workers in these areas were so accustomed to wage labor that moving some distance to find it was not much of a stretch. In the intervals between cropping seasons, thousands of peasants migrated long distances for short-term work in the manufactories of Shunde and Foshan.[44] The peculiar landforms of delta agriculture also provided opportunities for specialized wage labor: much of the land consisted of polders (silt fields reclaimed from the sea by diking and draining). Financed by wealthy gentry, these enterprises absorbed multitudes of laborers. Given their habituation to labor export, families in the Pearl River delta developed flexible and diversified economic strategies.[45]

Farm life in the delta illustrates how families could adapt to overpopulation by combining subsistence farming with production for market. Instead of relying exclusively on cash crops, they continued working their family plots for their own food needs. The sugar industry, for example, was based on a myriad of small family farms rather than on a plantation system. Smallholders sustained their bond to the land and to family-based farming even while families diversified their incomes by hiring out male labor.[46] Just as seasonal labor export was based on individual farm households, longer-term migration also needed the farm family as an anchor to rural life in the delta country. Central to the sojourner's way of life was the knowledge that his family relied on him and that

whatever he sent home would remain part of the household estate in which he remained a stakeholder.

Cantonese were well equipped by their tradition of labor export to seek livelihoods abroad. Substantial emigration to Southeast Asia had begun as Cantonese refugees from the Manchu conquest settled in Champa and Annam (today's Vietnam) and Cambodia. Yet before the mid-eighteenth century, Guangzhou lagged behind Xiamen and other Fujianese ports as an emigrant sender to the Nanyang because Cantonese trading interests were already well served by foreign ships (including the vessels of tribute emissaries); hence, they were not impelled to develop their own shipping (and emigrant-carrying) industry.[47] Although it could not rival Xiamen as a port for purely Chinese shipping, by 1757 Guangzhou was the sole port licensed to receive Westerners' shipping. Thereby Cantonese gained increased access to the trade routes of the South China Sea. Contact with foreigners also brought familiarity with foreign artifacts, by which some Cantonese learned to operate and repair machinery, an eminently salable skill. Later, the British seizure of Hong Kong provided easy access to what was soon to become the region's busiest shipping entrepôt. Cantonese thereby were able to pioneer far-flung emigration venues in North America, Australasia, and other areas less frequented by Hokkien; and by the second half of the nineteenth century were flocking to the tin mines of the Malayan jungle.

The Teochiu: Shipping, Trade, and Settlement

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

Numerically, nineteenth- and twentieth-century Teochiu emigrants were mostly poor farmers, craftsmen, and wage laborers displaced by poverty, warfare, and natural disasters. Their emigration venues were situated throughout Southeast Asia, with Siam/Thailand still the preferred destination (to this day, the Chinese population of Thailand is predominantly Teochiu). With the opening of Shantou as a treaty port in 1860, the export of laborers rapidly increased, an estimated two-thirds of whom were voluntary emigrants and the rest indentured (contract) coolies.[50] Overseas, Teochiu gained an initial foothold in plantation agriculture (pepper and gambier in Singapore and Malaya, sugar in Siam) but later branched out into varied occupations, including (in Thailand) the highest spheres of business and finance.[51]

The Hakka: Borderland Frontiersmen

As internal migrants adapted to clearing and cultivating hilly uplands along macroregional borders, the Hakka (lit. "guest people") were a peripheral dialect group with a distinctive culture. Occupying niches in frontier ecologies, they labored at mining and forestry, quarrying, stonecutting, metalworking, and charcoal burning, along with slash-and-burn agriculture. Uniquely among ethnic Han, Hakka women kept their feet unbound, which made them effective cultivators alongside their husbands or on their own while the men sojourned elsewhere. Their historic homeland was the mountainous borders separating three southeastern and southern macroregions, but they expanded their areas of settlement into the lowlands during periods of economic growth when work was plentiful. Faced with hostile Cantonese-speaking neighbors, they considered themselves (and often rightly) an embattled ethnic minority whose safety depended on community self-defense.[52]

As emigrants, these frontier-bred people were able to sustain themselves in demanding environments, such as the jungles of western Borneo, where Hakka (and some Teochiu) were invited by the local Malay sultan around 1750 to mine gold and where militant self-defense corps proved essential to survival.[53] Community self-defense also led Hakka communities into wider conflicts: back in China, a local militia confederation in the Guangxi hill country formed the core of the massive Taiping Rebellion (1851–1864), which transformed local interethnic feuding into an antidynastic millenarian movement. The defeat of the Taipings and persistent interethnic warfare with Cantonese speakers forced tens of thousands of both dialect groups to flee abroad. Cantonese and Hakka brotherhoods found themselves competing for tin deposits in the Malayan jungle, where they went right on fighting each other. During the nineteenth century, mining continued to be an important niche for Hakka laborers, particularly in the Indies and Malaya. In urban settings overseas, such as Singapore, Hakka quickly established profitable footholds in low- to lower-middle-class craft and service occupations as pawnbrokers (in Singapore, a virtual monopoly), cabinetmakers, house builders, woodcutters and sawyers, blacksmiths, and house servants.[54]

The Hailam: Cheerful and Hardy Pioneers

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

Hokchiu: Twentieth-Century Migrants

The region around Fujian's provincial capital (Fuzhou) and its market hinterland, northern Fujian (Minbei, "north of the Min River"), was agriculturally rich and productive and therefore lacked a culture of maritime trade and migration. In fact, it sent relatively few migrants overseas until the twentieth century. Mass migration hardly began in Minbei until 1900, when tea-growers suffered from drought and foreign competition. Since 1901, however, the Hokchiu dialect area has been the source of two famous migrations: the first to the region of Sibu in present-day Sarawak, East Malaysia, on the northern coast of Borneo. There the reformer, pioneer, and Methodist minister Huang Naishang (see chapter 6) led 1,000 Fuzhounese farmers to settle and till the land under the patronage of the British raja, Sir Charles Brooke. To this day, Sibu is called "New Fuzhou," with some 60 percent of its population of Chinese ancestry.[56] Since the 1980s, there has been a second and much larger migration, hundreds of thousands, largely to North America, from the villages and market towns near Fuzhou (see chapter 8).

Henghua/Hokchia: Enterprising Latecomers

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

Wenzhou: A Late-Blooming Emigrant Community

Situated in coastal Zhejiang, Wenzhou's spoken language is part of the Wu speech group common in the lower Yangzi region. It is mutually unintelligible with Mandarin and with any other dialect of the Lingnan and Southeast Coast regions. Although the Wenzhou area was not a prominent source of emigrants before the mid-twentieth century, its story thereafter has been one of extraordinary

versatility and adaptive opportunism, shaped by poverty and a culture of regional self-reliance. In the late twentieth century, Wenzhou emerged as a powerful emigrant homeland, spreading its workforce both nationally and internationally. We shall explore Wenzhou's famous success story in chapter 8. It will show how manipulation of available resources, traditional migration techniques, and adroit evasion of central state control combined to create China's most celebrated local model of private enterprise.

Adaptive Practices in the Emigrant Homelands

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

What can we conclude more generally about the special ecologies of the Southeast Coast and Lingnan regions as homelands for migration? One factor was human displacement by degrees: leaving a village to work, either seasonally or permanently, in a city.[60] This often amounted to the first stage in a transition from agriculture to petty commerce or artisanry, social roles that migrants could turn to advantage in many venues. From shop assistant to shopkeeper, to regional or interregional trader, was a path to success for hardworking (and lucky) migrants. A second factor was intense cohesion of affinity groups, bonded by dialect and kinship, which served as networks of security, mutual aid, and business cooperation far from home. Such affinity groups were to be found across China. Nevertheless, linguistic fragmentation along with close bonding between village and kinship (one-surname villages) lent an especially intense particularism to the societies of the south and southeast seaboard regions. Reliance on linguistic, kinship, and locational bonding led to identities defined by narrow, defensible boundaries. A third factor was a general familiarity with money and commerce, to be discussed shortly.

Niches, Corridors, and Livelihoods

During the early modern era, the increased pace of internal migration forced migrants to find efficient ways to survive and even prosper far from home. The search for mere survival, to say nothing of prosperity, led to practices that enhanced a migrant population's competitive strength. These practices grew naturally out of shared native-place bonds, or compatriotism. Compatriotism required, first, maintaining links to the native place itself so that the heavy moral obligations to kinsmen back home could be met by sending them money as well as helping others follow in the migrant's footsteps (presuming that the occupational niche in the new venue was promising). Compatriotism also meant banding together in the venue society for security, business cooperation, and moral support.

The assumption behind compatriot links was that migrants were not permanently settled away from home. Instead, they were considered temporarily absent, "sojourning" in another place of work. This sense of impermanence was often unrealistic, given the profitability of long-term

sojourning, the personal ties (including second families) that grew up in migrant communities far from home, and the likelihood that a migrant might die without realizing his dream of returning rich. Realistic or not, the sojourning concept had survival value. It reinforced compatriot ties in the migration venue, with all the business and social benefits they provided. It also sustained corridors to the *qiaoxiang* (hometown) from which migrant enterprises could attract fresh capital and labor.

Sojourning as a way of life bred institutions to sustain migrants in their "temporary" venues whether within China or abroad. Merchants and literati founded native-place lodges (*huiguan*) as centers for socializing, for providing essential services, and for furthering common interests. Surname associations (which commonly substituted for actual lineage organizations since whole lineages seldom migrated) were mutual aid and social clubs within a particular dialect group. A *huiguan* was organized on the basis of common origins: a province, a region, a county, or a town. Common dialect was its binding force. How much more agreeable to associate with men to whom one could talk effortlessly (for business or pleasure) and how much deeper the level of trust one could repose in them.[61] Surname associations were based on real or imaginary kinship, often with particular hometowns in their titles (the Tan lineage of Yongchun).

Services performed by *huiguan* were both symbolic and practical. If a man were to die far from home, his regional *huiguan* would bury him in a compatriots' cemetery or even ship his remains back home for burial so that kinsmen could perform funeral rites for the repose of his soul. *Huiguan* also provided lodging for compatriot travelers, social gatherings where common interests were discussed and hometown gossip exchanged, and altars for worshipping hometown or regional deities. These institutional expressions of compatriot identity did not stop their members from cooperating with non-compatriot groups in their adopted cities. They simply ensured that adjustment to a new locale was accompanied (and even furthered) by reinforcing hometown ties. Only from a solid compatriot base could a sojourner feel secure enough to broaden his connections to an adopted society.

Integral to the *huiguan* were the community temples set up for the worship of regional deities. Such cults were readily transferred along trade routes by migrants who transported incense from the old temple to fill the censers of the new. Sometimes the deity to be worshipped was the patron saint of a particular trade, but the regional identity of the temple cult was usually quite plain because trades were commonly identified with migrants from particular regions. The practice of cult transfer was continued by emigrants. A case in point is Mazu, a goddess sometimes called "Empress of Heaven," a favorite among China's Southeast Coast communities because she was the protectress of seafarers. Accordingly her temples can be found throughout Southeast Asia wherever Chinese settled. Merchant lodges were commonly found associated with regionally specific temples, illustrating the closely interlocking spheres of compatriotism, occupation, and ritual.[62]

Compatriotism brought migrants more than the security of shared identity: it was also a competitive resource. Finding an economic niche in a venue society and protecting it from competitors led immigrant merchants and artisans to form guilds based on compatriot ties to secure occupational turf. In China as well as overseas, among ordinary craftsmen as well as wealthy merchants, occupations were distributed along compatriot lines. Thus, the native-place lodge was also a model for an occupational guild. Many skilled laborers in eighteenth-century Suzhou were sojourners from nearby provinces who had relied on chain migration ("led and followed one another") to the metropolis to find jobs in weaving or papermaking firms owned by compatriots. "Ningbo banks" were signature immigrant institutions in Shanghai. Merchants from Huizhou ran the salt business in Yangzhou, and Hokkien ran the franchised foreign-trade agencies (*yanghang*) in Guangzhou. Such links between compatriotism and economic niches in particular cities had many causes. Historical accidents (the talents of an individual entrepreneur or official favors granted to a particular merchant) might start the process; chain migration and the hiring of compatriot apprentices or co-opting additional partners expanded the compatriot group to hundreds or perhaps thousands of members. An immigrant guild would protect its cartel by narrowing the gates of their trade to men speaking their dialect and would reduce costs through paternalistic control of compatriot labor and efficient dialect-linked networks.[63]

While carving out a niche and protecting it, migrants maintained ties to their native places—a necessity if additional labor were to be brought in. Cultural norms required it too: a migrant merchant would not be respected if he neglected to take care of kinsmen back home, either through patronage of new immigrants or through funds sent home to kinfolk and local charities. As we have seen, this continuing attachment did not preclude cooperating with non-compatriots in the host city or even developing a degree of biculturalism. Yet maintaining a compatriot niche meant maintaining

a cultural, social, and economic corridor to the old hometown. Late imperial China was crisscrossed by such corridors: busy channels of money, social transactions, and culture. Corridors served as extensions of the hometown that embraced compatriots far away, a realm of interests and affections that linked people over great distances; they were both connective links and living cultural spaces.

Besides regional trader groups such as the Huizhou and Shanxi merchants and the seafaring Hokkien, other groups developed specialized skills in labor export and migration. The sturdy and resourceful Hakkas, introduced previously, were so to speak professional migrants. In frontier environments, rough-and-ready analogues of *huiguan* were the self-governing corporations (*kongsi*), organized around deity cults and defended by armed militias. As we shall see in chapter 2, these were among the traits that made Hakka redoubtable emigrants during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. Little wonder they were well suited as miner-pioneers in the trackless, lawless jungles of Malaya and Borneo.[64]

Occupational Specialization

As we explore the early communities of Chinese who actually emigrated to foreign lands, we shall find that niches and corridors formed the architecture of their lives, just as they did for migrants within China. A niche in this context is an occupational specialty or social role in which a migrant population can survive because it is needed by the venue society and not filled by other groups. The challenge to find viable niches is something all migrant groups confront, especially if they are not yet equipped to compete in the mainstream economy. As a foothold in a new environment, the niche is a first step toward a livelihood. Migrants may later acquire the skills to compete more broadly in the labor market, but usually they start in niches particularly suited to their abilities and not claimed by others.

Little general analysis is available on exactly how native traits of Chinese dialect groups correlate with occupations overseas.[65] I suggest that at least four factors may affect a migrant's occupational niche: 1) skills and habitudes brought from home (his occupational capital), 2) the existing social distribution of occupations in the venue society (both among other immigrants and in the indigenous population), 3) the chance availability of viable niches to particular migrants who may establish bridgeheads for their compatriots and kinfolk, and (4) the process of recruitment. As examples of the first, it appears that the initial foothold for any dialect group in a new venue will likely be a niche that exploits something familiar in the home ecology—whether it is the Cantonese familiarity with cash cropping, land reclamation, or mechanics; the Teochiu habituation to plantation agriculture; the Hakka skills in forest clearance, mining, or metalworking; or the well-honed skills of the Hokkien in finance and maritime shipping. Of the second factor we can cite the prior occupation of one or more niches by earlier arrivals from an immigrant's dialect or kin group to which the immigrant may either have been recruited or to which he may turn in hope of being co-opted as a client or employee (or, contrarily, find himself shut out of occupations preempted by other dialect groups). Examples would include the existing Hakka and Cantonese mining *kongsi* in Malaya recruiting new workers through their own brotherhood channels or the recruitment of close kin or compatriots as shop assistants by every dialect group. Of the third, there is the chance involvement in an occupation whose main advantage is its availability and lack of competition: Cheng tells the story of how the Henghua and the Henghua-speaking Hokchia in Malaya and Singapore came to dominate the bicycle business: Henghua and Hokchia, as latecomers, got into the rickshaw business because so many other occupations were monopolized by other dialect groups. By about 1900, the bicycle had appeared in Singapore and Malaya. Apparently, a Henghua immigrant named Yeow in Kuala Lumpur, Malaya, who had apprenticed himself to an agent for British cycles, learned the business thoroughly, left his employer, and established his own shop. Inevitably, his own (Henghua) employees hived off likewise so that within half a century the Henghua had established thousands of bicycle shops in Singapore, Malaya, and Indonesia. In Singapore, the Henghua were joined by Henghua-speaking Hokchia who later branched out into spare-parts, motorcycle, trishaw, and taxicab businesses.[66]

Yeow's experience shows how niche choice is conditioned by the presence or absence of competitors. The competitive scene narrows options by making a business too expensive for outsiders to enter, as in the case of the cartelization of a trade by an organized dialect group, or *bang*.[67] Hiring was tightly restricted by kinship or dialect, creating a congruence of language and occupation that was next to impossible or too expensive and risky for outsiders to penetrate. This principle applies to the interaction of Chinese and indigenous populations. The most cost-effective way for an immigrant group to secure a niche is to provide salable goods or services that no

indigenous group has an inclination or capacity to provide. Such was the case with the Chinese in Siam, for example, where trade ranked too low in the Thai status order to be worth competing for. This social division of labor was one reason for the minimal interethnic friction between Chinese and Thai, at least until the race-conscious twentieth century, as we shall see in chapter 7. As for the Islamic lands (such as Malaya and Indonesia) where successful Chinese merchants were locking up niches that indigenes really wanted to enter, the resulting antagonism brewed a toxic anti-Sinitism. As to factor 4, the record shows that gangs of contract or indentured laborers were recruited along dialect lines by brotherhood operatives in China, shipped to Southeast Asia as groups, and turned over, at destination, to headmen of local brotherhoods who conveyed the workers (if indentured, under duress) to a mine or plantation (Cantonese miners to Malayan tin mines or Teochius and Hokkiens to Sumatran tobacco plantations).[68] Some old hands (*laoke*), having served out their contracts, returned to their home villages as labor contractors (*baogong* or *baoke*) to recruit voluntary workers on behalf of their employer—a postindenture form of chain migration for profit.[69]

To the extent that emigration is voluntary, the division of available ecological niches by particularistic criteria (each dialect group achieving a guildlike cartel in at least one niche) can be seen as a principle of efficiency for immigrants whose survival as a community may depend on establishing bridgeheads for new generations of sojourners. These "merchant bridgeheads" are found worldwide among immigrant populations. Their systematic particularism avoids ruinous competition and smoothes the integration of new immigrants into the labor force. It amounts to a dialect-based closed-shop system that fit the sociolinguistic pattern of south China emigration like a glove. All that is not to say that there were no fights over economic turf, though merchant elites preferred to avoid them. With backs to the wall, the dialect-turf system could produce fierce, ruinous feuds between rival groups, fought out by armed brotherhoods, and invariably a headache to ruling authorities.

Where a "niche" is a livable spot for a particular migrant group in a new environment, a "corridor" is an extension of the migrant's old environment. It is a channel of connections that keep the migrant in a meaningful relationship to the old country (or old village, lineage, or province). It may actually work against the development of a "myth of return," or a longing to go home again, because in certain respects the migrant has never left home. He has preserved various modes of belonging (economic, cultural, and kinship) so that he remains oriented more firmly toward the society of origin than to the society in which he is physically living. Maintaining corridors is the essence of sojourning. The migrant has not committed himself mentally or behaviorally to a permanent break with the old country, its culture, or its people.

Although corridors have a spatial aspect, they are best thought of as social and economic organisms. An authority on Chinese migrants in Europe points out that specialized emigrant-sending communities in China (*qiaoxiang*) "are completely integrated with their counterpart communities abroad and largely isolated from the society and economy around them."[70] That is, the income, the kinship links, and the social structure of a *qiaoxiang* exist in a special zone that is neither fully part of the homeland nor fully part of the adopted land of the émigrés. They and their compatriots abroad are at opposite ends of a corridor that makes up a transnational community of its own. Thus, the term "emigrant community" properly speaking includes both the migrants themselves and their kinsmen and neighbors back home.

The China side of an "emigrant community" consisted of kinship groups and even whole settlements that had developed cultural identities distinct from surrounding society. Under favorable conditions the two-way passage of people, money, and culture could sustain these distinct identities over generations. The special status of these kinship groups (called "emigrant relatives" *qiaojuan*) often entailed higher standards of living, a complete or partial escape from farm work, reliance on hired laborers, and investment in moneylending or trade. Returned kinsmen among them could gain high prestige by funding local projects. Visible signs of such largesse included dwellings of hybrid Sino-foreign design, such as the "watchtower houses" (*diaolou*) constructed in Guangdong's Kaiping county with funding from emigrants. In the countryside, the relative affluence of *qiaojuan* attracted bandits, hence the need for these ornate reinforced-concrete structures.[71] Such elegant fortresses signaled not only *qiaojuan* wealth, but also their sense of vulnerability. The long unhappy liaison of wealth with vulnerability will be a recurrent theme in later chapters.

Niches and corridors have changed with times and circumstances, and their interactions form a complex long-term pattern in the history of emigration, a pattern strongly influenced by technological and political changes. The differences in the speed and safety of travel in the eras of

sail and steam either limited or enhanced the ability of emigrants to react to events in China and to maintain viable corridors with their kinsmen back home. Fast, affordable two-way travel made sojourning quite a different matter in 1990 compared with the situation in 1690. Communications technology, from shipborne post to telegraph to wireless to cell phone, furthered the spread of intelligence about job markets and immigration rules along globe-spanning corridors between emigrants abroad and kinfolk back home. Political barriers to trade and migration could be decisive in the survival or demise of corridors. If an emigrant community's niche involves trade with China and the link to China is cut by trade or migration bans, then that niche quickly feels the pinch. Acculturation also affects corridors: when migrants' descendants reach out beyond their niches to participate more broadly in their venue economies, corridors to China attenuate or actually disappear (possibly to be reestablished when conditions change, as we shall observe in chapters 6 and 8).

As a homeland of emigration, early modern Chinese society displays four principal themes. First, migration was built into a pattern of life, in which labor spread spatially as opportunities permitted. Second, the resulting "migrant communities" were defined by corridors. The health of each end of the migrant community came to depend on that of the other so that a traffic of people, money, information, and culture could flow between them. Third, commerce and commercial knowledge molded the consciousness of all social classes, especially in the core areas of the Southeast Coast and Lingnan macroregions, sources of the vast majority of emigrants and areas where agriculture and commerce had long been intertwined requisites for survival. The consciousness of farmers in those regions was fundamentally affected by their links to commercial networks. Rural as well as urban people were acquainted with credit and debt, risk, and wage labor; and learned to estimate market conditions. However poor and ragged the migrant, in other words, there was a good chance that he would be canny in the uses of money and the ways of commerce and be able to make the most of commercial opportunities to strike out on his own far from home.[72] The cross-class nature of south China's commercialization produced emigrants skilled to survive in foreign lands. Fourth, China's great age of migration that began in the seventeenth century was primarily a domestic phenomenon, with emigration abroad a subcategory that was particularly important to the population of the Southeast Coast and Lingnan.

A School for Emigrants

Rather than seeing population pressure as a prime mover "pushing" people out of the country, we can view the crowded, commercially vibrant regional cores of early modern China as broad arenas of market relationships in which families learned to respond rationally and deliberately to commercial opportunities. As communities adapted to land shortage through labor export and commerce, the southern coastal regions became a great school for emigrants by nurturing migration skills within the homeland itself. For millions of Chinese families, life had come to include commerce and mobility. The institutions they created to handle them—the sojourners' guilds and lodges, the branch temples, the regional brotherhoods—could work at home or abroad. It is striking that early modern commercialization strengthened particularistic bonds rather than weakening them. The mosaic of linguistic and cultural divisions of coastal China reinforced particularism as a major asset for emigrants.

Notes

1. Wang (1991), 41–78.
2. Yu (1991), 107.
3. Zhuang (1989), chaps. 3 and 4.
4. Lin (2006), chap. 1.
5. For convenience, Southeast Asia may be defined by the states that compose it in the present day: Burma, Thailand, Laos, Cambodia, Vietnam, Malaysia, Singapore, Brunei, Indonesia, and the Philippines. The term "Southeast Asia" (and the names of many of the region's postcolonial states) was coined by Westerners.
6. My use of "leveraged marginality" is in a context distinct from that of Mehretu et al. (2000), q.v.
7. Tarling (1992), 1:421; Reid (1993), 120; Reid (1996a), 26–28.
8. Ho (1959), chaps. 8 and 9.
9. Ge (1996), 47–50; Skinner (1987).
10. Naquin and Rawski (1987), 24.
11. Guo (1984), 104–5.

12. For “estate household,” see Cohen (1976).

13. “Early modern” as applied to China is more meaningful than “late imperial” (which suggests a political structure but leaves society out). “Early modern” connotes market growth, commercialization, and monetization; changes in social roles; and more intense involvement with the international economy. The case for “early modern” is stated most cogently by David Ownby, “*Hui* and the early-modern social order,” in Ownby and Heidhues (1993), 34–67. My use of it here does not imply a teleology toward Western-style industrial capitalism.

14. Murphy (2002).

15. Murphy (2002), 2; Huang et al. (1998), 20.

16. Zhang (2001).

17. DQLCSLYZ (1964c), 66. 23–25.

18. GZDYZ, vol. 8, 836–38.

19. Wei (1995), 374. Nevertheless, like the old Ming ban, this one was only partly successful; a substantial part of the maritime trade was simply diverted into illegal channels. Ng (1983), 53.

20. Wei (1995), 378. Edict of September 1, 1684. Further examples of the pragmatic approach appeared in respect to the ban against migration into the Manchu homeland (Manchuria). Although the sentimental, almost mystical significance of the homeland in imperial views of Manchu identity argued for ethnic purity, during famines pragmatism supervened, and the throne permitted Han peasants to immigrate and establish farms. See *Lishi dang' an* (2001, no. 2), as cited in Benjamin Levey, “Famine, ideology, and migration policy towards Manchuria: 1740–1803” (unpublished seminar paper, Harvard University, 2007; cited by permission).

21. Blussé (1999), 113.

22. Ng (1983).

23. Rowe (1984).

24. Yu (1997); Wang (1991), 181–97.

25. Shiga (1978), 113–14.

26. Guo (1984), 110.

27. Guo (1984), 116 (from a report of 1714).

28. Guo (1984), 111–12.

29. Cao (1997), 95–104.

30. Cao (1997), 170.

31. Cao (1997), 481–99.

32. Cao (1997), 331. For the settlement of Taiwan, see Shepherd (1993), chap. 6.

33. Cao (1997), chaps. 5–9.

34. Zhejiang, Fujian, and Guangdong (if borderline fragments of Jiangxi were included, the provinces would total four).

35. Skinner (1977b), 211–20.

36. Skinner (1985), 277; Fukuda (1995), 43–45. For detailed maps of dialect areas, see Pan (1999) and Wurm et al. (1998).

37. Cushman (1993).

38. Ng (1983), chap. 1.

39. Ng (1983), 38–41, 213–22.

40. Ng (1983).

41. Ng (1983), 40.

42. Lin (2006), 991.

43. Ng (1983), 96–98; Chia (2006), 531

44. Li et al. (1989), 19–21.

45. Mazumdar (1998), chap. 5; Cao (1997), 517–19; Jiang (1987).

46. Mazumdar (1998), 292–94.

47. Skinner (1957), 40.

48. Parkes (1853).

49. Skinner (1957), 20–25.

50. Skinner (1957), 45–52; Leng (1999), 48.

51. Skinner (1957, 1958).

52. Leong (1997).

53. Yuan (2000), 83–85.

54. Cheng (1985), 91 (data from 1848); Chua and Tan (1990), 67.

55. Skinner (1957), 85–86.

56. Ye (1995), 20–27; Leung (2002); Chew (1990).

57. Cheng (1985), 22–23.

58. Ng (1983), 37.

59. Ng (1983), 29, 30, 37; Liang (1904), 116–17.

60. Ng (1983), 38.

61. For literature on *huiguan*, see Belsky (2005).

62. On the Mazu cult, see Watson (1985).

63. Liu (1981–1982); Ho (1966), 101–3. Light and Rosenstein (1995), chap. 1, offer a framework for the relation between entrepreneurship and ethnicity. For comparative data from Southeast Asia, see Mak (1993).

64. Leong (1997); Chew (1990), chaps. 1 and 2.

65. Among those available on specific venues are Skinner (1957, 1958), Mak (1993), Cheng (1985), and Tan (1990). Note that the last two of these deal exclusively with Singapore, a venue where many dialect groups are crammed into a small ecological space.

66. Cheng (1985), 98–99.

67. "*Bang*" (gang, or sojourner association) is an organized, hierarchical urban group based on dialect, devoted to promoting the business interests of its members and protecting its economic turf from rival dialect groups. It is typically headed by a prominent and wealthy man who (in the Straits Settlements before 1890) served also as patron or godfather of a fighting brotherhood ("secret society" to Westerners) that protected the patron's turf (as well as its own underworld enterprises).

68. Mak (1993), 72–73; Reid (1970).

69. This is the "kangany system" referred to in C. W. C. Parr's report of 1910 (excerpted in chapter 4).

70. Benton and Pieke (1998), 10–11; Watson (1975), chap. 7; Ch'en (1940).

71. Batto (2006); Kan (2007); Ch'en (1940).

72. Freedman (1979).

CHAPTER TWO

Early Colonial Empires and Chinese Migrant Communities

Except for political refugees forced to flee for their lives or their principles, the idea of settling permanently outside China was not widespread among any class of Chinese. No doubt that is why the Chinese language does not have a specific term for "emigrant." Yet the realities of foreign trade often produced unintentional emigrants. When traders ventured abroad, they might expect that their stay would be temporary (enough time abroad to sell their goods and collect their return cargo). Yet their commercial calling in itself did not dictate any particular frequency of return. Agents of trading firms might stay for years in foreign ports, marry local women, and establish second families. Sojourning as a temporary condition was an accepted part of life for trading communities. But for many commercial sojourners, the expectation of return often outlasted the likelihood. Furthermore, craftsmen and laborers recruited from the homeland to service the sojourners and their patrons, having scanty resources, probably had less chance of returning than their merchant sponsors. Chinese cemeteries overseas suggest that death intervened frequently enough to make sojourners aware of the odds against returning.

Establishing Overseas Communities

Venues in Southeast Asia

Chinese migrants established communities in two kinds of venue: the port cities occupied by European colonial powers and the uncolonized native kingdoms. The colonial regimes were Malacca in the Malay Peninsula; Manila on the island of Luzon; and Batavia, the present Jakarta, in western Java. Indigenous kingdoms included Japan, Korea, Siam, Cambodia, Laos, Burma, and Vietnam. In this chapter, we shall examine only the period prior to the late eighteenth century, when the intrusion of Great Britain into East Asia began to transform the process of Chinese emigration.

As clients of local rulers and managers of their commercial affairs, Chinese had long been participating in the Southeast Asian trading system. As we have seen, rulers who drew revenue from foreign trade commonly used foreigners of many nationalities (Greek, Arab, Persian, as well as Chinese) as port managers and customs collectors. In the seventeenth century, Chinese merchant-middlemen, who historically had participated in this system, were helped by their European patrons to take it over almost completely.[1]

Before the intrusion of European colonialism, Southeast Asia housed two kinds of Chinese settlement. One consisted of the merchants just described, valued as middlemen in commerce. The other consisted of self-governing, armed territorial regimes set up by outlaws or political refugees.[2] As colonial regimes expanded their power, the commercial entrepôts flourished, but the independent kingdoms virtually disappeared. European colonialists valued Chinese traders and craftsmen but brooked no political or military rivals. Chinese migrants to Southeast Asia were truly "merchants without empires."[3]

In times of dynastic transition or internal disorder, political refugees added to the sojourning Chinese population in Southeast Asia. Some were merchants, others loyalists of defeated regimes, soldiers, or members of proscribed brotherhoods ("secret societies"). The tumult of Manchu

conquest and consolidation between 1644 and 1683 created thousands of refugees who had to find niches in the economies of Southeast Asian societies, some in trade or crafts, others in farming or wage labor. In southern Vietnam, armed regiments of fleeing Chinese troops were allowed to settle undeveloped frontier territory under the leadership of their own commanders. Although many refugees undoubtedly remained loyal to the deposed Ming dynasty, there was nothing practical they could do about it; their lives in exile centered on the struggle to survive rather than on the loss of their homeland.

Variant Ecologies: The Colonial Pattern

Most Chinese settled in Southeast Asia for economic reasons, but they could not have thrived there unless local power holders profited from their presence. In some cases, Chinese were actively recruited as settlers. Those who traded under the patronage of colonial regimes took care to remain collaborators rather than competitors. Back home, merchants were ineligible for official careers; no matter how wealthy, they yielded precedence to monarchy and mandarins. Nor did Chinese merchants abroad compete with the rulers of their host countries for political power. Instead, they became, as in China, clients of those rulers: entrusted with certain tasks, accorded limited privileges, and subject to special controls and taxes. Their services centered on commerce and on "tax farming" (collecting revenues from local commodities and services on behalf of the colonial regime). These were the economic foundations of the leadership elite in early Chinese migrant communities. Chinese overseas were expected to enrich themselves and, in the process, their patrons. In return, they received (usually) protection and even a measure of social status. This arrangement met the needs of both sides.

In the colonies, Chinese immigrants were working for weak states that were struggling to control their territories with inadequate skills and manpower. Although the small bands of European administrators and merchants were backed by armed force, they were ill prepared to extract wealth from indigenous populations or from the China trade. How were they to raise the revenue to keep their colonial regimes profitable? How were they to deal with native populations of whose language and customs they knew little? And how were they to trade with China in the face of discriminatory treatment, sketchy knowledge of the market, and a daunting language barrier? In these early colonial enterprises, Chinese were indispensable partners. Although Chinese merchants were not empire builders on their own, they soon became essential collaborators in the empires of others. The colonial regimes were not "theirs" in a political sense, but they came to control a substantial economic share in them and took part in administering them. They were second-class citizens (beneath the colonialists but superior to the third-class citizens: the indigenous peoples). This colonial caste system enabled the Chinese to prosper for nearly three centuries, but it also bred bitter resentment among the indigenes, which erupted later with dire consequences.

Malacca

The Portuguese thought that seizing the Islamic kingdom of Malacca in 1511 would win them control of the Southeast Asian spice trade and, beyond it, of trade with China. Commanding the strategic strait between the South China Sea and the Indian Ocean, Malacca had been a thriving Malay trading kingdom for more than a century. Zheng He's naval expeditions of the 1420s had found Chinese ships there, though it is uncertain whether there was a settled Chinese community. When the Portuguese arrived, Chinese merchants sought their favor and continued to serve as middleman-traders at the port. They had become numerous enough by the late sixteenth century for the Portuguese to deal with them through a local Chinese "*kapitan*," a rich merchant who commanded the respect of his community. After the Dutch wrested Malacca from the Portuguese in 1641, records of a long succession of *kapitans* indicate a continuous settled community. This system of "officers" was an adaptation of a long Southeast Asian tradition of entrusting elite foreign merchants with the governance of their own countrymen. It sustained a multiethnic society under a single political regime, ruling minority groups indirectly by incorporating but not assimilating them. In Malacca, the officers were invariably Hokkien, the dialect group of most Chinese in the colony and the group with the most profitable occupations: trade and finance. Hokkien merchants commonly married local women, either local Malays or slaves brought from the East Indies, and by the eighteenth century their children constituted a mixed or "creole" culture. The sumptuous homes of the wealthy "Baba" (creolized Chinese) merchants, constructed in ornate Sino-Western style, are still to be seen on Holland Street in present-day Malacca.[4]

Manila

In the Philippines, Manila had long been a port of call for Chinese merchants, who called it "Lüsong" (Luzon). Spaniards seized the port in 1571, attracted there by the prospect of trading with China and ultimately of Christianizing it. At Manila they found some 150 Hokkien engaged in trade.[5] These formed the nucleus of the Chinese merchant community that served as middlemen for the Spanish. Chinese traders carried silk and porcelain to Manila by junk; the Spaniards paid with Mexican coined silver and carried their Oriental treasures back to Mexico by galleon, returning with more silver for the next exchange. The Chinese shipped their silver back to Fujian, where it became an essential medium of the regional economy. Although the Spaniards were disappointed in their hope that Manila would serve as a base for Christianizing China, the Philippines proved a highly successful mission field (in which many Chinese participated despite themselves).[6]

Manila soon displayed the classic symbiosis between colonialism and its Chinese partners: Chinese immigrants (whether sojourners or permanent settlers) were the backbone of the colonial economy. They were also, however, regarded as unreliable, possibly agents of an aggressive Chinese empire, and suffered enormous cruelties as a result. This unstable mix of collaboration and oppression made emigration to European colonies risky. Yet thousands risked it for the anticipated payoffs for their families.

Spanish policy was to separate cultural communities physically and legally. Spaniards, natives ("Indios"), and Chinese were administered separately, a reflection of the fact that the colonial economy was divided in exactly that fashion: the Spaniards involved in the galleon trade, the natives in subsistence agriculture, and the Chinese in the China junk trade. Chinese also furnished food and services for the fortified city and traded between city and countryside.[7] Many also adapted creatively to missionizing by the Spanish, who offered preferred status to Chinese converts. Unconverted Chinese sojourners (in the early years outnumbering converts by perhaps ten to one) were made to live in a separate settlement (the Parian) outside the walls of the fortified city. But Chinese who (at least in form) converted to Catholicism were permitted legal marriages with indigenous woman converts. At least equally attractive was mobility. Infidel Chinese, penned up in their Parian ghetto, were prevented from mixing with the natives and subverting their faith, while "Catholic" Chinese could move freely and prosper as middlemen between the inland population and the cities. Chinese settlement accordingly spread throughout the island of Luzon. The mobility of Sino-Indio offspring was not restricted, and these creoles (called Mestizos by the Spanish) became an important trading and later landowning population. Their language and customs diverged ever farther from Chinese because the colonialists extended a cultural welcome through Catholicism and eventually Hispanized them to some degree—a striking contrast to the early tactics of the Dutch in Batavia.

Batavia

Agents of the Dutch East India Company founded Batavia in 1619, having driven the local ruler from his port settlement at present-day Jakarta, and constructed a walled city there. From the beginning, Chinese were involved.[8] Chinese merchants at the nearby port kingdom of Banten had long been dealing in the pepper trade with China and were induced to move to Batavia. Serving the Dutch as contractors and tax farmers, they recruited laborers and craftsmen from China; and supplied bricks and timber for buildings and city walls.

The Hokkien were the dominant group in Java when the Dutch arrived and became the natural allies of the colonialists. Their top merchants, appointed as "officers" (*kapitan cina*) by the Dutch, were on terms of close confidence with the colonial authorities, who, in contrast to the Spaniards in the Philippines, made no attempt to convert them to their religion or educate them in their culture. The usefulness of the Chinese merchant elite lay in their ability to govern their compatriots through prestige, patronage, and wealth; and in their continuing connection to their home country. A rich Hokkien, Su Mingkang ("Bencon" to the Dutch), became the first Chinese *kapitan* in Batavia and a confidant of the Dutch governor-general. There is little question but that a merchant's reputation was enhanced by such an appointment (equivalent to an imperial brevet rank back home), although the general opinion of the "officer system" was a touch more skeptical, to judge by the following account.

A Chinese Description of the Installation of a *Kapitan Cina* in Eighteenth-Century Semarang (Java)[9]

"Whenever any of the Chinese are appointed to be Captains . . . a representation must be made to Europe. The new Kap-pit-tan then selects a lucky period, and assembles his relatives and friends, the guests in his family, and visitors from the villages amounting to some score of persons, when on the appointed day a Hollander approaches bringing the order. The Kap-pit-tan and his friends go outside the door to receive him; the Hollander enters, and stepping up into the middle of the hall, stands conspicuous and opening the order, reads it; then pointing to Heaven above, and Earth beneath, he says, 'This man is polite, intelligent, and well-informed regarding the principles of things, hence he is promoted to be a Kap-pit-tan; you elderly gentlemen, what think you of it?' All the people then with one voice exclaim, 'very good, most excellent!' The Hollander then shakes hands with all of them, and this ceremony being completed, they all return to their seats; the European then taking the Kap-pit-tan by the hand, leads him up the steps to the middle of the hall where they pay compliments to each other. And this is the way in which the Dutch get our people into their net."

As intermediaries in the China trade, the Hokkien were an indispensable link in Dutch commerce. The porcelains and silks borne by Chinese oceangoing junks bringing cargo from Xiamen to Chinese merchants in Batavia lured Southeast Asian merchants to bring their spice exports to trade there. The junk trade also supplied Batavian Chinese with the everyday needs of Chinese life (e.g., Chinese foodstuffs, an amenity basic to every Chinese overseas community), and their passengers swelled the colony's manpower by perhaps 1,000 immigrants annually.[10] Realizing the advantages held by Chinese in the direct Batavia–China trade, the Dutch East India Company in the 1690s abandoned that vexatious enterprise entirely and turned it over to Chinese merchants and shippers. Between 1691 and 1740, the golden age of the Batavia junk trade, an average of eleven large ships arrived from China every year.[11]

Chinese had become so numerous by the end of the 1600s that Dutch officials and Chinese *kapitans* grew uneasy; the swelling tide seemed a threat to public order. But so lucrative were the profits from immigrant passenger fares (at ten Dutch dollars a person) and so urgent was the demand for laborers in the burgeoning sugar plantations (owned and operated by Chinese) that immigration was hard to control. Despite Dutch attempts to limit the influx, Chinese in the East Indies numbered around 100,000 by 1800.

Fear and Violence in the Colonies

European colonialists were torn by contradictory feelings: they needed the Chinese but also feared them. They knew that without Chinese merchants, artisans, and laborers, their colonies could not survive, yet the dread of an "alien" race that was immigrating at alarming rates was never far from their minds. That dread prompted mass expulsions as well as massacres in which whole Chinese populations were put to death. Before the first of these massacres (1603), Manila was home to some 20,000 Chinese but only about 1,000 Spaniards.[12] In Batavia, before the massacre of 1740, 1,275 Europeans within the walled city faced 4,199 Chinese, to whom can be added a large but uncertain number of Chinese living in the suburbs and working on sugar plantations in the nearby countryside.[13]

The massacres in Manila and Batavia seem to have resulted from European anxieties as mirrored in Chinese minds. The Chinese, having reason to fear death or expulsion, launched preemptive strikes against their expected attackers. In Manila, nearly the entire Chinese population was killed in retaliation (killings of Chinese in Manila recurred in 1639 and 1662).[14] In Batavia, the Chinese urban population was wantonly slaughtered, their homes and shops looted. That such disasters did not occur in Malacca (where in 1750 some 20 percent of the population was Chinese) was probably due to the slow pace of Chinese immigration and the relatively smooth integration of immigrants into the community through intermarriage.[15]

Massacres were not deliberate policy, nor were they accidents. Instead, they apparently resulted from a deep ambivalence among Europeans toward this able, hardworking population. Economic dependence on Chinese went along with cultural ignorance and outright fear. Perhaps Europeans feared retribution for their own mistreatment of the Chinese by overtaxing them and extorting arbitrary payments. Furthermore, not all Chinese immigrants were integrated into the colonial economy. The sugar industry outside Batavia, owned and operated by Chinese entrepreneurs with insufficient capital, was unstable. When employers failed, workers became a destitute rural underclass that neither the Dutch nor the Chinese elite could control. In this growing, class-stratified Chinese community, only a small minority could grow rich from the relationship with Europeans.[16]

The flow of Chinese immigrants in the early colonial days was but a faint foreshadowing of the mass migration to come, but it was large enough to cause growing pains in the young colonies. That massacres and expulsions did not deter more immigration demonstrates the powerful attraction of European colonies for Chinese emigrants. That the Qing rulers back in China did not retaliate by cutting off trade shows their pragmatic view of its importance to the coastal provinces. As trade continued, so did its natural by-product, emigration.[17]

Colonial Profits and Chinese Middlemen

The importance of early Chinese immigrants to the economic life of Batavia was related by a foreign visitor in 1700:

> Not only do they carry out a great commerce in the city, in tea, porcelain, silk and laquerwork, but they also give themselves assiduously to numerous occupations, being excellent blacksmiths, carpenters, cabinetmakers, . . . All the umbrellas used here are made by them. They excel in varnishing and gilding. They are also distillers of arak [an alcoholic drink] and large-scale farmers. They make bricks, produce sugar in their mills around Batavia and deal in that commodity. . . . All the agriculture of Batavia rests on them. . . . Not only do they produce what is needed throughout the year, but they also work through the day to deliver to people's homes all the groceries, textiles, laquered goods, porcelains, tea and other goods, which they sell at modest prices.[18]

Early colonial rulers relied on Chinese for three sorts of economic service: trading with China, extracting wealth from the natives, and servicing the colonial cities. But from the early colonial point of view, the major service was running the China trade. Sojourning in Manila, the entrepôt for the Xiamen–Acapulco trade, was a regular part of the Hokkien trading routine. Essentially the same system was employed in early Batavia by the Dutch, who had found that dealing directly with China in East India Company ships was troublesome and expensive. Although European vessels were beginning to displace the junk trade by the mid-nineteenth century, European shippers still dealt with Chinese merchants living in colonial ports. The China trade had developed its own conventions and practices that depended on the knowledge and skill of the Chinese at both ends.[19]

However, as the direct Xiamen–Batavia junk trade declined over the second half of the eighteenth century (for a number of reasons, mainly British competition and Dutch mismanagement), the adaptable Chinese of Java diversified their services as middlemen.[20] By the early nineteenth century, when the colonialists (briefly including the British under Stamford Raffles) tried taxing the indigenous Javanese in money instead of labor service, Chinese moneylenders became essential links to the village populations. At the same time, the Dutch expanded their reliance on Chinese as tax farmers of opium, a commodity that became more salable with the spread of colonial rule. Although many Chinese themselves were smokers, the great bulk of opium sales were to the native Javanese.[21] Proceeds went by contract to the colonial government after the Chinese opium farmers had taken their cut, and the richest Chinese fortunes were made from the tax farms. Chinese in the Dutch territories also found ways to profit from other aspects of colonial administration: government leased whole villages to Chinese agents who became in effect rural tax collectors as well as retailers of imported goods. As the nineteenth century progressed, Chinese middlemen, adapting flexibly to opportunities for profit, became ever more essential to the regime as agents for forced-labor production of export crops such as coffee and sugar.[22] After 1857, under a liberalized immigration policy, Chinese in the Spanish Philippines could bid on contracts for tax collection and soon dominated revenue monopolies in the cities and provinces.[23]

Chinese initially had been co-opted into the colonial system because they were outsiders without native connections that might have compromised their dependence on colonial patrons, because Europeans in Asia were not yet prepared to staff full-scale bureaucracies to govern and tax their subject peoples, and because many Chinese immigrants were equipped by historic experience to handle commerce. These realities made the Chinese essential collaborators in the colonial system, whether in a closely controlled regime of forced production or in a more liberal, free-trade system. As colonial institutions evolved, Chinese found ways to adapt to them.

Early Colonial Social Structure

Throughout the early colonial period (roughly from the late 1500s to the late 1700s) as we have seen, the dominant dialect group in Southeast Asia and Japan were Hokkien, whose maritime ventures had established the bridgeheads for Chinese emigration. Hokkien regional culture, along with their local occupations, were reflected in their religious life. Beginning with the first generation under Dutch rule (the early seventeenth century), they constructed temples in and around Batavia to honor deities of the homeland. Hokkiens worshipped familiar China-coast deities, such as the earth

god (Fude zhenshen) and the "Empress of Heaven" (Tianhou or Mazu—protectress of all who sailed the sea). Other temples enshrined protectors of particular trades, that is, the patron deities of the various craft guilds.[24] From China, immigrants had brought the great festivals of the ritual calendar. The scene in colonial Batavia on Chinese New Year, as described by a Dutchman in the early eighteenth century, shows that Chinese carried on their most cherished public celebrations in apparent harmony with non-Chinese: a great parade wound through the city streets, with "hundreds of paper figures of horses, ships, carriages, fish, all lit by lanterns or candles; they run everywhere and animate a huge frightening serpent [dragon]."

> Everywhere in the streets may be seen little Chinese dressed in their best clothes, numerous Dutch, and many slaves, each with at least a drum, or a horse-figure around his body, or riding in a vehicle or carriage, or a caymen or other animal all lit with candles, everything amid a terrible din. . . . Some present here and there a *wayang* [shadow-puppet] performance before their gates, where the Dutch may come with their wives and daughters. These are received courteously with tea and pastries, Chinese drinks and other sweets.[25]

Migration into the countryside and the smaller towns furnished niches both in the official sector and as freewheeling entrepreneurs. A description by a late eighteenth-century Chinese traveler portrays a scene in one of the smaller seaports:

A Chinese Settlement at Pecalongan, Java, around 1790[26]

"The Chinese town faces the hills, and borders on the sea; it consists of a row of dwelling houses, amounting perhaps to fifty or sixty. To the north and south it is defended by wooden palisades; the Chinese dwell between these, and commonly call the place Pa-China-an (Pat-che-lan), or Chinese town. The houses are joined one to another, with high stories; towards the west is the Kap-pit-tan's residence, to the right of which is a garden, which may be about an acre in extent, beautifully shaded with trees, the colour of whose foliage is very agreeable: in it there is a pavilion called 'the pavilion of floating clouds,' where the Kap-pit-tan during his leisure hours amuses himself. . . . Behind the garden there is a [Chinese] cemetery, in which are some scores of cocoanut trees, tall, straight, and free from branches. . . . To the north of Pat-che-lan there is a temple, dedicated to the Ze-hai zhen-ren ("fairy that favours the seas" [originally a Chinese maritime trader named Guo, who drowned under miraculous circumstances and was thought to have become a god]). On the outside of the inclosure is the Pabeyaan, (bo-mian) or custom-house, where they collect the import and export duties. . . . Southward from Pa-che-lan, the road leads to Ba-tang, distant about ten miles [where there] are two sugar-mills."

In the early days of settlement in Southeast Asia, Chinese associations commonly took simple forms rather than a multiplicity of functional and regional types as in a later period. A number of functions could be served by a single association, as we can see in the case of the leading temple in seventeenth-and eighteenth-century Malacca. There Chinese sojourners were united by the "Blue Clouds Pavilion" (Qingyunting), a temple founded in 1673 by Hokkien merchants. Some of these men served the Dutch colonial government as a customs collection guild, in effect the top stratum of the Chinese community. Their view of their role in immigrant society is conveyed by an inscription of 1801 that makes a case for merchants as community leaders. The pavilion had been built by a *kapitan* (a refugee from the Manchu conquest) who also donated a great tract of hilly land for a cemetery that came to be called, in Malay, Bukit China (see chapter 7). Originally named for Guanyin, the goddess of mercy, the pavilion later was renamed "Blue Clouds" (*qingyun*), an ancient metaphor for scholarly eminence and high official rank – suggesting the *kapitans*' equivalence to the literati elite of the homeland.

Inscription Celebrating the Reconstruction of the Blue Clouds Pavilion (Qingyunting), Malacca, 1801[27]

"Why was this Blue Clouds Pavilion built? We merchants carry goods around for sale, not afraid to ford the streams and cross the oceans in order to travel to this land, striving to emulate Tao [Zhu] and Yi [Dun] [famous rich merchants in ancient China]. This indeed shows our lofty ambition. [On our way here] we relied on auspicious omens that streams and oceans were calm and peaceful. The reason why divination showed that 'it would further one's fortunes to cross the great water' [a reference to the ancient Classic of Changes, *Yijing*] was because gods and Buddha have blessed us. That is just why this temple was built. Its construction is to manifest Buddha's blessing; its name is to rouse people's ambition.

"To amass a fortune through trade has been a longstanding practice since ancient times. Those who acquire wealth should have lofty ambitions. Their high aspirations are like the Blue Clouds

finding their way [to the skies]. Making profit should not be insufficient for making [an honorable] name. Therefore we placed a plaque on the temple inscribed with 'Blue Clouds Pavilion.'

"Because there was a virtuous person who built this temple, there could hardly fail to be a great person to repair it. After a long period of time, there was concern that it had become worm-eaten and rotten, eroded by wind and rain through the years, and was likely to fall down. . . . How fortunate it is that we had *Kapitan* Cai Shizhang, who generously proposed rebuilding it and led his colleagues of the Customs-house Guild (*Haiguan gongsi*) to realize the project. . . . *Kapitan* Cai and the other donors will be blessed by the gods and praised by the people. [There follows a list of donors.]"

The Blue Clouds Pavilion served many social needs: as a temple to the goddess of mercy, Guanyin, it was the ritual center of the Chinese community as well as a shared space for the community's ancestral cults, preserving memorial tablets to the dead of various surnames. Its cemetery provided rituals and gravesites for deceased compatriots. Because the immigrant's crucial ritual need was the care of his soul, should he die far from home where none might sacrifice to it, the organization that controlled a cemetery was a powerful presence in the community.

Eventually, charitable relief and education were added to the temple's community services. Regional compatriotism was served too: the Hokkien origins of the leadership (in a predominantly Hokkien community) meant that the Blue Clouds Pavilion served as political and ritual headquarters of the Hokkien dialect group (in effect, the Hokkien regional lodge, though never so called). The leadership committee of the temple served the colonial government as a guild of port customs collectors, one of whom was designated *kapitan* of the whole community. Leadership was so closely identified with the temple's management that even after the *kapitan* system was abolished by the British in 1826, the title "pavilion head" (*tingzhu*) was used informally until the early twentieth century to designate the leader of the Chinese community, even though the core of the business elite had already remigrated to Singapore.[28] The Pavilion's amalgam of ritual management, tax monopoly, and political leadership was characteristic of the early colonial immigrant elite.[29] A similar amalgam of ritual and compatriot functions can be seen in the Chinese merchant community of Nagasaki, Japan, by the early seventeenth century. There, however, the regional origins of sojourners were more various: two Fujianese groups, one Cantonese, and one from the Jiangnan provinces each erected its own temple to regional deities in addition to providing cemeteries and charitable relief.

In early colonial days, temples displayed a variety of types and social clienteles. In old Batavia, Chinese temples comprised those enshrining the patron deities of occupational guilds as well as shrines for ancestral worship by surname groups. In all these cases, though funding and management were in the hands of merchant elites, the poorer immigrants were also devotees of the deity cults. Class divisions were bridged, even as the dominance of the elite was affirmed. As to dialect-group divisions, not until the 1820s is there evidence of temples being founded by dialect groups other than Hokkiens, particularly new Hakka immigrants.[30]

China-Born and Creolized (Totoks and Peranakans)

The trade link to China was an economic mainstay of the merchant community abroad, as it was for the hometown merchant firms and families of Chinese emigrants; therefore, the corridor to the homeland remained open and active. The junks that brought China goods to Southeast Asia also brought passengers whose way into existing Chinese communities was paved by those already there. Before the 1800s, however, the influx was slow, so the settled communities had little trouble absorbing the newcomers. Like immigrants of the present day, a new arrival relied on compatriot ties in his new home: people of his own regional or kin group who had access to jobs and housing and could help him gain a foothold in the new land. Such obligations were not only assumed but socially esteemed as well.

A Hokkien Merchant-Patron in Eighteenth-Century Batavia[31]

"K'hoe-hong-leang [Xu Fangliang] was a native of Cheang-chew [Zhangzhou], and became captain China of Batavia; he was also of a liberal disposition, and truly generous. . . . At that time all those belonging to the clan of K'hoe were people of respectability, of which Hong-leang used to boast. It being reported to him, however, that one of his clan was doing the work of a day-labourer, Hong-leang sent for him, and said, Since you are a relation of mine, you ought, on your

arrival at Batavia, to have waited on me immediately; why should you stand in your own light? The Captain then took him into his employ, and in a few years he became a rich man. Of such acts of generosity there are frequent instances."

Labor export and merchant sojourning were male pursuits; Chinese women (until the late nineteenth century) seldom emigrated, on the premise that their duty was to remain at home looking after their parents-in-law. Accordingly, long-term sojourners married native women as second wives and often as business assistants. By the mid-eighteenth century, the dominant mode of Chinese life in European colonies was the hybrid community that had gradually formed among the descendants of these unions. Such culturally stable, or "creole," communities were found in Java (called, in Malay, "Peranakan," meaning local born); in Malacca, Penang, and Singapore (called "Baba"—etymology unknown); and in the Philippines ("Mestizo").[32]

The culture of creolized Chinese mingled Hokkien and Malay traits: Chinese surnames and surname exogamy were preserved, but marriage and funeral practices showed mixed influences, with the strictly patrilineal Chinese family pattern broadened by native usages: residence of the groom with the bride's family, for example, was rare in China but common in overseas creole communities. Ancestral rites reflected the bilateral pattern of Malay kinship by honoring forebears on both the father's and the mother's sides. Peranakan dress showed clear Malay influences but was also distinguishable from that of the indigenes.

During the early colonial period, the rate of immigration was gradual enough to permit new immigrants to be absorbed into these creole communities and controlled by their merchant headmen. The old communities were able to accommodate most of them through marriage and assimilate them to their creolized culture. New migrants were not so numerous as to overwhelm the old communities or re-Sinicize them, yet immigration and commerce were constant enough to keep the old communities in touch with the culture of the homeland.

Why was creolization more common than outright assimilation into the native cultures? The creole outcome depended on a number of factors: the continuing vitality of the China corridor, the particular cultural ecology of the local society, and the policies of colonial authorities. The China trade kept at least the upper levels of society in communication with their homeland regions, where their sons could be sent for education and the emigrants could remain in touch with Chinese life. Intermarriage with local Malay-speaking women produced children whose household speech followed that of their mothers, resulting in creole languages with (generally) Malayan syntax and Hokkien loanwords. Yet creolized families did not marry their children to indigenous people; they either married within the creole community or absorbed Chinese immigrant males as husbands for their daughters. In colonial societies, where the native elite had been humbled, to marry local non-Chinese would have meant marrying "down," while marrying "up" into European society was forbidden. There resulted a sustainable hybrid culture with both Chinese and Malay features.

How colonial authorities treated Chinese communities differed from one colony to another. In the Philippines, the Spanish encouraged marriages between Chinese immigrant men and Catholic native women as a way of getting the Chinese under control and in hopes that the Catholic population thus formed through conversion and intermarriage would lead to the conversion of China itself. The children of these marriages—the Mestizos—were also granted certain privileges, including the right to own land and (most important for a trading group) relative freedom to live and work where they chose. Unlike the Peranakans of Batavia or the Babas of Malacca, this Hispanized, Christianized population did not recognize themselves as "Chinese" because assimilation to Spanish culture and the Catholic Church was socially more esteemed. By contrast, the Dutch insisted that the Peranakans retain a Chinese identity because of their special usefulness to the colonial system as commercial and fiscal middlemen. The Mestizos of the Philippines did not assimilate to the culture of the native Filipinos; they considered themselves superior by virtue of the culture they shared with the colonial rulers. They were not a "special kind of local Chinese" but "a special kind of Filipino."[33]

Nevertheless, "Chinese Mestizo" was the concept by which the Spanish rulers identified them, and Mestizos were objects of some of the same suspicions as the Chinese themselves. In particular, once the Mestizos became a substantial economic force (by the end of the eighteenth century), the Spaniards feared that they would dominate and exploit the natives by their superior aptitude for business. "In the case of the Chinese Mestizos economy and cupidity go together with intelligence and energy to increase their funds," wrote a Spanish observer.[34] Their creolized culture was one reason why the Mestizos flourished as an advantaged middleman group: they were expert at dealing

with the Indios on the village level; they spoke their language and understood their culture (just as the Java Peranakans understood the native Indonesians). Having induced the Indios to pawn their land, Mestizo moneylenders would foreclose on them but let them remain on the land as tenants. In cash cropping, too, Mestizos used their understanding of Indio weaknesses by acquiring the rights to their future produce through cash advances, then selling those rights to Chinese merchants in Manila. By 1800, there were about 120,000 Mestizos, about 5 percent of the total Philippine population, with higher percentages in the central provinces of Luzon (the region to which Catholicized Chinese had access).[35]

By contrast, China-born and unconverted sojourners in the Philippines numbered only about 7,000, and the Spaniards' treatment of them was distinctive among colonial regimes. Purely Chinese male communities (merchants as well as craftsmen and laborers) continued to exist in the neighborhood of Manila, the port of arrival, where they were required to live in a separate quarter. A steady inflow of Chinese sustained these non-Catholic communities throughout the early colonial period. The Spaniards continued to fear them and sought to control them by strict residence regulations and sometimes (as we have seen) by expulsion or violence. At the same time, the colonialists realized that the colony's economic life depended on them. Because of this dilemma, neither immigration nor residence was controlled effectively.[36]

In Java and Malacca, the Peranakan Chinese were so useful to the colonial economy that the Dutch kept them distinct from the native population. Conversion to Islam was generally forbidden or discouraged, although the Dutch could not easily stop it. After the massacre of 1740, many Chinese had sought safety in conversion anyway, and for those so inclined, the acculturated Peranakan culture made conversion that much easier. Yet to remain creolized "Chinese" had great advantages. The *kapitans*, whose authority and status depended on having a "Chinese" community to govern, opposed assimilation, and the continuous operation of the China corridor sustained the Chinese component of creole culture with foodstuffs, ritual supplies, and more migrants. So the interests of the Peranakan elite in retaining their Chinese identity, added to the Dutch insistence that they do so, largely maintained the creole communities in Java and Malacca in their culturally intermediate zone.

The process of creolization, aided by economic incentives and colonial policies, efficiently absorbed most new immigrants. By the early nineteenth century, pure Chinese in the Philippines were greatly outnumbered by the Mestizos (perhaps seventeen to one).[37] In Java, the comparable ratio was about 8,000 China-born to 100,000 Peranakans.[38] It was not until the age of mass migration, from the mid-nineteenth century, that newcomers began to achieve the critical mass to challenge the Peranakans/Mestizos/Babas economically and culturally.

Despite points of similarity between the Mestizos of the Philippines and the Peranakans of Dutch colonies, a striking difference was that Mestizos were brought into the cultural world of the colonialists through the Spanish policy of conversion, somewhat as the Straits-settlements Babas were drawn closer to the British through English education. Catholicism and its Hispanizing force led the Philippine Mestizos to link their fortunes to the dominant culture of the ruling elite. Although trading relations between Chinese Mestizos and pure Chinese were mutually profitable, Hispanic culture and Catholicism made the Mestizos natural collaborators of the colonialists: when unconverted Chinese came into conflict with the colonial state, it was the colonialists with whom the Mestizos identified.[39] By contrast, not until the early twentieth century did the Dutch try to draw Peranakans into their cultural orbit.

Political and Social Structure

Chinese communities during the early colonial period were shaped by the nature of colonialism and by relationships with native peoples. At the top were merchants who served the colonialists not only as maritime traders but also as collectors of taxes. Delegating tax collection to the Chinese, who bid for the various types of revenue "farming" franchises, was a necessary resort of weak and understaffed colonial states. Although able to dominate the native populations militarily, they lacked the personnel and the cultural skills to exploit them economically. From this fact emerged the characteristic institution of the Chinese merchant elite in Southeast Asia: the "tax farm." Such monopolies had long operated in Malay states and appeared in Dutch and British colonies from earliest colonial days (but in the Spanish Philippines not until the 1850s).

The tax or revenue farm was a license issued by state authority, generally through competitive bidding, to collect taxes on goods, services, and markets. The successful bidder would guarantee a

certain amount to the state, then proceed to charge customers whatever the market would bear. Institutionally, the revenue farm was rooted in both Southeast Asia and Europe. As we have seen, the rulers of maritime cities appointed port headmen of various types to tax their compatriots' maritime trade and govern their communities. This custom was reinforced by the colonialists' own traditions: when the Dutch took over Batavia, they quickly established tax farms, which were consistent with well-established European traditions. They considered that the logical holders of such franchises in Batavia would be the elite of the dominant merchant group, the Chinese, to whose leading members the Dutch had already granted power over their own communities as *kapitan cina* and similar quasi-military ranks. The economic foundation of the *kapitans* in the early colonial world was the revenue farm.

Farms were of many types: some taxed slaughterhouses, markets, and both maritime and domestic commerce. The most desirable farms, however, were associated with gambling, liquor, prostitution, and narcotics, all of which, as in most societies, were great moneymakers. Chinese merchants were quick to take on the farms for these activities, which as yet bore no moral opprobrium. Not only colonialists but also native rulers (local sultans of Java and the Malay Peninsula) found Chinese-run tax farms rewarding sources of revenue, as their weak states strove to hold out against European power.[40]

As upper-level "farmers," only the rich Chinese merchants had the resources to guarantee receipts to their colonial patrons. From the colonial point of view, these merchants were outsiders yet rich enough to run the tax-farm business reliably and make good their commitments. They dominated the Chinese community and were connected to the Chinese brotherhoods, which supplied armed fighters to enforce their monopoly franchises. In the countryside, lower-level Chinese "farms" operated through tollhouses at road junctions and river crossings. Chinese penetration of rural Java for tax farming added fuel to the 1820s rebellion known as the "Java War," in which infidels, both Chinese and Dutch, were targets of popular hatred.

The officer system was found in many venues of Chinese settlement with variations to suit local conditions. It grew not only from the needs of the European colonialists but also from the needs of the Chinese community for a cultural broker, a middleman who could deal effectively with local political regimes. The *kapitans*' authority depended partly on their wealth but more on the prestige of the semiofficial status conferred on them by colonial governments.

In the later colonial period, community power entailed service on interlocking directorships of social groups, such as surname associations, temple management committees, and regional lodges. Such service enabled the merchant elites to project their authority throughout the Chinese community by operating within these cross-class institutions. Membership on such boards commonly required a substantial cash contribution as a sign of personal commitment. By the early nineteenth century, the operators of tax farms were closely allied to the brotherhoods or actually were ranking members of them. By protecting their patrons' privileged markets against illegal suppliers, brotherhoods served as the coercive "muscle" of the merchant elite.

Ritual, too, played its part in assuring the dominance of the *kapitans*. Through their "public offices" (*gongguan*—quasi-governmental bureaus with judicial and administrative authority), the *kapitans* issued marriage certificates and also controlled the Chinese cemeteries that were emotional necessities for migrants who had lost hope of returning home to die. To obtain space in a cemetery and assure one's soul the benefit of ritual services after death, one had to apply to the agents of the *kapitan* elite.[41]

The prestige of the officers was also insured by major community rituals such as the Qingming, or Spring Festival, when sacrifices were offered at ancestors' graves. A Dutch account from the late eighteenth century shows the *kapitan* and his associates flaunting their quasi-official status in this ceremony, in which Chinese of all social classes were involved. At nine in the morning of April 4, an immense crowd was gathered at the Buddhist temple near the Chinese cemetery of Batavia. The officers conducting the ceremony, in formal Chinese official dress, behaved

> just like mandarins in China: the *kapitan* at their head, followed by his herald carrying his official placard on his chest; the principal notables, including mainly the captains, pursers and pilots of the Chinese junks then in port, and who seemed to have the same rank as the principal tax-farmers.[42]

The lower classes of Chinese had a harder lot. In Batavia, many had been recruited by merchant-entrepreneurs to work in plantations or mines. The fluctuating sugar market meant that plantation workers were sometimes unemployed, with no hope of either returning to China or finding new employment. Roving bands of hungry workers in the countryside near the city were controllable

neither by the Dutch nor by the urban Chinese elite. As we have seen, the Dutch, who feared these desperate men, devised a plan to deport them, which in turn touched off the rebellion and massacre of 1740.[43] A similar situation can be seen in the pre-1800 Philippines, where non-Mestizo Chinese were mainly retailers and artisans in and around Manila. They were vulnerable to repeated cruelties, including the massacres already mentioned, as well as mass expulsions motivated largely by fear.[44]

Variant Ecologies: The Uncolonized Monarchies

The perception that Chinese were useful as trading middlemen, city builders, and tax farmers was not confined to the colonial powers, nor were the European colonies the only Southeast Asian regimes to employ Chinese as middlemen. Uncolonized kingdoms—including Siam, Vietnam, Cambodia, Laos, and Burma—allowed Chinese privileged places in their commercial systems. Rulers of these native kingdoms needed reliable agents to collect revenue from foreign trade and from their domestic populations, agents wise in the ways of commerce but without political ambitions. For these regimes, Chinese were perfectly suited. Their association with the monarchies of the region was historically deep and, from the late eighteenth century, grew more intense. An exception was the Tokugawa regime in Japan, which seized power in the early seventeenth century and, suspicious of all foreign merchants, controlled them rigorously. Although the Japanese marginally favored Chinese over Europeans, they were kept closely confined and supervised.

Siam

As a venue for Chinese immigration, the Siamese monarchy of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries resembled the early colonial states in several ways. Chinese trade with Siam and sojourning in Siamese ports can be documented with certainty from the thirteenth century. Not only merchants but also craftsmen and political refugees had settled there, marrying Thai women and participating in many sectors of Siamese life, particularly domestic and international trade. In some areas, particularly peninsular Siam bordering present-day Malaysia, Chinese became governors of territory within the structure of the Siamese monarchy. Hokkien served as prominent officials of the Siamese court beginning in the early eighteenth century, especially as ministers responsible for the court's own foreign trade. Manned by Chinese crews, royal Siamese ships traded with Japan, China, and Southeast Asian kingdoms. The Chinese position at court was already well established by the Bangkok period, when Chinese (Teochiu now outnumbering Hokkien) served Thai rulers as middlemen-administrators.

How readily a man or woman of Chinese ancestry could be accepted within the upper levels of Siamese society is illustrated by the career of the Sino-Thai king Taksin, born of a Teochiu father and a Thai mother, who had been adopted into a noble Thai household and had led the fight to expel Burmese invaders in the 1760s. Fresh from the battlefield, Taksin ascended the throne and set the stage for the powerful Siamese monarchy of modern times. His successor, Rama I, the first of the Chakri dynasty that rules Thailand to this day, had a Chinese mother. The turmoil that surrounded the founding of the new dynasty brought Bangkok Chinese into an expanded relationship with the Siamese state. From the late eighteenth century, Chinese tax farmers were crucial to the state-building programs of the dynasty. The distinctive aspects of Chinese life in Siam grew from easy accommodation to a tolerant society; from a division of functions and consequent lack of competition with the Thai, who valued government service and agriculture above commerce or wage labor; and from a continuous intimacy with a monarchy that used these tax farmers as makeweights in its effort to increase the royal share of power and wealth.[45]

The vigorous, expansionist Chakri monarchy behaved like a colonial state, seeking to control weaker regimes on its borders and to supplant the fiscal power of the Siamese nobility. In their centralizing, rationalizing program of state building, the Chakri kings sought new sources of revenue for the crown and the central government. This meant breaking down the old labor-service system (which had sustained the power and wealth of local elites) and replacing it with a system of direct taxation.[46] Accordingly, the Siamese monarchy was in somewhat the same position as European-run colonial regimes, which also were deepening their control over indigenous societies. As neither ruling group had the ability to extract more revenue unaided, each turned to Chinese middlemen as tax farmers and traders. Thus, weak states trying to become stronger found Chinese partners ready and willing to advance their agendas.

The Chakri state sought to expand tax farming and, at the same time, to free up labor for wages or for commerce. To these ends, the old master-serf system, to which most Siamese were subject, was not to be imposed on the Chinese. Instead, they would pay a special head tax and were not required to register under a master, in the Thai manner, and perform labor service unless they chose to. Thus, the choice between Thai or Chinese social roles was to be made by the Chinese themselves on coming of age. That Chinese had to make this essentially political choice did not determine their cultural identity: they might retain Chinese culture or assume whatever degree of Thainess they found most agreeable or useful. Racial classification was not part of the old Siamese system. The idea that one was indelibly "Chinese" *by race* was not even conceived until its twentieth-century appearance as part of a truculent ethnonationalism.[47] Here Siam differed from the colonial world, which (no doubt because Europeans brought racial ideas with them) insisted on clear divisions among ethnic groups.

We have known—ever since G. William Skinner pointed it out—that Chinese in Siam did not acquire a "creole" culture as did those in the Spanish, Dutch, and British colonies. Recent research confirms Skinner's view. Instead of creolization, there was widespread biculturalism and bilingualism among Chinese and Sino-Thai—a kind of Chineseness that resisted complete assimilation even while adding a layer of Thai behavior and speech to its cultural palette: Chinese speech in the home and with Chinese business associates, Thai speech with Thais.[48] Biculturalism has not been a way station to creolization. Situational identity enabled Chinese and their descendants to dress, speak, and behave as Thai when dealing with the Thai majority but remain culturally Chinese among kinsmen and compatriots. Siam afforded flexibility to the immigrant: assimilation was neither promoted nor discouraged by economic necessity, neither required nor forbidden by the ruling power, nor was it deterred by a religion (as with Islam in the Dutch East Indies) that most Chinese found ill suited. Siamese tolerance, a partly shared Buddhist faith,[49] and the old Siamese idea that the monarchy extended equal protection to all ethnic groups made for an easy and flexible cultural adjustment. Only in the early twentieth century, when ideas of indelible "racial" traits were promoted by a nationalist Thai government, did "Chineseness" become an ascribed quality that marked immigrants and their descendants regardless of their personal preferences.

Vietnam

In precolonial Vietnam, Chinese immigrants (mostly Cantonese) also found important roles to play on behalf of an expansive state power. The lords of the Nguyen lineage, who controlled the narrow coastal plain of Annam, sought to expand their food and manpower base by extending their realm into the Mekong delta. In this process, Chinese immigrants served as farmers, land clearers, and traders. During the war-torn decades surrounding the Ming decline and the Manchu conquest, thousands from China's southern provinces fled to Vietnam, whether for economic reasons or political. In 1679, 3,000 armed Chinese soldiers from Guangdong and Guangxi, fleeing the Manchu invaders, arrived in a flotilla of fifty junks and were granted asylum in the sparsely settled Mekong delta. The Nguyen rulers found these hardy settlers convenient new inhabitants of an area recently cleared of Cambodian invaders. Merchants from China's coastal provinces were welcomed by the rulers in southern Vietnam, particularly those who brought in military supplies such as iron, steel, and sulfur. Another armed group of Cantonese, under their leader, Mac Cuu, arrived in the 1680s to occupy a disputed and undeveloped area in the far south, Ha Tien, where they established an armed, self-governing state under the patronage of the Nguyen, who regarded them as a useful counterweight to Cambodian ambitions. So firming up the borders and establishing regional centers of trade were considered valuable services by the southern Vietnamese power holders.[50]

Although the better-off Chinese immigrants resisted assimilation and maintained their Chinese identity by seeking brides from China (or at least daughters of Sino-Vietnamese marriages) for their first sons, marriages with pure Vietnamese were common. As in other venues of Chinese migration, mates from the native culture were invaluable partners for doing business with the local population. Vietnamese called such refugees from Manchu-ruled China and their partly assimilated descendants "people who venerated the Ming" (*Mingxiang*). By the mid-nineteenth century, Vietnam-resident Chinese and their descendants numbered some 25,000 in the north and 40,000 in the south.[51]

Japan

By contrast, sojourning Chinese merchants in Japan were strictly segregated from local society, their identity fixed and their functions supervised by government decree. During the sixteenth century, Chinese merchants had traded with Japan from several locations on the China coast, including principally Guangzhou, Xiamen, Taiwan, Fuzhou, and the Yangzi delta region. A Chinese merchant community in the port of Nagasaki, in far western Kyushu island, had not been long in residence by 1603 when the first local Chinese headman ("interpreter," *tsūji*) was appointed by Japanese authorities. This small group of sojourning merchants learned to live under the heel of the newly established Tokugawa regime. Beginning in 1688, the Tokugawa shōgunate (fearing Christian influences from Catholic missionaries in China) confined Chinese residents to a walled ghetto where they could be closely watched. Yet the government found them indispensable for importing coveted Chinese silk and also for providing a window on the Asian scene. Because Japanese were now forbidden to travel outside their own country, the government was dependent on the Chinese for intelligence about conditions in East and Southeast Asia. Although the "interpreters" constituted a rudimentary headman system, they lacked what their counterparts enjoyed in Southeast Asia: not only significant authority over their fellow Chinese but also a lucrative role as tax farmers. Although the Nagasaki Chinese were important in Asian international trade, they were not a significant group within Japanese society. This fact reflects both the suspicion with which Japanese viewed foreign influence and the efficiency of the Tokugawa rulers, who needed no foreign middlemen to collect their taxes.

Variant Ecologies: The Independent Chinese Regimes

Although the dominant pattern was for Chinese to settle in areas where political control was already in the hands of others (European-ruled colonial regimes and indigenous monarchies), there were also those who settled independently in areas where political structure was weak or absent so that they could govern themselves. One such example is West Borneo, where groups from eastern Guangdong (mostly Hakka but some Teochiu) settled as miners in the dense tropical jungle during the mid-eighteenth century. Theirs is a story of embattled independence within a local order run by the miners themselves through what look remarkably like little republics.[52]

The Borneo Chinese arrived as mineworkers, first recruited around 1750 by local Malay sultans. The earliest groups may have come not directly from China but from some intermediate point such as Bangka (off Sumatra) or Brunei, where Chinese miners were known to have enriched their local Malay ruler-patrons. By the 1760s and 1770s, there was direct immigration from China. On those forbidding frontiers, accessible only by ascending the rivers in boats, Chinese set about prospecting and exploiting the rich placer gold deposits.

Having been frontiersmen and miners in their homeland, Hakka were particularly suited for rugged pioneering. They were fitted for the rigors of the Borneo jungle by centuries as internal migrants, moving along the mountainous peripheries of the south and southeast provinces, settling wherever they could make a living from mines and forest products while maintaining their distinctive dialect and culture. They were used not only to rough living but also to competing with others for survival, when necessary by force of arms.[53] In Borneo, their chief antagonists in the early years were the indigenous Dayaks, a relationship complicated by the fact that many Hakka pioneers took Dayak wives. Evidently, fighting and acculturating were complementary strategies for survival in the Borneo jungle.

Word of opportunities in frontier Borneo got back to China quickly through returned miners. Like Hokkien, many recruits were neither displaced nor pauperized but enterprising men looking for new ventures. They included some educated figures such as Luo Fangbo, who in 1772 accompanied a band of migrants to the Mandor area, where he became leader of an independent confederation of mining communities.

Coming from weakly governed border areas, Hakka migrants were used to local self-rule. Although self-governing Chinese communities in Borneo have been variously described as "democracies" or "republics," they are perhaps better called "democracies or republics with Chinese characteristics" in that they relied heavily on elements of ritual, militarism, communal property, and personal leadership. One such element was the local cult association known as *hui*, dedicated to the worship of a common deity. All who donated funds to the association were members in good standing and had a common stake in its well-being. Another such institution was the joint-stock enterprise, in which capital was raised for a business venture, such as shipping or mining, profits to

be divided among shareholders according to the size of their investments. In both these institutions, there was an element of democracy whereby all who contributed had a stake in the enterprise and a right to participate in its affairs. There was also, however, a strong element of individual leadership in which a prominent (usually wealthier) member would be either the manager (*tingzhu*: temple head, or *luzhu*: censer head) of a cult association or, in the case of a share partnership, the head of the management committee (*kongsi*).[54] Differences in wealth or in ability (surely related to literacy in the case of the charismatic Luo Fangbo) could create a small cadre of elite leaders atop a basically egalitarian organization.

In these Borneo communities, elite leadership was reinforced by an urgent need for military organization. Under constant threat from competing communities or ethnic enemies, each self-governing community considered its adult males a pool for a militia force ready to be summoned as need arose. Back in China, these local militias were constantly involved in feuding with neighboring communities, particularly those of the settled populations who regarded Hakka as dangerous competitors. In Borneo, with weapons made locally by skilled armorers, the militias became a formidable force in the jungle frontier.

The needs of community defense also gave rise to confederations in which dozens of mining associations (*kongsi*) were represented in a joint council (*zongting*) with regional power to raise militia and administer justice. Heads of these joint councils were also the chief priests of a shared deity cult and were themselves worshipped (as if lineage ancestors) after their death. The largest of these joint councils, at Montrado, united fourteen associations of some 800 members each, with the total population under the joint council numbering around 10,000 persons at the time of its founding.[55] A rival confederation at Mandor, under the scholar-pioneer Luo Fangbo, was said to have numbered perhaps 20,000 by the end of the eighteenth century.

Although these mining communities began under the patronage of local Malay chiefs, they soon asserted their independence through both economic and military power. The Dutch were astonished by the scope, resilience, and morale of the *kongsi* associations. One observed, around 1850, that although Europeans used to consider Chinese as a people to be "of a cowardly nature" (i.e., preferring trade and accommodation to warfare), "yet one has to admit that the [Chinese] people of Borneo are an exception to this, as a result of their institutions and their numerical importance."[56] He might have added, "by virtue of confidence in their ability to govern themselves," a historical inheritance of the Hakka dialect group. Until the heavily armed Dutch regime decided to bring all such local governments under its control, the Borneo immigrants were able to maintain their independence. Only in 1884, after a long, bitter military campaign, was the last of the *kongsi* confederations destroyed and its members subjected to colonial control.

In Malaya was to be found a parallel story, also originating in mining. Tin mining in Siam, in the Malay Peninsula, and on the island of Bangka had involved both Chinese capital and Chinese labor since the late eighteenth century. In Malaya, the pattern resembled that of the Borneo goldfields: local Malay chiefs brought in Chinese labor to develop and work their mines. Although in Borneo the Chinese *kongsi* achieved independence from their patrons, Chinese in Malaya became pawns in the vicious fighting among the Malay aristocracy for control of tin resources during the second half of the nineteenth century.

Although they did not achieve independent local government, Chinese immigrants in Malaya had other resources. These were preeminently the brotherhoods (also called *kongsi*) whose martial arts skills made the immigrant miners formidable military contenders in the Malay civil wars. Brotherhoods in Malaya served the same purposes as the *kongsi* confederations in Borneo: mutual protection and labor organization. Similar mining *kongsi*, probably influenced by remigrants from Malaya, were formed on the island of Bangka (off southern Sumatra) by the mid-eighteenth century.[57]

To sum up: in Malaya and Bangka, as in Borneo, the Hakka and the Cantonese were prominent immigrants in the mining business from the mid-nineteenth century. These immigrant communities combined egalitarian sentiments with strong charismatic leadership. Self-government and community protection were the bonds that united their semimilitarized bands. Ritual, too, played a part, with community leaders acting as cult chiefs with charismatic authority in their own persons. How "democratic" they were is open to question; certainly their original joint-stock format suggested the brotherhood model of shared wealth (the method of payment preferred by miners was a share in the proceeds rather than wages). But brotherhoods themselves had hierarchies ("older

brother, younger brother") and discipline, and the militarized character of these frontier settlements suggests that egalitarianism was balanced by forceful leadership.

A Brotherhood Chief and Mining Pioneer in Malaya (adapted from Carstens [1993])

Born to a poor Hakka farming family in Guangdong Province, Yap A-loy (Ye Alai) emigrated to Malacca in 1854 and found work in a kinsman's shop. Later, after a stint as a laborer in a Malayan tin mine, he became a bodyguard for a local Hakka *kapitan* who also was a Triad brotherhood chieftain. (In this region, the post of *kapitan* was often associated with the headship of brotherhoods, conferred not by colonial patrons but passed down through Triad organizations.) When his patron was killed in battle, Yap (who had impressed everyone with his fighting and leadership talents, both prized in Hakka culture) was elevated to *kapitan* himself. It was not long before the young strongman moved to the primitive outpost of Kuala Lumpur (now the capital of Malaysia), where he went into business and became proprietor of two tin mines.

Civil war erupted nearby between rival Malay potentates competing for control of the tin revenues, each faction with Hakka miner-fighters at its disposal. The redoubtable Yap, still only thirty-two years old, was again called on to lead his brother-miners as *kapitan* of Kuala Lumpur. In effect, Yap headed what amounted to a self-governing body of miners and their militia. His leadership was founded on dialect-group solidarity as well as on local deity cults that resembled those of the Borneo mining *kongsi*.

After the British had intervened in Malaya in 1874 and established order (to allow the tin business to proceed profitably), *Kapitan* Yap found himself ruling the Chinese community of Kuala Lumpur as a client of colonial masters. Like the little "republics" of the Borneo Hakkas, Yap's organization was no match for the armed power of European colonialists and soon lost its independence. As *kapitan* of Kuala Lumpur, however, Yap prospered mightily in the tin business and acquired large tracts of property in the city. His charitable gifts (a hostel for the sick and the city's first Chinese school) followed the standard pattern by which Chinese merchants turned wealth into social status. On the eve of a triumphant visit to his Guangdong hometown as a rich, successful sojourner, he sickened and died at the age of forty-eight.

Corridors to the Homeland

How effectively could Chinese in Southeast Asia maintain ties to their home communities in China? On the homeland side, imperial policies were the governing factor. The imperial ban on maritime trade, initially imposed during the Manchus' struggle to control Taiwan and the southeastern coast (1662–1683), was reinstituted between 1717 and 1727 by a nervous dynasty that feared infiltration of anti-Qing Chinese from abroad. As before, the ban threatened ruin to merchants trading to Southeast Asia and prolonged exile to those sojourning there. Opposition was seething among officials and literati in southern Fujian, and the Maritime Interest rallied its forces once again. Lan Dingyuan (1680–1733), a Hokkien, was a noted geographer and an expert on southeast coastal affairs. He was personally involved in the campaign to suppress Taiwan rebels in 1721, and his practical writings earned him a nationwide reputation. Although he never attained a high civil service degree, the Yongzheng emperor recognized his merits and favored him with official appointments. He was broad-minded and pragmatic, favoring education for women and a more realistic policy of settlement in Taiwan. As a Hokkien, he was in a position to represent the opposition of his compatriots to the renewed trade ban of 1717.

Lan Dingyuan (1680–1733), "On the Nanyang [South Seas—Southeast Asia]" (1724)[58]

"The barbarians of Nanyang can do us no harm. Thus we should lift the ban on maritime trade and allow the people to trade with Nanyang. By doing so we can use what is abundant abroad to make up for what is deficient at home. How can this policy be delayed! . . . .

"Fujian and Guangdong are small in area but densely populated. The arable land area is insufficient to support the people's livelihood. Therefore five or six out of ten people make a living from the sea. When cheap Chinese goods are carried to barbarian lands, they are regarded as treasure. Thus people in the coastal areas manufacture small exquisite handicrafts and

women's needlework and sell to the seagoing ships. Every year silver and goods worth ten million [silver dollars?] flow from those barbarian islands into China. This is not a trivial matter.

* * * *

"Before the contact with Nanyang was banned, each family was provided for and everyone in Fujian and Guangdong was well-fed and well-clothed. Even vagabonds and rascals were eager to get wealthy and all went to the barbarian islands. There were very few cases of robbery by people who were hungry or cold. After the ban, goods could not be traded, and the people lived in destitution. There was no way for the residents of those provinces to use their skills, and the traveling traders sighed that they were not allowed to go far. Thus some people would berth their seagoing vessels, which had each cost them four or five thousand ounces of silver to build, and leave them rotting at the abandoned ports. These seagoing vessels were too large to navigate [except on the ocean,] and they could not be sold at any price. . . . However, [their owners] are not reconciled to the ban, and still expect that it will be lifted someday . . . so that they can trade overseas again. Abandoning each of these ships has destroyed the property of several hundred Chinese families. Their misery is beyond description—what can justify it? That coastal inhabitants are desolate and poverty-stricken is entirely because of the ban. The sailors who were skillful at ocean navigation and shipboard work cannot earn a living by carrying goods on their backs or their shoulders, so they take the risk of sailing ships for the pirates in order to keep body and soul together. And the vagrants and rascals, who now have no place to go, are flocking to Taiwan, where they may cause disturbances. . . .

". . . The present policy of banning trade with Nanyang is not helpful but only harmful. The ban can only impoverish the rich among the coastal inhabitants, and make the poor even poorer. It has driven craftsmen and merchants to become vagrants, and vagrants to become thieves and robbers. Since Fujian does not produce silver, people need to use foreign money. If the ban is strictly imposed for a long time and people have nothing to use [in trade], they will use paper or leather currency as an expedient. The disadvantages of such a practice are not trivial at all."

Thanks to such advocacy from coastal officials and literati, the trade ban finally was lifted in 1727. Nevertheless, the status of maritime merchants was far from resolved. The essence of the problem was sojourning. Merchants trading to Southeast Asia typically sailed south with the autumn monsoon winds, back north with the winds of spring. Time spent in a port such as Batavia or Malacca might, however, last longer than a season if they still had goods unsold or debts uncollected. Commonly, traders would leave behind a trusted agent (a brother or a nephew) to maintain the foreign base of the firm. The issue was complicated by the financial interests of corrupt low-level functionaries at the ports who exacted bribes from outgoing sojourners, which explains the relatively lax supervision of outgoing traffic. But corrupt underlings profited even more from the *incoming* traffic because returnees often were repatriating overseas riches that could be targeted for extortion or even confiscated outright. This may explain why officials winked at departing emigrants (demanding only modest bribes) but were particularly zealous to catch and fleece returnees.[59]

Keeping corridors open between the overseas Chinese sojourners and their home communities remained a controversial issue through the mid-1700s. Some official factions still considered emigrants renegades and security threats. Others, especially officials and literati in coastal provinces, regarded maritime trade as essential to the prosperity of the provinces they governed and understood the importance of sojourners to that trade. Imperial policy took a pragmatic turn following the Batavia massacre of 1740, which had emboldened antitrade officials to recommend stiff sanctions against the Dutch colonial government, through cutting off trade. But southern officials opposed such proposals on the ground that any moral satisfaction gained by a trade cutoff would come at the cost of economic damage to China. Not only would the coastal provinces suffer grievous harm (with more than half a million in the shipping industry thrown out of work and thousands more pauperized by the collapse of the southern economies), but imperial revenue from trade taxes would shrink. The message got through to the new emperor, Qianlong, who declared that trade would continue, an indication of imperial pragmatism that foreshadowed the eventual resolution of the sojourner issue.[60]

The sojourner debate intensified after an unfortunate incident in which a wealthy Hokkien merchant, one Chen Yi, ran afoul of the law that forbade sojourners' return after more than two years of absence from China. Chen had migrated by way of Macao to the Dutch East Indies, where he had made a fortune and been appointed *kapitan* by the Dutch authorities. He evidently had

visited his Fujian home quietly at least once without incident. But a visit to his mother in 1749, bringing his foreign wife and their children along with chests of silver and valuable goods, aroused the attention and greed of local officials. Shortly after his arrival in China, he was arrested, tried, and banished to the northwest frontier, not so much for having sojourned abroad as for having served a foreign government.[61]

During 1754, the "return question" dominated official debate on this issue; coastal officials, along with their allies at court, seem to have been searching for a compromise between the security concerns of the dynasty and the commercial interests of coastal officials and merchants. The chilling effect of Chen's fate on merchant sojourners seems to have galvanized the Maritime Interest of the day. The leading protagonist was Governor Chen Hongmou (1696–1771; no relation to Chen Yi) of Fujian, one of the ablest provincial officials of his era, who enjoyed the trust of Emperor Qianlong. Chen believed that trade, if unhindered by state interference, would usually benefit the common people. As governor of Fujian, Chen could observe the harmful effects of restrictive policies aimed at Chinese merchants sojourning abroad. He foresaw the danger that the Chen Yi case would frighten sojourners from returning and thereby cripple the lucrative Southeast Asian trade.

A Proposal to Permit Return of Those Who Have Sojourned Abroad: Memorial to the Throne by Chen Hongmou, Governor of Fujian, 1754[62]

"The Governor of Fujian Province, Chen Hongmou, memorializes: It would be proper to allow Fujianese who have long resided in foreign countries to return to their native places and settle down with their kinsmen, in order to manifest Imperial benevolence.

"Fujian Province is situated on the seacoast and has easy access to the various foreign peoples in the Southern Seas (Nanyang). In the four prefectures of Fuxing, Xinghua, Zhangzhou, and Quanzhou, the cultivable land is narrow and the population is dense. The cultivated fields do not produce enough to feed the people, half of whom rely on maritime occupations for a living. After the maritime ban was imposed in the year 1717, those Fujianese who were living outside China to pursue trade were not able to return to their homes. They then received the benevolence of your Imperial father [the emperor Yongzheng], who decreed that those who had gone abroad before the 1717 ban would have a time limit of three years within which to return to their native places. At that time, although there were many who observed the time limit and returned to China, there were also many who remained in foreign lands.

"In the year 1727, in response to a recommendation by Gao Qizhuo, Governor-General of Fujian and Zhejiang, the maritime ban was lifted. Thereafter, an unceasing stream of merchants proceeded from China to foreign lands. They brought back to China large amounts of silver, rice, and various goods. But separated from home by the vast ocean, sojourning merchants lack a settled domicile, and some are unable to return by the specified time. In the year 1736, the Governor-General of Fujian and Zhejiang, Hao Yulin, memorialized that these people were basically law-abiding subjects who had gone abroad to trade, but had overstayed the time limit because they had not sold all their goods, or because debts had not been paid, or because their capital was exhausted . . . or because they could not sell the land or houses they had bought. Their situation was pitiable. The Throne accepted his plea that they be allowed to return home. The Council of Princes and Ministers recommended that, except for those who had secretly gone abroad *after* the 1717 ban, who would not be permitted to return, law-abiding subjects who had verifiably gone abroad *before* the ban would be allowed to return.

"In 1737, Governor-General Hao again requested that wives married abroad and children born to them be allowed to return with them, and that the wives and children of those who had died abroad be allowed to come back to live [and this was permitted]. From then on, anyone who went to foreign countries to trade and had to stay abroad for legitimate reasons would be allowed to return if he obtained a guarantee-bond from the shipping firm.

"In 1749 a man from Longxi County named Chen Yi, who had privately [i.e., without an official exit pass] gone to Batavia and lived there for more than twenty years, had served as *"kapitan"* and had secretly returned to his home bringing his foreign wife and children. . . .

"Because of this case, Chinese merchants who have been unavoidably detained in foreign countries, even though they went abroad [legally] before the ban went into effect, are nevertheless doubtful and fearful about coming back.

"Your minister believes that because Chen Yi went privately from Guangdong Province to a foreign nation where he lived for many years and served as a foreign official with the title *kapitan*, in which capacity he collected taxes on goods and thus served a foreign government, he is certainly not a law-abiding merchant. It is most likely that he would have stirred up trouble. Thus it was proper to punish him according to law in order to prevent later disasters. But in cases where a law-abiding Chinese has actually had to stay abroad because debts owed him have not been paid; or where the wife and children of a deceased merchant wish to return to China and there is no clear rule against it, naturally we should beg an imperial decree permitting their return. . . .

"Your minister humbly suggests that more than twenty years have passed since the ban on Nanyang trade was lifted [in 1727]. Therefore all who have been doing business in foreign lands, whether they left before the ban was imposed or after, should be allowed to return. As to the problem of distinguishing between the disloyal and the loyal . . .: All shipping companies will require bonds that their passengers are loyal subjects and have not committed crimes, or do freely confess their wrongdoing. Then they will be permitted to board the ships and return to their homes. Back home, they will be placed under the supervision of local officials, who will give them over to their kinsmen and receive a bond for their good behavior. Furthermore, local government personnel shall not be permitted to take advantage of the circumstances to cause trouble for traders carrying money or goods back home. . . .

"Henceforth, those who trade over the ocean should be required to return within a three-year period. If they fail to return within three years, they will be forbidden to return. . . . That way, loyal subjects will not linger long in foreign places, and disloyal persons and lawbreakers will not secretly go abroad and cause trouble (9 May, 1754)."

The emperor referred Chen's suggestion to other coastal governors for their opinions. From the southern provincial chiefs in Guangzhou came a proposal even more liberal than Governor Chen's, in effect abandoning the three-year return deadline entirely, accepting the reality of merchant sojourning as a fixture of Chinese life and livelihood. Acting Governor-General Yang Yingju and his colleague, Hong Nian, governor of Guangdong, recommended that because "there is now an endless stream of people going overseas for trade," those who overstayed the three-year limit for reasons of illness, business delays, or vagaries of weather should be vouched for by shipping firms and allowed to return home. "Thus they would not be trapped for the rest of their lives in foreign lands, and Your Majesty's benevolence would be borne in their descendants' hearts from generation to generation."[63] The emperor referred the issue once again to the grand councillors, whose conclusion may have surprised even Chen Hongmou, the original proponent of the open-return policy. Duke Fuheng (the chief grand councillor and a brother-in-law of the emperor) wrote for his colleagues, accepting the Guangzhou recommendation:

> Wherever there are people crossing the sea to trade, no matter whether for long periods or short, they should all be permitted to return home. Moreover, this ruling should be dispatched to all places along the seacoast so that all persons shall know it. Thus no one will harbor any doubt or uncertainty. As for ordering the shipping firms to provide guarantees, it ought to be as recommended [by Governor-General Yang]. As for those who bring valuables back from foreign lands: if local officials and clerks trump up excuses to harass and extort from [the returnees], their superior officials are to impeach and punish them.

The emperor accepted this recommendation on October 24, 1754, and ordered it implemented.[64]

A Turning Point in Emigration Policy?

China now had what might reasonably be judged a permissive policy not merely toward maritime trade but also toward long-term sojourners, a policy backed by high officials in the coastal provinces and at court and ratified by the emperor. This has to be regarded as a milestone in the government's official policy toward Chinese overseas in that it recognized the legitimacy of their return to China and hence of their having sojourned abroad for an indefinite length of time. Note that there remained, both in officialdom and among the people, the presumption of sojourning, not permanent emigration. Emigration as a final renunciation of one's family and homeland was evidently not a concept that anyone cared to put into words. It was simply assumed that everybody abroad wanted to return. How significant was this policy milestone? Certainly, it was easier to proclaim than to enforce. Even pronouncements from the throne could not trump the compelling economics of local corruption, which remained a discouragement to potential returnees. Zhuang Guotu has shown that the opportunities for self-enrichment by local officials continued to victimize and intimidate sojourners, with numerous cases of returnee oppression cropping up in succeeding decades. Indeed, the forces for and against maritime trade and its sojourning merchants remained in conflict until the

dynasty's last days.[65] Even after the return issue had been resolved, homecoming sojourners were exceedingly wary of bringing wealth along with them. As a result, the return of wealth and people seems to have been carried on as a kind of smuggling operation.

These limitations aside, there is evidence that the corridors between China and Southeast Asia remained open. First, consider a contemporary account by an experienced British observer. Thomas Stamford Raffles, later the founder and first governor of British Singapore, served as lieutenant governor of Java from 1811 to 1816 (having first ousted the French occupiers who had seized the island from the Dutch). Fluent in Malay, Raffles familiarized himself not only with prevailing conditions of Java's society and economy but also with its history. His *History of Java*, published after his return to Britain in 1816, includes treatises on demography, local customs, and commerce not only of Java but also of outlying islands in the archipelago. As a free-trade enthusiast, he admired the Chinese as diligent, talented, and commercially skilled, an estimation he bore with him to Singapore in 1819. His *History* shows that Chinese sojourners in Java were adept at sustaining their corridor to the homeland despite obstacles erected on the China side by venal officials.

A Viable Corridor: A British Account of 1817[66]

"[The Chinese] arrive at Batavia from China, to the amount of a thousand and more annually, in Chinese junks, carrying three, four, and five hundred each, without money or resources; but by dint of their industry, soon acquire comparative opulence. . . . Many return to China annually in the junks, but by no means in the same numbers as they arrive. (I.74–75)

* * * *

"Of all the imports from China, that which produces the most extensive effects on the commercial and political interests of the country is the native himself; besides their cargoes, these junks bring a valuable import of from two to five hundred industrious natives in each vessel. These emigrants are usually employed as coolies or labourers on their first arrival; but, by frugal habits and persevering industry, they soon become possessed of a little property, which they employ in trade, and increase by their prudence and enterprize. Many of them, in course of time, attain sufficient wealth to render themselves independent, and to enable them to remit considerable accumulations yearly to their relations in China. As these remittances are generally made in the valuable articles, such as birds'-nests, Malayan camphor, *bich de mar* [sea cucumbers], tin, opium, pepper, timber, leather hides, indigo, gold and silver, the return cargoes of these vessels amount to an almost incredible value. (I.205)

* * * *

"With respect to the disposal of the gold from the mines of Borneo, it may be observed, that every native Chinese, whether employed in the mines, in agriculture, as merchant or artificer, manages every year to remit at least the value of one *tahil* [Chinese ounce], more or less, of gold to his relations in China. These remittances are generally made by the junks in gold, as it saves freight, is more easily smuggled on shore without the notice of the rapacious Mandarin, and remitted over-land to the residence of their families." (I.236–7)

Local genealogies of Quanzhou prefecture, a principal Hokkien homeland, also record considerable two-way traffic during the eighteenth century. They suggest that the wiles of official extortionists were often matched by those of returning sojourners. Huang Tmgyuan (1737–1804), described as "doing business far and wide," returned from Southeast Asia "dressed in dignified attire" bearing handsome gifts for his kinsmen. His house and land in the home village he gave away to his second paternal uncle and nephews (a sign that he was returning to his sojourning home overseas, having married into a Peranakan family).[67] Another emigrant, Liu Wenxiu (1686–1740), took Buddhist orders as a young man and then left home for Batavia, where he resumed secular life, prospered in business, and married a local Peranakan woman. On returning to his native village, he divided his wealth among his younger brothers and nephews, whose descendants continued to honor him.[68]

Cai Zhengdu (1743–ca. 1790) lost both parents while still a young boy; without family to care for, he shipped out to the Philippines and went into trade. Over a span of more than twenty years, he returned home many times. On one such visit, he married a local woman surnamed Wu, who soon bore him a son. He married a second wife in the Philippines (evidently the daughter of a Mestizo named Xie), who bore him a second son. When wife Xie died, Zhengdu took his second son back to the ancestral home ("showing that he understood the principle of respecting one's native place").

Subsequently, he married another local village woman, surnamed Chen. Of his sons the eldest and first heir was named Shilin (born of wife Wu), the second Shilai (of wife Xie), and the third Shihua (of wife Chen). "His character was sincere and honest," and his devotion to hometown and kinsmen was unstinting. He used his savings to buy back his family's land and spent his last years in his native place.[69] Such eulogies indicate how important was the norm of native-place loyalty in the formation of the emigrant's social conscience. Here indeed was the ethos of the migrant corridor.

Eighteenth-Century Trade Expansion: China and Britain

Major developments in both China and the West influenced the history of Chinese emigration beginning in the late 1600s. These involved first the expansion of Chinese commerce with Southeast Asia and later Great Britain's penetration into East and Southeast Asia with the ultimate aim of securing a foothold in the China market. These two developments heralded the end of the early colonial period, which had been dominated by the semigovernmental merchant regimes of Portugal, Spain, and Holland, along with a substantially increased rate of Chinese emigration: first through an expanded junk trade and later by the direct Western assault on the Qing Empire in the mid-1800s, to be treated in the next chapter.

Following Kangxi's decree of 1684 to free up maritime commerce, Chinese junk trade in the South China Sea slowly gained momentum, initiating a period of intensified Chinese participation in the regional trading system. Prosperity under the fourth Manchu emperor (Qianlong) from the 1740s increased demand for Southeast Asian imports. At the same time, population growth and worsening land shortage spurred labor export by coastal families, sending a surge of migrant laborers into Southeast Asian mining and plantation enterprises. With a pragmatic commercial policy in place by mid-century, more merchants took ship for Southeast Asian ports to set up businesses, and virtually every junk carried emigrant passengers (a mid-eighteenth-century Dutch source records that a single junk to Batavia might carry as many as 130 merchants along with hundreds of emigrant passengers).[70] Later, even as junk traffic to Manila and Batavia declined, it became "the lifeline of independent states from Siam to Sulu."[71]

In the course of the eighteenth-century commercial surge, Chinese integrated themselves into the trade and production systems of the region. Merchants and immigrant workers found profitable niches in three types of venue ecology: European colonial ports, native river-delta kingdoms, and the paddy-rice agriculture of the Southeast Asian mainland and the island of Java. The key was to infiltrate trade networks, collaborate with local rulers (including Malayan rajas, Siamese kings, and European colonialists), and make their regimes profitable by running their revenue systems and their foreign trade.

By mid-century, Chinese entrepreneurs and labor gangs were beginning to open and exploit local resources (tin mines, pepper and gambier plantations) under the patronage of local sovereigns.[72] Malay rulers recruited Chinese workers through middlemen in existing emigrant communities. The rapid flow of new recruits into Java's sugar plantations contributed to the disturbances and the massacre of 1740. Native monarchs (such as the sultan of Palembang, ruler of Bangka) and colonial governments were determined to raise production and expand revenue by using Chinese labor. Local sultans imported workers to mine tin in Malaya and Bangka and gold in Borneo. Many of these were Hakka and Cantonese, who now began to compose a more significant portion of dialect communities in Southeast Asia. Teochiu continued flocking to Siam to work in plantation agriculture and urban trade. At the same time, Southeast Asia's tributary missions to China experienced a renaissance during the 1700s because of the lucrative trade associated with tributary voyages, which were sometimes brokered by Chinese junk captains as middleman-entrepreneurs.[73]

The British Straits Settlements

Great Britain, hitherto occupied with developing its base in India, emerged as a major player in Southeast Asia colonialism much later than the Portuguese, Spanish, and Dutch. "Country traders" (private shippers trading among Asian ports and thus not competing with the franchised East India Company) brought Indian goods, including opium, to sell in Southeast Asia and China. Not until the eve of the Industrial Revolution did Britain establish its presence in the Straits of Malacca. It was in fact a former country trader who persuaded the Company to support an expedition to secure the island of Penang, the first of the "Straits Settlements," for Great Britain. This event (1786) signaled an important shift in the scale and character of Chinese migration into the region. Not only did

Penang (and Singapore and Malacca after it) establish new formats for attracting Chinese capital and labor, but they also proved to be the staging area for the British-led assault on China itself, which triggered the mass migration that followed.

Britain's colonial outposts in Southeast Asia proved especially attractive to Chinese migrants because they worked on the principle of free trade—that is, tariff-free trade open to all comers. Free trade contrasted sharply with the monopolistic, tax-encrusted trade policies of the Dutch, Spaniards, and Siamese and proved especially attractive to Chinese merchants and settlers. The advent of free trade quickened the pace of commerce with China and hence of Chinese emigration. The shift toward free trade follows the history of the British "Straits Settlements" from the late eighteenth century and is associated particularly with Penang and Singapore.

The British drive into Southeast Asia began in a small way in 1786 when Penang, an island off the west coast of the Malay Peninsula, was acquired as a base by Captain Francis Light. Light (the country trader) was naturally inclined toward free trade and free ports. He determined that the revenue to support the administration of Penang could not come from port fees or customs duties, which would hinder a lively commerce, but had to be raised from tax farms within the colony. Penang was therefore declared a tariff-free port and opened to settlement by all nationalities; opium and liquor farms were promptly let out to Chinese merchants.[74]

The colony of Penang proved a magnet for Chinese commerce. Within a few years, the island had attracted a Chinese community, some of whom had moved from the monopoly-burdened Dutch colony of Malacca. Captain Light found the new Chinese residents "the most valuable part of our inhabitants." Quick to find economic niches, they worked as "carpenters, masons, and smiths, . . . traders, shopkeepers and planters," much the same callings found a century earlier in Dutch Batavia.[75]

After a three-decade struggle with Holland for control of strategic points in the Straits of Malacca, Britain next acquired the island of Singapore (1819) from the local Malay chiefs and Malacca itself (seized in 1795, formally acquired in 1824) from the Dutch, and declared them free ports. Besides attracting Chinese merchants long established in Malacca (i.e., creolized Baba), the business potential of Penang and Singapore lured an increasing flow of immigrants directly from China. Thus emerged an international maritime nexus centered on Singapore, with branches in Malacca and Penang: a trading network based on British naval power and Sino-British commercial energies. The larger British goal was trade with China, for which the new Singapore colony was to be a way station. The Straits Settlements had inherited the age-old role of the Malacca–Johore–Riau region as an entrepôt for the internal maritime trade of Southeast Asia; the catchment area was now no longer regional but worldwide.

It was in Singapore that free trade reaped its richest rewards. Its founder, the indomitable Raffles, determined from the beginning that there should be no taxes on trade or industry; the effect on Chinese merchants, so accustomed to state exactions of all sorts, was electrifying. Singapore's earliest Chinese settlers, before the British takeover, had been a few Teochiu planters of gambier (a plant used in tanning and dyeing). But Chinese junks soon arrived in Singapore harbor with new immigrants from Guangdong (Cantonese and Hakka) who quickly found jobs as laborers and artisans building the port city. Substantial Chinese merchants were not long in coming. Raffles and his deputy, who had determined that traders were to have the choice areas in the new colony, proceeded to oust the working-class immigrants from the designated commercial zones so that wealthy, "respectable" Hokkien could move in.[76] With the transfer of Malacca from Dutch to British rule in 1824, the door was opened for a major infusion of Chinese immigrant talent and wealth. Besides its strategic importance, a signal contribution of Malacca to British rule in Singapore, not forseen at the time, was a group of rich Malacca merchant families who remigrated to the island colony from 1824 to 1827. These long-settled Baba families brought not only wealth to invest but also cultural assets: their generations-long residence in Malacca had not only creolized their language and culture but also had given them experience dealing with Westerners and foreign trade. Originally from the Minnan prefectures of Zhangzhou and Quanzhou, they formed a close-knit compatriot group that soon dominated the Singapore Chinese both commercially and socially. Indeed, these Baba merchants and their locally born offspring occupied the top layer of Chinese society in Singapore until the early twentieth century. The British found them especially useful colonial subjects, "more enlightened" and "better merchants" than other Chinese. And because some had learned English while in Malacca and had been in "constant communication with Europeans," they were accordingly "more agreeable" to foreigners.[77] Such colonial attitudes solidified the privileged Baba position in Straits Settlement colonies as intermediaries in both

commerce and administration. They were everybody's middlemen, serving not only the British but also new immigrants from China. Later we shall consider how their cultural marginality was related to Hokkien compatriotism in Singapore.

Singapore's Chinese population, of all dialect groups, grew rapidly in the decades after its founding. Chinese outnumbered all other ethnic groups (Malays, Indians, and Europeans) by 1827, with about 6,000 residents. By 1867, their number had risen to 55,000, some 65 percent of the population.[78] Singapore and Penang quickly became the only Southeast Asian venues where Chinese were a majority population.

Singapore emerged as not only the administrative center for the Straits Settlements but also the way station for Chinese migrants headed for other Southeast Asian destinations. The social structure of the colony was well suited to the purpose. Singapore merchants served as labor brokers, paying off the passage debt owed to the shipmaster (the "credit ticket") and selling the immigrant's debt to his new employer, to be paid off through his labor. By 1823, this system was already in operation, to judge by a Singapore ordinance to regularize it and limit its claims on the immigrant worker. Not only was slavery prohibited, but the immigrant's term of indenture was limited to two years, and the collectible passage fee limited to S$20.[79]

Larger cohorts of workers were soon to be needed in the plantations and mines of peninsular Malaya and beyond them, in Bangka and Sumatra in the Dutch East Indies and as far as Australia. Recruiting migrants from China, shipping them to Southeast Asia, placing them with employers, and collecting their debts required capital as well as a means of preventing indentured immigrants from absconding. For these purposes, the brotherhoods were well suited. Because we shall discuss brotherhoods in a later chapter, for the present we need only note their role in labor recruitment and discipline.

Collaborators in Empire

As merchants, tax farmers, city builders, artisans, and agriculturalists, Chinese immigrants were essential to the establishment of the colonial system in Southeast Asia. Not only colonialists valued them: continental kingdoms such as Siam and Vietnam found Chinese useful to their own states in many capacities, as traders, shippers, tax farmers, and even local administrators, intelligence agents, and soldiers. Central to their usefulness was always the corridor to China. Whether Spaniards or Dutch, British or Siamese, ruling powers needed skilled and well-connected Chinese merchants as links to the resources of their China homeland. Even Japan, with its tight restrictions on external travel and its suspicion of sojourning foreign merchants, needed the Chinese as trading middlemen and as sources of strategic intelligence.

Despite the suspicion of the Chinese court toward migration and migrants, the migrants themselves saw no reason why they should not collaborate with foreigners, even to the point of serving as "officers" under colonial governments. Ideas of nationality and citizenship were not yet parts of the East Asian scene, and making a living in foreign lands did not presume loyalty or commitment to foreign governments. "Chineseness," in those early days, had not emerged as a *political* concept in East Asia, nor the nation-state as a focus of loyalty.

In conclusion, the ability of Chinese to carve out niches in foreign lands owed much to the society from which they had emigrated. Relying on particularistic ties—kinship, dialect group, region, and ritual—patrons recruited migrants into overseas venues. In the colonial world, the merchant bridgeheads were generally the indispensable points of contact between migrants and their venues. In areas where colonialism was weak or absent, such as Malaya and Borneo, local rulers were their initial patrons. Although some immigrants were able to establish forms of local self-government under their own leaders, such as Luo Fangbo and the formidable Yap A-loy, they could not preserve them against European colonial rule.

Notes

1. Reid (1992).

2. The cases of Liang Daoming in Sumatra and Chen Zuyi in Java; the abortive expedition of Lin Feng to Manila. Wu (1993), 38–45.

3. Wang (1991).

4. Tan (1988), 35–42.

5. Wickberg (1965), 4.

6. This account follows Wickberg (1965), chap. 1.

7. Chia (2006).

8. Blussé (1986), 49–72.

9. Wang (1849), 8.

10. Blussé (1986), 102–10.

11. Blussé (1986), 123.

12. Wickberg (1965), 6.

13. Blussé (1986), 84.

14. Wickberg (1965), 10–11.

15. Blussé (1986), 95; Cushman (1978); Skinner (1996), 57.

16. Blussé (1986), 90–96.

17. Cushman (1993), 154.

18. Salmon and Lombard (1980), 266.

19. Wickberg (1965), 80–83; Blussé (1986), chap. 6.

20. Blussé (1986), 139–55.

21. Rush (1990), 28.

22. Furnivall (1944).

23. Wickberg (1965), 59.

24. Salmon and Lombard (1980), chaps. 1 and 2.

25. Salmon and Lombard (1980), 269 (translating an account by Francois Valentijn, published 1724).

26. Wang (1849).

27. Franke and Chen (1982), 238.

28. Lim How Seng (1986); Tay (1986). On Chinese immigrant associations in general, see Li (1995).

29. Li (1995), 27–31, on early associations; Franke and Chen (1982), 238.

30. Salmon and Lombard (1980), xviii–xxv.

31. Wang (1849), 25.

32. Skinner (1996).

33. Wickberg (1965), 31.

34. Wickberg (1964), 79.

35. Wickberg(1964).

36. Chia (2006).

37. Wickberg (1965), 24–25.

38. Skinner (1996), 56.

39. Dobbin (1996), chap. 2.

40. Reid (1993).

41. Li (2003); Zeng and Zhuang (2000).

42. Salmon and Lombard (1980), lix, 271.

43. Blussé (1986), chap. 5.

44. Wickberg (1965), 22–23.

45. Skinner (1957), chaps. 1–3; Wilson (1993); Kasian (1992); Wyatt (1984).

46. Kathirithamby-Wells (1992), 581–84; Hong (1984), chaps. 1 and 2.

47. Kasian (1992).

48. Chan and Tong (1993); Szanton (1983).

49. Although the Buddhism practiced in Siam was that of the Theravada branch, distinct from the Mahayana Buddhism of China, it was familiar enough to allow immigrant Chinese to feel comfortable with it.

50. Cheng (1976), chaps. 2–4; Tarling (1992), 1:586; Purcell (1965), 181–85.

51. Li (1934), 117.

52. Yuan (2000).

53. Leong (1997), chaps. 1 and 2.

54. *Kongsi* (Mandarin: *gongsi*), literally the manager or management committee of a public enterprise of some sort, was used as a metonym for the enterprise as a whole. The term could designate a lineage association, a brotherhood organization, or (in commercial use) a business firm. In the case of the Borneo Hakka, it seems to have applied to the joint-stock enterprise.

55. Yuan (2000), 45, following the nineteenth-century Dutch scholar S. H. Schaank.

56. Yuan (2000), 92.

57. Wong (1965), 17–29; Carstens (1993); Heidhues (1992), chaps. 1 and 2.

58. Lan (1726).

59. Zhuang (1989), 118.

60. Cushman (1978); Blussé (1986), 138–39.

61. Ng (1991).

62. GZDQL (1982–1986), 8:138–40; DQLCSLQL (1964b), 463.17–18.

63. GZDQL (1982–1986), 9:210–11 (September 6, 1754).

64. DQLCSLQL (1964b), 472.12 (October 24, 1754).

65. Zhuang (1989), 118–19. See Xue Fucheng's memorial of 1893 (excerpted in chapter 7). Zhuang Guotu cites Huang Kerun's report on the ineffectiveness of government policy against harassment of returnees.

66. Raffles (1817), 1:74–75, 205, 236–37.

67. Zhuang et al. (1998), 53.

68. Zhuang et al. (1998), 99–100.

69. Zhuang et al. (1998), 517–18. Of course, there are many other entries on lineage members who either died abroad or suffered fates unknown.

70. Blussé (1986), 109.

71. Reid, in Pan (1999), 52.

72. Blussé (1999), 116, 122–24; Reid (1996a), 41–49.

73. Reid (1996a), 41–48.

74. Hoyt (1991), chap. 2.

75. Purcell (1965), 244.

76. One authority speculates that this episode of apparent discrimination was the origin of a century-long hostility between Hokkiens and other dialect groups. Lim How Seng (1995), 17.

77. Song (1984), 30–31, quoting an 1837 source. Many Baba had learned their English at Malacca's Anglo-Chinese College, founded in 1820 by Robert Morrison of the London Missionary Society.

78. Turnbull (1989), 36; Lim How Seng (1995), 20.

79. Turnbull (1989), 23.

CHAPTER THREE

Imperialism and Mass Emigration

Mass Chinese emigration began in the mid-1800s and lasted through the 1920s, its demographic and spatial scales abrupt departures from the past.[1] The energy of this great human movement was generated within China, but some of its mechanisms were imposed by the industrializing world outside. For Chinese of that time, the well-ingrained adaptive strategy of labor export became linked to expanded opportunities—real and imagined—for work abroad. Meanwhile, the imperial ambitions of the West outgrew the old colonial framework in South and Southeast Asia and spread worldwide, extracting resources, selling manufactured goods, and requiring vast new cohorts of cheap labor. While European émigrés dominated the workforce in the underpopulated temperate regions of the Americas and Australasia, Asian workers (principally Indians and Chinese) were imported to tropical regions suitable for plantation agriculture. This chapter will explore how mass Chinese migration was organized and its institutions established, the routes migrants followed, and the places they settled. Succeeding chapters will treat the environments they lived in and how they coped with them.

By the early nineteenth century, the initial shock waves of the Industrial Revolution were being felt in eastern Asia. From their base in India, British merchants reached out toward the alluring China market, and Indian opium became a major commodity in the China trade. Repercussions of the opium trade transformed the conditions of Chinese emigration and reshaped Chinese communities abroad. As competing European powers reached into Asia for markets, raw materials, and labor, the old colonial forms of Chinese emigrant society were transformed. Meanwhile, south China, thrown into turmoil by the foreign invasion, became a seemingly inexhaustible pool for the international labor market.

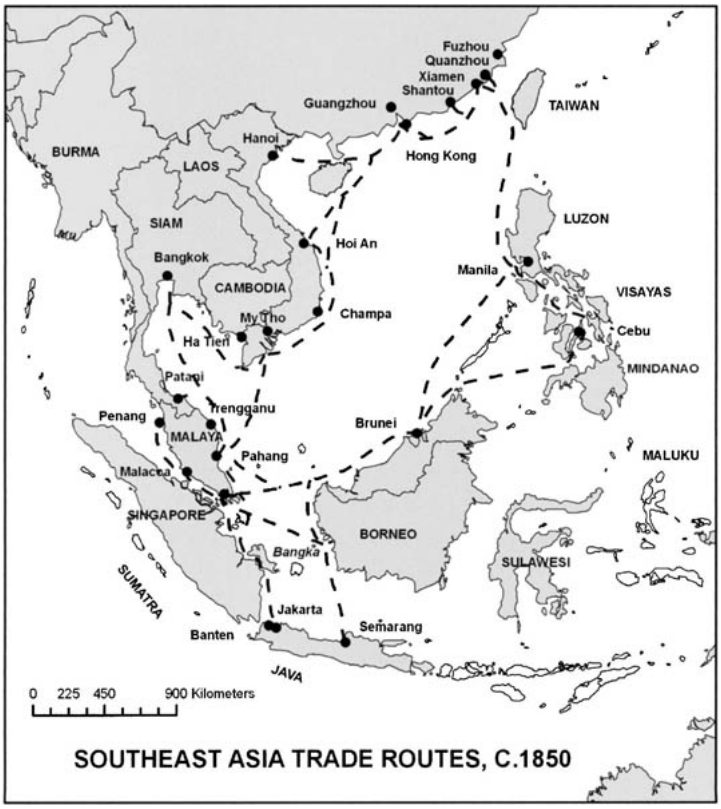
In the background lay Britain's ambitions to expand the markets for its growing industries, with the China market as the ultimate prize. As we observed in the last chapter, the stepping-stones were the Straits Settlements, which the British saw as advance bases for the commercial push into China. As a base for the China trade, the Straits Settlements were shortly to be supplanted by Hong Kong. Singapore, however, became the preeminent way station for Chinese commerce and Chinese labor moving into Southeast Asia as well as an entry for Sino-British penetration of the Malay Peninsula, which itself became a major venue for Chinese migration.

Led by the burgeoning tea trade, direct Western commerce with China expanded at Guangzhou, which had been designated the only port open to foreign shipping. By the early nineteenth century, this commerce was being financed by the most salable commodity in Asia, opium, which the British carried from plantations in India via Singapore. The British came to rely on opium taxes to generate the bulk of the revenue needed to run its Southeast Asian colonial ports. Opium was therefore an essential component of the "free trade" regime under which traders of all nationalities were welcome, free of customs duties, and which made the British colonial ports so attractive to Westerners and Chinese alike.

The effects of the "opening of China" on emigration can be considered in political, social, and technological aspects. Politically, the settlement forced by Britain on the Qing government established a framework of special privilege for Westerners in China-coast ports, where labor recruitment was then able to flourish largely unhampered by Chinese laws. Socially, southern Chinese society suffered economic decline and civil conflict that ruined livelihoods and displaced

vast numbers of people. Technologically, the economy of ocean travel was transformed by the advent of Western ships: first square-rigged vessels and shortly afterward steamships, which made oceanic travel in both directions swifter and more convenient (though not necessarily cheaper per passenger), overtook Chinese junks as the dominant carriers in the Pacific trade (see Map 3.1).

Clamping the Western-imposed "Treaty System" on China-coast ports, along with imperialism's insistent demand for cheap labor, transformed the mechanisms of Chinese migration. Under the old colonial regime, Chinese who migrated overseas did so through systems run by other Chinese: recruitment, transport, and settlement of migrants relied on existing patterns of Chinese maritime trade; the transportation was on Chinese junks; and the settling of migrants in the venue societies took place largely through the agency of existing Chinese communities. Merchant bridgeheads, many established since the sixteenth century, provided access to work, housing, social institutions, and sometimes marriage partners. In both origin and venue societies, migration networks were anchored in shared dialect, kinship, and regional origin. Nevertheless, once foreigners were established in the treaty ports and the colonial entrepôts of Hong Kong and Macao, these old networks were challenged by a new, foreign-dominated form of network in which foreign firms contracted for laborers, foreign ships transported them, and foreign-controlled enterprises employed them. The old form of Chinese-dominated network also continued to function in many areas. As a result of this new mix of migration mechanisms, Chinese societies overseas became more complex and internally divided. In areas where foreigners were completely in charge at both ends (such as Peru), Chinese communities were less able to form and maintain themselves.[2]



Map 3.1. China trade routes to Southeast Asia, ca. 1850. Produced after Reid (1996).

The Opium Wars and Their Effects

The establishment of Western power on the China coast took roughly two decades, from the first Opium War of 1840–1842, followed by a series of conflicts lasting through the occupation of Beijing by an Anglo-French army. The result, as it affected emigration, was a system of treaties that established a foreign presence in the treaty ports that was immune from Chinese law. Thereby the process of recruiting or impressing migrant labor could be conducted under foreign initiative and legal protection. The first Opium War pitted an India-based British naval and military force against the economically and socially troubled Qing Empire. The immediate cause of the war was a dispute over Beijing's campaign to suppress the opium trade, but its broader cause was British

determination that China accept free trade, along with Western-style legal procedures and diplomatic relations. The British triumphed in 1842 with the Treaty of Nanjing, under which the Qing conceded an array of demands, including outright cession of the island of Hong Kong and the opening of five seaports where Westerners could trade and reside under an exemption from Qing law. France and the United States shortly demanded and were given the same privileged terms.

The war had two momentous effects on emigration. First, Western dominance of China's seaports under the terms of the treaty (the number of open ports greatly expanded under subsequent treaties) provided a legal framework for recruiting millions of laborers and shipping them overseas, a framework sustained by the military supremacy of the foreign powers. Second, the war and the opium trade profoundly disrupted Chinese society in the coastal provinces. Thousands were torn from their livelihoods, impoverished, and driven to desperate measures (including emigration) merely to survive. Thus, the "opening of China" not only produced the mechanisms for recruiting labor but also uprooted that labor socially and economically.

The direct effects of the Western incursion included the disruption of old economic patterns and the loss of jobs by thousands of workers. The opium trade (served by gangs of outlaw distributors) contributed to the anarchy along the southern coast. The Pearl River delta was both the most economically vulnerable area and also the most convenient to overseas shipping. As discussed in chapter 1, families of that crowded region had long been accustomed to exporting labor to manufacturing towns such as Foshan and to the seaports of Guangzhou and Macao. The foreign presence touched off massive disorder in the delta beginning in the 1850s. Guangzhou, historically a magnet to migrant labor, was abruptly subject to commercial competition from the newly opened "treaty ports" of Shanghai and Ningbo. Some 100,000 of its porters and boatmen, suddenly unemployed, quickly joined outlaw brotherhoods and turned to banditry to survive. The "Red Turban" rebellion, fueled by these desperate castoffs and led by brotherhood chiefs, tore through the delta from 1853 to 1855, its violence matched by official vengeance. Many fled government reprisals by emigrating.

The war had deepened a cyclical economic depression in the southern and southeastern provinces, and as times grew harder, local intervillage feuding inflicted widespread chaos and displacement. Competition for scarce resources pitted dialect groups against one another, resulting in war between Hakka and Cantonese from 1856 to 1868 that killed hundreds of thousands of farmers. Up the West River from Guangzhou, feuding Hakka and Cantonese communities mobilized for warfare. The outnumbered Hakkas gathered an army in 1850 and proclaimed a new regime, the Heavenly Kingdom of Great Peace (Taiping Tian Guo), inspired by a millenarian, Sinicized version of Protestant Christianity. The sect's ability to attract followers (perhaps as many as 2 million at the height of the movement) shows how easily people on the margin of subsistence could be marshalled in southern China. Thus, poverty and violence were the lot of a generation of young men for whom emigration to a distant and uncertain future held few terrors by comparison with what they faced at home.[3] Once mass emigration began in earnest, ships jammed with migrants sailed from ports that had been opened to foreign shipping, which now included the treaty ports plus the outright colonial enclaves of Hong Kong and Macao. The last two became transshipment ports for emigrants recruited from farther up the coast.

Conditions of Emigration

Foreign domination established the mechanisms for both voluntary and involuntary emigration. As African slavery was gradually abolished worldwide over the early and mid-nineteenth century, the demand for cheap labor became acute. In the West Indies, Chinese and Indian indentured workers began to replace Africans on sugar plantations. In the growing economies of Southeast Asia, Australasia, and the New World, cheap Chinese labor seemed an attractive prospect to developers of mines, plantations, and railroads.

Hong Kong (a British colonial possession after 1842) owed its primacy in the shipment of Chinese overseas to its freedom from Chinese official presence and its advantages as a terminus for steamships. From the new colony sailed Cantonese emigrants in much greater numbers than before, and to venues that used to be dominated by Hokkiens. But not only Cantonese departed through Hong Kong; as the primary international steamship port, the colony served as an entrepôt for migrants from the hinterlands of Xiamen (Hokkien), Shantou (Teochiu and Hakka), and Guangzhou. Through transshipment at Hong Kong, emigrants from all three areas reached the great labor

entrepôt of Singapore and thence were carried to the Dutch East Indies, Malaya, and Siam. From Hong Kong, the emigrant ships reached also North America, Hawaii, and Australasia. Portuguese Macao, the other foreign-controlled port, served as the main embarkation point for Cuba and Peru and was notorious for the worst abuse of coolies. Maltreatment and coercion in the Portuguese colony was at one end of a culture of oppression that reached to the plantations and the guano mines of the Hispanic New World.

Emigration after 1842 exhibited a range of types, the distinguishing factor being the ways emigrants met the expenses of travel, which in turn determined the degree of personal freedom the migrants enjoyed: 1) The freest migrants were those who were able to pay for their overseas passage through their family resources. Although they were certainly "indebted" to their family in the sense that they owed obligations to them in the form of remittances, they were not controlled by an outside creditor. 2) Somewhat less free were those who got loans from merchants, brokers, or shipping companies, to be repayed from wages or profits from work overseas, an arrangement usually termed "credit ticket" or "assisted migration." 3) Still less free were the migrants whose indebtedness was certified by a contract of indenture, which bound them to work for an employer abroad for a set term, commonly three to five years but sometimes as long as eight. And 4) least free —indeed in a condition that hardly differed from slavery—were those who were coerced or deceived into boarding ship and signed contracts under duress. These victims of the coolie system were as cruelly treated as any slaves and lived (or died) under the whips and shackles of their masters.

Of these four types, the largest number were probably types 2 and 3: migrants who had to borrow their travel fares but who enlisted themselves as voluntary debtors, as did (and still do) migrants from many societies around the world. The indentured migrants of types 3 and 4 were recruited in various ways, some voluntary and others coerced. Nevertheless, at destination they often shared a condition of bondedness that can be termed "paraslavery" in that they were so dominated by their employers that they could neither get protection from cruel treatment nor escape from their closely guarded confinement. Although they were not "owned" by their masters, the conditions under which they lived and worked resembled chattel slavery so closely that "paraslavery" denotes just the right degree of distinction.

The Slavery Factor

Whether a credit-ticket or an indenture system prevailed was influenced by the cultural and productive ecology of the venue society: although African slavery was being abolished during the period of Asian mass migration, indentured paraslavery became entrenched in colonial regimes worldwide. Abolition of the slave trade and, subsequently, of slavery itself led to the importation of Asian labor as a substitute. Worldwide abolition proceeded in stages, from the British antislavery legislation of 1807 (banning the slave trade and in principle enforcing that ban upon all slave ships on the seas) and 1833, when slavery was abolished in all British territories; to the later abolition in the Spanish colonies and their successor states; to constitutional prohibition of slavery in the United States in 1865.

Historians have linked the abolitionist movement as a whole to the rise of industrial capitalism and to bourgeois ideology that scorned bondage and dependency.[4] But an awkward discrepancy in this story is the indenture system, which was instituted by industrialized colonial powers in their tropical possessions. Based nominally on contracts to serve particular employers for a span of years, indenture substituted for chattel slavery as the economic mainstay of European tropical colonies in Asia, America, Africa, and Oceania. Colonial powers with antislavery ideologies practiced a form of psychological dissociation where the economies of their tropical plantations and mines were concerned. Lasting in some localities into the early twentieth century, indenture affected hundreds of thousands of unfree Asian laborers, particularly (in the Caribbean) in colonies of Holland, Britain, and Spain and (in Southeast Asia) in British Malaya and the Dutch East Indies. Indenture was also used in the sugar plantations of Mauritius, Australia, and Fiji and in the gold mines of South Africa. In Malaya, the regulation of indenture involved an uneven contest between the economic demands of plantation operators and the humanitarian norms that tempered the policies of the British colonial civil service. Dutch possessions exhibited an even more marked disparity between the economy and culture of the industrialized metropole and the cruelties inflicted on indentured laborers in its tropical colonies. Regulations imposed, for example, in eastern Sumatra, ostensibly to rein in the harsher aspects of the indenture system, actually resulted in legitimating the interests of the employers in controlling their workers by beating, imprisonment, and humiliation.

How little the nineteenth-century public in the metropoles knew about indenture is suggested by a learned article on "slavery" from 1911 by the Irish economist and historian John Kells Ingram. Ingram discusses indenture as "a sort of legalized slave traffic" in which workers were "decoyed into the labour ships under false pretences, and then detained by force" or else kidnapped outright. Recruits were deceived as to the actual terms of service; in sum, it was "a system which in treachery and atrocity was little inferior to the old African slave trade."[5] The only example he cites, however, is the indenture of imported Pacific islanders by white planters in Fiji and in Queensland, Australia. He seems not to have heard about the large-scale use of indentured Chinese and Indians by British employers in Malaya and British Guiana. Ingram quickly recognized indenture as disguised slavery but evidently was unaware of how widespread it was in the British Empire.

The reality of indenture as it affected most Asians after 1850 was a system that resembled slavery in some respects, but substituted a contract for a purchase; the employer owned the worker's labor but not his body. Yet some aspects of slavery remained, even though dressed up with a contract. Renewals of contracts were often compulsory. Workers lived in what amounted to captivity. But the main conceptual link to slavery was a state-supported system of grossly unequal power, contracts notwithstanding. To be sure, contracts were familiar to many if not most ordinary Chinese: written contractual arrangements were common in land transfers and business partnerships and in kinship transactions, such as the division of family property among brothers and marriage agreements between families.[6] That the indentured worker usually "signed" a contract was literally true (even though with a finger- or handprint); nonetheless, the act of signing an indenture was commonly coerced, the contract was unintelligible to the illiterate signer, and its interpretation and enforcement were entirely in the hands of the employer and of the colonial state within which he operated. Although colonial states got involved in the indenture system by issuing regulations for both workers and employers, the survival of the system rested on the fact that certain breaches of contract (by the workers) were punishable by penal sanctions—they were treated as criminal offenses against the state, not civil disputes between contractual parties. Juridically, indenture was linked unmistakably to its close ancestor, slavery.

Indenture's long survival in the tropical colonies (e.g., down to the 1930s in the Dutch Indies) was dictated by two factors of ecology. First, even poor Europeans could not be enticed to work in steamy tropical locales like Cuba or Sumatra, which were unpleasant and dangerous to anyone not inured to their climate or resistant to their diseases. Second, plantations and mines were labor-intensive enterprises, and value added per worker was low. The tropics repelled European workers at any wage, and the low per capita production kept wages so low that the only people willing to work there were those whose native economies paid them even less.[7] Both from climatic and economic perspectives, south China produced what looked to prospective employers like suitable human material.

The Role of the State

Like slavery itself, indentured paraslavery flourished only in venues where the state was prepared to enforce it. That escape was considered a penal offense; that atrocities against workers, even murder, would be immune from state punishment; and that inhumane conditions of life and work were tolerated or even legitimated by state agencies—all these conditions required a state that nurtured a culture of slavery or that was so cowed by the plantocracy that its protestations carried little or no weight. Whenever a colonial administration resolutely curtailed its cruelties or was compelled to do so by its metropolitan superiors, or when a state would not enforce indenture contracts (as was the case in North America), indentured paraslavery either never took root or else withered and vanished.

It was in British South Africa that the state's role in sustaining indenture was displayed with particular irony. Britain, where abolitionism grew up with the Industrial Revolution, had pioneered in banning the slave trade and enforcing the ban on the high seas, as we have seen. Although chattel slavery finally was abolished in 1834 in all British possessions, the peculiar institution lived on as indenture in the service of British plantations and mines. Indentured labor was introduced in the Transvaal, a region in South Africa recently brought under British imperial rule, where gold mining was a mainstay of the economy. After the Boer War (1899–1902), a labor shortage in the mines led to the importation of "Asiatic" (in this case, Chinese) coolies.

Three factors distinguished the Transvaal "Asiatic" enterprise. First, the recruitment of workers took place mainly in the northern provinces of Zhili (Hebei) and Shandong, the usual Cantonese

labor being in short supply because of competition from British Malaya. Second, for domestic political reasons, the venture was minutely supervised by the British administration and its agents in South Africa. At the outset, a coalition of abolitionists and labor unionists cried "Chinese slavery," so Whitehall had to tread carefully. Agreements were made with the Chinese government, the recruitment process was carefully hedged with safeguards against fraud or coercion, and the terms of employment guaranteed repatriation at the expiry of the three-year (renewable) indenture contracts. Third, the Transvaal system became an incendiary issue in a British parliamentary election, leading to the fall of the government that had installed it.

In the course of this supposedly most conscientious and humane episode of indentured labor, nearly 63,000 Chinese were transported to South Africa between 1905 and 1907, with some 53,000 in the mines at peak employment. Despite close regulation of recruitment, carefully supervised transportation, and consensual contracts of service and pay, the result was surprisingly close to the paraslavery seen elsewhere in the indenture system.

Recruitment was bungled from the outset, starting with interpreters who spoke only Cantonese rather than the Mandarin dialect of these mostly northern recruits. Chinese overseers were appointed from among the workers to enforce discipline. These "Chinese Police" or "police boys" filled the role of venal middlemen found in all unfree labor systems. As in all indentured workforces, indebtedness became a manacle of enslavement, the main entrapments being gambling and opium purchases, businesses the "Chinese police" ran for their own profit.[8]

Behind oppressive treatment, however, was state support, starting with government-sanctioned tinkering with the indenture contracts: mining companies substituted piecework for hourly wages in order to lower costs and boost production. By docking pay at the low end and capping it at the high end, employers structured piecework rates to commandeer what amounted to unpaid labor. (Thirty-six inches of arduous rock drilling yielded full pay for a day's work. Shorter distances earned less—down to 24 inches, below which *no pay* was given.) Not surprisingly, workers rioted, and some were killed.[9] The state labeled as "outlaws" any workers who escaped; local farmers could shoot them on sight. Deserters captured alive were fined and imprisoned. Flogging for minor offenses was tolerated by state supervisors—until it became known in Britain and sparked a domestic political crisis. Although the Conservative government was ousted over the issue of "Chinese slavery," the mining companies managed to sustain the Transvaal indenture until 1910, when the last contracts expired. Surviving miners were shipped back to China; none remained in the colony.[10]

Although indentured labor was employed in all of Britain's Caribbean colonies, its only large-scale use was in Guiana, where between 1852 and 1879 around 13,500 Chinese were imported to work on sugar plantations. Guiana is an example of how a migration venture could fail for lack of a viable corridor to bind emigrants to their *qiaoxiang* and thus form a continuous chain of recruitment. Recruiting Chinese for British Guiana was difficult: so long, expensive, and arduous was the passage via the Cape of Good Hope that few migrants were seen to return. The contrast with California, from which many returned, was noted by people in Guangzhou. Consequently British coolie agencies recruiting for Guiana found that farmers, however willing to sell their labor,

> would never come of their own accord to the emigration depot, because they hear of it only as a certain road to "that bourne from whence no traveller returns." Absurd as it may appear, it is nevertheless true that many Chinese peasants actually believed that the coolies upon their arrival in a foreign land were made into opium.

Enlisting missionaries as middlemen proved a vain effort. The British campaign (unusual for the 1860s) to recruit women in hopes of generating a settled worker population had scant success because Chinese believed "that the women were needed to gratify the lusts of the debased foreigner."[11]

Cecil Clementi, who had served as government secretary of British Guiana, concluded his 1915 history of Chinese emigration to that colony by asking why, although Guiana was "the very place where the procreative recklessness and the adventurous industry of the Chinese is most needed!" all attempts "to introduce [permanent] Chinese immigrants into this Colony failed of success?" The reasons, he believed, were 1) that the colony had failed to attract more than a tiny proportion of Chinese woman immigrants (14 percent); 2) that the colony's demand for imported labor had fluctuated, giving rise to doubts among potential recruits; and, most important, 3) that before the days of the canal across "the Isthmus of Darien," Guiana and Guangzhou were separated by an arduous sea voyage (by way of the Indian Ocean and the South Atlantic) and by the reluctance of planters to bear the costs of either the migrants' return to China or the transmission of family remittances. Accordingly, the emigrant "was completely lost to all who once knew him in his

mother-country and . . . was no advertisement at all for this Colony among his fellow-countrymen. Demerara [Guiana] became known in South China as a land whence no one returned."[12]

Indeed, had they been able to return, their tales of plantation life would have been no advertisement either. A British judge summed up the dread scene in Guiana:

> [Indenture] places those subject to it in a position of adscription to the soil, and obligation to labour for its owner under a system of personal subjection and of servitude enforced by special penal discipline. . . . A "dollar a day" is the formula which has very generally been impressed upon the minds and expectations of the Chinese immigrants before arrival. . . . Such a formula, however, represents a delusion so monstrous that its assertion for such a purpose must reflect upon the sense, the knowledge, or the *bona fides* of the speaker. It may, indeed, be possible for an immigrant who obtains the post of "driver" to earn a dollar a day, but the average earned by immigrant labourers is considerably less than a fourth of that amount.[13]

Indenture in the Dutch East Indies

The cultural background of paraslavery in the Dutch East Indies reveals a grim history of slavery and slave trading throughout the Indian Ocean since the seventeenth century.[14] As imperialism reached out to Asia, however, more sophisticated and efficient ways to mobilize and subjugate labor were needed. Hence, a contract-based paraslavery established itself in frontier settings such as eastern Sumatra (a frontier region called Deli), drawing its labor supply mostly from the south China poor, commonly imported through the Straits Settlements. The plantation system as it existed in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries was rigorously industrialized, with meticulous attention to timing and to labor discipline. Coolies were treated as harshly as considered necessary to discipline them to the system. Breaches of the rules were met with penal sanctions—including fines, imprisonment, forced labor, and beatings—legitimized by "Coolie Ordinances," which, though purporting to regulate both companies and workers, bore disproportionately on the workers. Backed by state agencies, the plantation managers had little incentive to maintain humane standards in the treatment of their workforce: hunger, disease, and exhaustion were endemic on the plantations. Coolie revolts incited by harsh penalties were put down with armed force.

Conditions in Deli were known to be so bad that it became difficult to recruit workers directly from China. Even the British authorities in Malaya and the Straits were loath to permit transshipment of immigrants to Sumatra—though they had limited ability to prevent it. As usual in indenture systems, Chinese middlemen (*ketou*) were an indispensable link in the system of driving and disciplining workers. Many of these men were probably connected with the brotherhoods in Penang and Malaya, which were instrumental in recruiting and shipping coolies. Their own financial interests meshed neatly with those of the plantocracy: getting coolies hopelessly indebted in gambling sessions was one way to ensure their inability to leave at the expiration of their contracts. Debt bondage, backed by state power, was an effective way to keep the coolie in perpetual confinement.

As soon as reformer and statecraft activist Zhang Zhidong was appointed governor-general of Guangdong and Guangxi (1884), he realized that overseas Chinese (many of whom had relatives in his jurisdiction) were potential donors to his state-building projects. Zhang proposed stationing consuls in Southeast Asian ports to defend Chinese residents and to solicit their support. To follow up, he sent two diplomatic officials to investigate conditions among emigrant communities. Among the regions his envoys visited was Deli in eastern Sumatra, where the Dutch colonialists were notorious for mistreating Chinese workers. Local Dutch officials summoned a "luitenant" (a Chinese "officer" appointed by the colonial regime) to deal with Zhang's envoys. But when the envoys demanded the arrest of a Dutch plantation official who had allegedly beaten a Chinese to death, they found that the "luitenant" was powerless. Following are excerpts from the envoys' report to Governor-General Zhang.

A Chinese Report on the Treatment of Indentured Workers in the Dutch East Indies (1886)[15]

"For days we, your envoys, questioned the foremen and various workers. They stated that they all had been brought by Chinese recruiter-middlemen to Singapore and Penang from various counties near Shantou. They appeared before a British court and testified that they were all voluntary workers. Contracts in Chinese were then drawn up, one for each worker [stating] that he would first be provided thirty dollars [as an advance on salary] to pay for their shipping fares. All the money was taken by the recruiters without any explanation, or appropriated by them on various excuses. Eventually the worker retained only three or four dollars. . . .

* * * *

"Each year, after the tobacco harvest, the plantation owners allow the foremen to set up a moneylending system [for the workers]. Some workers gamble and lose their money. . . . As a result they lose all their savings and cannot return to their home villages. The plantation owners are not uniformly good or bad. The good ones are not outrageously cruel. As for the bad ones: if the workers take a moment to rest, they whip them past endurance. They even reduce their wages, or detain them so that they can never leave the plantation.

"It has been more than a decade since the Westerners established plantations and began planting tobacco. . . . The most evil among them are those who expel sick workers from the plantation. These unfortunates can but beg in the streets or lie stiff and motionless by the roadside. Their kinsmen and fellow villagers cannot bear to see them thus and try to care for them and provide them medicine. After a worker recovers, any foreman who spots him informs the plantation owner, who promptly hauls him back to resume work. [Anyone who has given him shelter] will be tried and jailed for three months. As a result, even if one sees sick and homeless Chinese workers, one dares not get involved. Thus there are countless cases of sick Chinese workers who are left to die along the roads."

Back in Holland, the citizenry got a glimpse of East Indies indenture through a journalist's pamphlet in 1902, and the resulting outcry led to a government investigation. The official report, which painted an even grimmer picture than the original pamphlet, was discreetly shielded from the public, the furor died down, and the abuses in Sumatra went on as before.[16]

Whether or not equating indenture with slavery was a "terminological inexactitude," as the young Winston Churchill declared in Parliament (referring to the Transvaal), the similarities were plain enough to eclipse formal distinctions (as British voters evidently decided in the 1905 election). The contractual element itself was so compromised and so lacking in fair enforcement that it was, at best, a fig leaf on a fraud.

Voluntary Emigration

By contrast, voluntary migration followed naturally from the labor-export strategy long employed by families in the southern provinces. As we have seen in chapter 1, farmers of the Pearl River delta had long taken for granted that small-scale agriculture alone could seldom support a family and that —if there were surplus male workers in the family—wage labor or petty trade away from home might make up the difference. Industries in towns such as Shunde and Foshan absorbed surplus labor from the surrounding countryside. Peddling and wage labor in the port cities were common resorts of underemployed rural men. On the eve of the Opium War, it was already the custom for country people to seek seasonal employment abroad in the winter slack season by taking ship on foreign vessels sailing from Macao.[17]

Voluntary emigrants found ways to raise their passage money. Furnishing travel expenses to an emigrant was an investment: a kinship group was advancing the money in view of future remittances or of wealth to be brought back home; a businessman was making a speculative loan to be repaid with interest. Emigrants without such backing had to apply to passage brokers or shipping companies for a credit ticket, an arrangement sometimes called assisted migration. A contract for a credit ticket might be signed at the port of embarkation or at destination (depending on the need to evade regulations against shipping contracted laborers).

Handling a migrant's passage debt commonly involved several layers of middlemen. Chinese organizations abroad (such as merchant houses, regional lodges, or passage brokers) would pay the debt to the shipping company on the migrant's arrival, then collect it back from the debtor himself. In other cases, the lender would either travel with a group of emigrants or send an agent (*ketou, towkay*) who would collect the debt from another agent on the receiving end (essentially a labor broker) who then became the emigrant's creditor. This broker would commonly sell the loan to the operator of a mine or plantation. Sometimes the creditor's agent would travel right along with the migrant (e.g., to gold diggings in Australia) to make sure that the obligation was met.

A migrant was routed through the process in an orderly fashion. At the port of departure, his passage was certified on a ticket that recorded whether he had paid his own way. Careful debt management required that a migrant's home district be identified on the face of his ticket so that he could be connected at the destination port with an agent of the right regional lodge or brotherhood

who would assume responsibility for him and his debt or would pass him along to an employer who would do so. Such meticulous handing-off of the migrant ensured, in addition to debt repayment, that the native-place networks were constantly reinforced by the ongoing stream of migration.[18] It also made loans more secure by the careful recording of migrants' native villages so that their families could be held accountable for any unpaid passage debts.

Such transfers of indebtedness relied only minimally on trust: in California, for example, Chinese regional lodges in San Francisco that had assumed migrants' passage debts arranged with the shipping companies that no migrant could take passage home without a document to certify that his debts had been paid. Such a system was not a form of indenture because the worker was not bound to a particular master or under contract for a fixed period of labor. Going into debt to pay the cost of travel was (and still is) a common way to finance migration. Although it was a risk to both debtor and creditor, in an age of acute labor shortage and powerful inducements to migrate, the risk was acceptable.

We cannot know the exact proportion of those who emigrated voluntarily as self-paid passengers or as debtors bound by credit tickets or indenture. There was certainly a class difference between those who could pay their own way, borrow from family, or present sufficient collateral to borrow from merchants; and those who could afford passage abroad only by pledging their future labor. The self-paid emigrants came mainly from the merchant and artisan classes or groups with special skills such as doctors. Those emigrating under contracts (whether credit tickets or indentures) were people living close to the margin of survival, such as poor farmers, peddlers, fishermen, and rural wage laborers.[19] Such class differences undoubtedly meant that a preponderance of migrants had to travel by means of credit tickets or indenture contracts.

That the collateral for the credit consisted only of earnings from the emigrant's future labor meant that creditors (the agents, the shippers, and, at the receiving end, the merchant or brotherhood labor importers who in effect purchased the contract) had only the emigrant himself as security for their investment. Hence, a certain amount of coercive enforcement was considered necessary to keep an indentured emigrant from absconding. This fact lay behind much of the mistreatment (confinement, threats, and physical punishment) that was visited on emigrants, both en route and at destinations abroad.

Some aspects of the emigrant recruitment system were familiar to Chinese, who were accustomed to dealing with middlemen in the wage-labor market. In China, work for a distant employer was customarily arranged through a "labor agent" (*baogong* or *gongtou*) who would recruit men from his home region, bring them to the employer, and often handle their housing and food. The workers' pay would be given by the employer to the agent, who would then pass it on to the men, taking his commission and expenses off the top. Labor agency was a business venture, and there were surely thousands undertaking it in every coastal province. The management of emigration can be seen as an extension of this time-honored business.[20]

Chinese migrating abroad usually did not make arrangements for themselves but worked through middlemen.[21] Because this is such a salient and generally recognized feature of Chinese migration (and perhaps of human travel in general), it is worth a brief discussion. Middlemen in migration can be thought of as "facilitators": persons who, because of their connections and specialized knowledge, are able to help migrants avoid the trouble and the hazards of travel. More basic to the facilitator role, however, is the Chinese practice of relying on a specific kind of connection: affinities (kinship, dialect, region, or occupation) that can hook the migrant into networks at the other end of his journey.[22] Such affinity connections are generally the first resort of Chinese when they maneuver in the world outside the home and family setting, and normally a facilitator will have an affinity connection to his clients. A kinship or compatriot network on the other end can ensure a "soft landing" for the migrant.

A facilitator may be someone with special knowledge who is otherwise unavailable to the migrant, someone who knows of business and job opportunities and travel conditions, of administrative procedures and how to manipulate them, and of official obstacles and how to avoid them. He may also have connections, or correspondents, at the other end who can point the migrant to jobs, housing, and security. Historically, as now, facilitators are in it for profit (though sometimes the "profit" may be social in nature—the status and acclaim that come from being a patron of people in one's kin group or community who need help to migrate).

Facilitators often were returned migrants who had worked off their contracts and gone into business for themselves as labor recruiters; naturally, their most fruitful recruiting grounds were

their own home villages and lineages. By the early twentieth century, such a system was preferred by plantation operators in Southeast Asia who were having trouble recruiting indentured labor, which by that time had acquired a bad reputation along the China coast. The relation between this sort of headman and his workers was more likely to be congenial than coercive because the network of family or village connections that bound the facilitator to his recruits formed a natural restraint against abuse, while it ensured the migrant's willing repayment of his debt.

The business interest of the facilitator could be either benign (helping voluntary migrants) or malign (defrauding or kidnapping involuntary migrants). Thus, we can include in the general category "facilitators" anyone from travel agents to organized criminals. In this last respect, the role of brotherhoods was crucial. At the receiving end (most prominently Singapore, the major entrepôt for immigrant Chinese entering Southeast Asia), the man at dockside who took over the immigrant's debt from the shipper was generally a brotherhood agent. As the migrants disembarked, they would be marched off by such agents to a confined residence in sheds near the port, then passed on to labor gangs upcountry in Malaya or in Singapore itself or transshipped to another colony, such as Deli in Dutch-controlled Sumatra. At the final destination, the workers would be handed over to the mine or plantation of the ultimate employer in return for the principal of the passage debt plus commission. Labor brokers all along the line were commonly agents of the brotherhoods.[23] The role of the brotherhoods in the China-coast sending ports is less clearly understood, but one authority considers that the broker-facilitators in the treaty ports generally had brotherhood connections.[24]

Involuntary Emigration

Here, in the notorious recruitment rackets of the treaty ports, was the path to indentured paraslavery for hundreds of thousands of Chinese men. Dragged onto ships by kidnapping or lured by fraud, these victims of the unequal treaties were forced to sign indenture contracts under physical threat.[25] The universal demand for cheap labor was a natural product of the expansion of imperialism in tropical venues. Because voluntary emigration could not generate the numbers needed to meet the demand, involuntary emigration became common beginning in the 1850s. During the decades after the Opium War, press gangs were on the prowl all along the China coast.

Impressing labor in south China was a joint Sino–foreign enterprise. Western firms relied on Chinese agents to obtain men, and the Chinese agents relied on Westerners to use their extraterritorial status to protect them from prosecution for fraud or kidnapping. The fact that coolie recruitment was a business in which Chinese participated with Westerners is a reminder that every human tragedy offers profits for somebody, and coerced emigration became a hugely profitable Sino–foreign business.[26]

The China coast was a fertile field for criminal facilitators. Gangs of thugs, known by the British as "crimps," were either employees of foreign labor agencies in port cities or freelancers who sold their captives to foreign agencies at a few dollars per head. Crimps prowled coastal villages preying on the poor and defenseless, who were then lured by promises of jobs, trapped in gambling rackets, or simply assaulted and kidnapped. In the anarchic conditions following the Opium War, ethnic and lineage feuding yielded prisoners who could be sold to coolie brokers. Sometimes poverty and desperation even led villagers to sell their own kinsmen and neighbors into bondage. Victims were lured or hauled to seaports, where they were locked into the prisonlike "barracoons" to await shipment abroad. The whole criminal operation was protected by the extraterritorial rights of Western powers—and, in practice, their employees—under the unequal treaties. Without Chinese collaboration, the foreign labor agents could not have gathered their victims; without foreign treaty rights, their Chinese agents could not have operated without fear of prosecution.

A Petition from The Merchants of Canton to the British Consul, 1859[27]

[This petition (translated at the Consulate), presented by thirty-four merchant guilds in Guangzhou, offers details of the kidnapping rackets afflicting the Pearl River delta region, rackets now centered mostly on Macao.]

"The duly prepared Petition of the Chinese Mercantile Community at Canton, engaged in business under the following denominations: [list of guilds]

* * * *

"Our Province of Kwang-tung has for more than 200 years had commercial intercourse with your country; both parties have observed good faith, mutual confidence has subsisted, and each and all have enjoyed the advantages accruing. Unexpectedly, the Portuguese have recently built several barracoons at Macao, and in conjunction with Chinese merchants, whom they protect and screen, they have hired not only steamers and lorchas, in connection with which they make use of your country's name, but also all kinds of river boats, large and small, all having Portuguese on board, and which anchor at Whampoa, and various other places in all parts of the Canton waters, where numerous strategems and devices are employed in order to deceive and delude the children of virtuous families, and also the inexperienced country louts. These having been once kidnapped or seized by violence, or as it is called, 'the pigs having been bought,' are taken to the large sea-going vessels where they are bound and confined in the dark hold, and then carried to the 'pig guild' at Macao. At the time of examination and numbering, such of the people kidnapped as submit escape ill-usage, while those who refuse to yield are most cruelly treated, perhaps even shot dead; and, on witnessing such barbarous atrocities, their only resource is to submit under compulsion: for ah! who is there that dreads not death? They are then taken across the sea and sold as slaves, where they suffer such hardships that not one out of 10,000 lives, while at home their parents, wives and children, hoping to be nourished and supported by them, and having no one else to depend on, lament and mourn both morning and evening, not seeing them return. . . .

* * * *

"Possibly the Portuguese Consul does not take notice or institute examinations, because he is not fully acquainted with the evil. But the British Consul being right-minded and honest, and cherishing in his bosom benevolence and rectitude, will not, we imagine, sit quiet, and look on doing nothing when informed of such atrocities." [Dated April 6,1859]

More than two-hundred kidnapped coolies were rescued in Yokohama harbor in July, 1872, from a storm-damaged ship (the *Maria Luz*) en route from Macao to Peru. One captive had escaped by jumping overboard and had been rescued by a British ship. The British alerted the Japanese authorities, who then notified the Qing government. A Chinese official was sent to interview the captives and escort them to Shanghai. Later they were given government subsidies to return to their homes. Of the surviving victims, 196 were from Guangdong, twenty-seven from Fujian, and one each from Hunan, Jiangxi, and Zhejiang. One Guangdongese had died of illness aboard ship. Their personal stories, as recorded by Chinese officials, reveal the trickery and violence by which they had been rounded up.[28] The contemporary Chinese term for these victims was "piglets" (*zhuzai*), in mordant recognition of their dehumanized status.

Readers will notice, in two of the stories that follow, a bizarre perversion of the family labor-export strategy: the desperate conditions of the age, alongside the temptation of foreign money, resulted in men being sold into indentured servitude by their own kin or neighbors. In south China society, lineages or branches of lineages were often village-residential units, with everybody in a village bearing the same surname. Although it would normally be expected that kinsmen and neighbors would care about one another's well-being, poverty might dictate otherwise: what we probably see here is one branch of a lineage surviving by selling members of another branch into slavery.

Testimony of Kidnapped Victims Rescued from the *Maria Luz*, a Peruvian Ship (1872)

"Zhao Ahao: I am from Sanjiang village, Xinhui county, Guangzhou prefecture. Now 22 years old. Parents both dead. No brothers. Married. I was lured by my older cousin [lit. "lineage elder brother"] Zhao Aying to cook on the foreign ship. I was promised monthly pay of four foreign silver dollars. I boarded a boat in Xinhui in the 22nd day, 4th month and arrived in Macao on the afternoon of the 22nd day. I was delivered by a small boat to a ship and was locked in the hold. The ship sailed to Japan. Later someone jumped into the water and escaped. He was saved and interrogated to uncover the true situation. Thus we were taken out of the ship and escorted back to China. What I have said is true.

"DengYayi: I am from Shuixi village, Longmen county [more than 100 kilometers from Guangzhou]. Now 25 years old. Parents both dead. I am the second of two sons. We farmed for a living. Su Chengjiu and Su Aquan from Linyuan lured me to work on the ship. They promised me four foreign dollars per month. We left on the 14th day of the 4th month for the provincial capital

[Guangzhou] to take a ferryboat in the 18th day and arrived in Macao on the 20th day. Then the ferry carried me to a ship. Because I could not bear the suffering, I jumped into the water and tried to escape. But I was recaptured and my queue was cut off. Later someone else jumped overboard and escaped. He was saved and interrogated to uncover the true story. So we were taken out of the boat and escorted back to China. What I have said is true.

"He Shaoguang: I am from Dasha village, Nanhai county [adjoining Guangzhou]. Now 24 years old. In my family are my father, named Dejiu, my mother, and one brother. I am the elder son. We tilled the land and did woodcutting for a living. In the 18th day, 4th month, I left home for the provincial capital. I was lured by an older cousin [lit."lineage elder brother"] called He Gui, who lived in Xiaobu, to go to work in Macao. He promised to pay me four foreign dollars per month. I took the Shibo Steamship to Macao. [When the steamship reached Macao] it was late in the evening. He Gui hired a little boat to take me to a ship. The ship sailed on the 22nd day. On the 25th day, 5th month, the masts were broken by the wind. It arrived in Japan on the fourth day, 6th month. . . . [further details as above] What I have said is true.

* * * *

"Huang Muqing: I am from Xinxing county, Zhaoqing prefecture, Guangdong. Now 25 years old. My family live in Tiantangxu, along the Xiaoxi Road. My father dead. No brothers. I farmed for a living. Old Arong, a fellow villager, and Xian Guodu, who was from the neighboring village, Dongshen, lured me to go to Macao to work. I lived there two or three days and did not even go outside the building. In the 19th day, 4th month, I was delivered by a small boat to a ship. Then I was pushed into the hold and locked up. The foreigners were supposed to give me eight foreign dollars. They wanted me to give them my fingerprints [a customary way in which illiterates signed contracts]. They warned me that if I did not give them my fingerprints, they would hoist me up with a rope and beat me. So I had to give them my fingerprints. The boat left Macao in the 22nd day, 4th month. We met with wind and the mast was broken. In the 4th day, 6th month, the ship arrived in Japan. Because of the unbearable suffering and starvation, on the 8th day, 6th month, I took a "watches-beating drum" and jumped into the water. By holding the "watches-beating drum," I floated to an English naval ship and cried for help. They saved me but sent me back to the ship, which resulted in the foreigners' cutting off my queue [a humiliating punishment commonly inflicted on Chinese by foreigners]. Later I escaped again. An Englishman sympathized with my suffering and was willing to offer one hundred foreign dollars to redeem me. But the master of the ship did not accept it. Therefore the Englishman informed Japanese local officials, who questioned me about my suffering. Then they took the abducted men out of the ship. They kept us and, along with officials of other countries, offered us food. On the 13th day of this month [the ninth month], the Chinese officials escorted us back aboard an American ship. What I have said is true." (Chen [1985], 1:3, 976–1000)

The "Coolie Trade": Ocean Passages

Strictly speaking, the infamous "coolie trade" was a form of migrant labor in which the worker was recruited by force or by fraud and in which "contracts" were simply window dressing for a system close to outright slavery. "Coolie," however, has come to be applied more broadly to a laborer who emigrated in a context of unequal power between worker and employer, or, more generally, any poor emigrant laborer.

Cruelties aboard ship followed naturally from the coolie trade's criminal origins, which in turn thrived under the treaty-based relationship between Westerners and Chinese.[29] On Western coolie ships, passengers were locked in reeking, airless holds during the months-long voyages to the Caribbean and South America. Conditions of passage were nowhere humane, but some of the worst occurred on the 100-day voyages to Peru, which began importing Chinese workers in 1849. Peru's president, Marshal Ramon Castilla, declared in 1861 that the coolie trade "renewed all the evils of the reprehensible [African] slave traffic" (slavery in Peru had been abolished in 1854). Migrants, having been recruited by force or fraud, were "crowded into constricted boats, deprived of ventilation and even of the most essential food, and subjected during the voyage, to a barbarous treatment."[30] Mortality was accordingly very high: during the period 1860–1863, annual death rates ranged from 22 to 41 percent on Peruvian voyages. Deaths were variously attributed to scurvy, dysentery, dehydration, and suicide. Such was the worst period on the worst ocean route. In other periods, after the outrage became generally known and conditions somewhat better regulated, the Peruvian route dipped as low as 6 percent.

High mortality was also reported on overcrowded ships out of China-coast ports bound for California, Australasia, and the Caribbean during the 1850s. On one 1852 voyage, the vessel *Lord Elgin* made Singapore from Amoy in sixty-two days, thence to a port on the Straits of Sunda in another twenty-three days. The ship reached the Cape of Good Hope forty-six days later and sailed from there to Demerara in British Guiana for another thirty-nine days, making a total of 170 days. During the entire voyage, sixty-nine Chinese passengers died out of 154, a mortality rate of about 45 percent. An inquiry established that the deaths were due to illegal overcrowding, inadequate food, and the fumes from fermenting rice that had been soaked by leaking seawater.[31] On another particularly disastrous voyage, a British vessel bound for Havana in 1859 was overtaken by a hurricane in the South China Sea and driven onto a reef. The captain and crew took to the boats, leaving 850 Chinese migrants aboard to perish as the ship sank.[32] Conditions aboard ship as well as fear of the destinations to which migrants were headed incited numerous mutinies by Chinese passengers. So odious was the reputation of conditions in Peru and Cuba and so insufferable the onboard conditions on those routes that out of twenty-four passenger mutinies between 1850 and 1872, nineteen were aboard ships bound for either Callao or Havana.[33]

The onus for maltreatment of Chinese migrants was by no means confined to the Peruvians. British, American, and European ships, too, carried Chinese to the New World and Australasia. Conditions on British ships were so shameful that Parliament passed the Chinese Passengers Act in 1855, which decreed minimally acceptable space and conditions aboard British vessels, followed by an amendment in 1858 that limited British transport of migrants to destinations in British dominions. In 1843, American ships began transporting Chinese to Cuba, and soon afterward the gold rush drew many ships to California. Americans also picked up some of the formerly British routes after the 1858 act drove many British shippers out of the business. The odium attached to these voyages led the U.S. Congress in 1862 to forbid Americans from taking any part in the Chinese migrant passenger trade unless the migration was entirely voluntary and free of indenture.[34]

Although we refer to the post-1840 era as one of "mass" emigration, it is clear that the "mass" was by no means composed solely of poor emigrants but included a portion of men who were already established as traders or shopkeepers. In Singapore, for example, a special area had been set aside for Hokkien merchants as early as 1822, indicating that the junk trade with Xiamen was already attracting a group of merchant immigrants to the new colony. Although Baba (creole) remigrants from Malacca dominated the Singapore Hokkien community for decades after 1824, they shared the Hokkien turf with a larger group of new immigrants from China.[35] Cantonese and Teochius, too, contributed mercantile talent to the migrant flow. The merchant group was essential to the larger migration flow. Not only did merchants play a part in the financing and distribution of labor coming into venue ports, but they also provided the nuclei of the regional associations (*bang*) on which immigrant laborers depended for protection, job placement, and essential social services (the provision of temples and cemeteries being the most obvious). Those merchants who ran tax farms provided a financial base for the brotherhoods, which served as the hands-on managers for organizing and distributing immigrant labor.

Regulation and Legalization of Mass Migration

The legal status of emigration was ambiguous: as seen in chapter 2, southern coastal administrators and their allies at court had extracted, in 1754, an imperial decree legalizing multiple returns and departures of bona fide traders to Southeast Asia. Harassment of merchant sojourners by predatory local officials proceeded notwithstanding. Sojourning laborers had not been mentioned in the decree, and their status was undetermined. Chinese laborers and artisans from coastal provinces had long been emigrating anyway, and many officials simply accepted the fact, although they could not openly condone it. But deceptive or coercive recruitment by foreigners and their Chinese accomplices angered both government and populace. Chinese kidnapping gangs were feared and hated, and when Chinese authorities caught them, they were beheaded. But the matter was complicated by the treaty status of foreigners in Chinese ports, which exempted both them and their principal Chinese collaborators from Chinese laws. The fear of running afoul of foreign pressure convinced many local officials to avoid trouble by declining to confront foreign coolie agents and their Chinese agents over emigration issues.

Yet there were occasions when Chinese outrage boiled over. In an 1852 case at Xiamen, a notorious Chinese coolie broker who had been attacked by irate townspeople and then arrested and

imprisoned in a military guardhouse was rescued by two officers of Syme, Muir and Co., the coolie agency that had hired him. Later the same day, two passing Englishmen, unrelated to Syme, were attacked and wounded by soldiers from the guardhouse, and during the following two days an angry crowd rioted in the foreign quarter and threatened the Syme headquarters. The alarmed British consul summoned a force of marines from a warship in the harbor; the marines stood off the crowd but were finally frightened into firing at them, killing four and wounding others. Although the coolie agency in this case was said by Her Majesty's government to have "brought disgrace on the British name," it was not easy to bring them to book because the coolie trade was of immense economic value to British colonial interests. As for the coolie trade on the China coast, British colonial interests were too powerful to permit strict regulation of unscrupulous brokers like Syme or their Chinese collaborators. Like opium, coolies were too profitable a commodity to be regulated effectively by well-intentioned laws.[36]

Nevertheless, various attempts were made. During the 1850s, the British Parliament passed laws to regulate the conditions under which coolies might be shipped. The law applied to British ships from any Chinese port and to ships of any nation sailing from Hong Kong. Adequate conditions (space, food, and medical supplies) were to be certified by British officials for every sailing. In an effort to stamp out criminal kidnapping rackets, coolie brokers in Hong Kong were to be registered and bonded. Contracts of indenture were to be prepared in both Chinese and English and, under the supervision of a British emigration officer, explained to the would-be emigrant. Nobody was to use either persuasion or coercion on a prospective emigrant. Nevertheless, a British consul wrote in 1867 that there was no voluntary emigration from the colony whatsoever, all passengers having been coerced or defrauded by shippers who found ways to evade the law. The port of Xiamen was already notorious for shipping kidnapped men abroad (witness the 1852 riot just described). Even Britain's 1855 "Chinese Passengers Act"—establishing legal minimums for space and amenities per passenger—seemed to have but a paltry effect. Xiamen's coolie-export agents simply shifted their business down the coast to the port of Shantou (not a treaty port until 1860).[37]

Thereafter the effect of the 1850s legislation was to shift the coolie trade to Macao, whence impressment gangs would send small vessels to anchorages in the Pearl River delta to kidnap young men and take them to prison pens ("barracoons") to await their fate in the holds of coolie ships. After a devastating report on coolie abuse in Cuba, Great Britain forced Portugal to ban the Macao coolie trade in 1874. This can be considered the end of coercive migration under color of law, though abuses continued at every port right through the nineteenth century. Coolie exports were like opium imports: the profits, driven by the insatiable demands of consumers, were so irresistible that those charged with enforcing legislation, whether Chinese or foreign, faced daunting odds.

How did the Qing imperial government fit into this system? Fearing popular anger and repelled by the trade's inhumanity, Chinese provincial officials wanted to stop kidnapping, fraud, and brutality in the coolie trade. But in order to regulate the trade, it had to be acknowledged as a fact, and this would contravene the imperial ban on emigration (never formally rescinded). The opportunity for official action came while the British and French were occupying the city of Guangzhou during the war of 1858–1860 (the "Second Opium War"). The chaos caused by rampant kidnapping in the Guangzhou region led the British and French to cooperate with their Chinese counterpart, Governor Bo Gui, to regulate emigration. Emigration was to be permitted on the basis of registered contracts understandable to both parties. This was in one sense a recognition by Chinese local authorities of the reality of emigration and thus a breach with imperial policy in the interest of emigrants and the general populace. In another sense, it was an imposition by foreigners, by coercion, in a region under their control and influence. Recruiting laborers for West Indies plantations was an urgent priority for the British, and the cooperation of provincial officials was essential if recruitment were to be humane and subject to Chinese official inspection. Shortly thereafter, in the treaty settlement ending the Second Opium War (the Peking Convention, 1860), Beijing agreed to a clause permitting Chinese to make emigration contracts with British firms. France, Spain, and the United States shortly received similar assurances by treaty. Thus, foreign pressure lent de jure status to a long existing fact.[38]

Practical details of legalization were negotiated in a *Convention to Regulate the Engagement of Chinese Emigrants by British and French Subjects* signed at Beijing in 1866. This agreement set up procedures for licensing foreign emigration agencies in Chinese ports, under mutual agreement by foreign consuls and Chinese authorities. Contracts, which were to include strict terms of payment, five-year time limits, and paid passage back to China, were to be signed in the presence of Chinese inspectors, and the free will of the emigrant was to be attested by all. Emigrant ships were to be

inspected for decent conditions by foreign consuls prior to sailing. The Chinese government added regulations against improper recruitment. This reasonable document was accepted by the Chinese side but ultimately rejected by the British because they realized that the labor needs of their Caribbean colonies could never be satisfied under the term-of-service and return clauses. Thus, from the foreign side, the *Convention* was of no effect, though it formed the basis of Chinese policy and (attempted) enforcement. A document agreed by only one side proved a weak instrument of regulation.

Another momentous turn in Qing emigration policy was an agreement of 1868 with the United States (known as the "Burlingame Treaty" for its proponent Anson Burlingame, engaged by Beijing as an ambassador to Western governments). The treaty stated plainly the principle of free migration in both directions "for the purpose of curiosity, of trade, or as permanent residents." Also agreed was China's right to station consuls at U.S. ports to promote Chinese interests, including the welfare of immigrants (although Chinese consulates were not, in fact, established until 1878).[39] This amiable treaty was however overtaken by the "exclusion" movement in the United States.

Whatever the immediate results, the *Convention* of 1866 and the Burlingame Treaty of 1868 were a watershed in China's policy toward the emigration of its people. Although formal legalization was not forthcoming until 1893, these steps to regulate emigration had the effect of legalizing it. To the Qing government, the growing Chinese population abroad now presented both a responsibility and an opportunity (as just seen in the case of Zhang Zhidong): responsibility, to show concern for the welfare of the Chinese abroad; opportunity, to solicit financial support from them. These tasks were taken up by Chinese legations and consulates established abroad beginning in the late 1870s. To consider its sojourners overseas a resource rather than a problem was a turning point in China's worldview.

Shipping Technology and Migration Services

Chinese who manned coastal defenses during the Opium War had been astonished to observe the *Nemesis*, a smoke-spewing British gunboat that could defy wind and current. Steam technology soon affected emigration as profoundly as it did war, and mass Chinese emigration entered history along with steamships. The annual tonnage of steamships launched in Britain rose from less than 11,000 in 1835 to nearly 300,000 in 1865. By 1870, the annual tonnage of steam-powered ships had overtaken that of sail-powered.[40] The increased speed and capacity of steamships affected migration by reducing the overall cost of transport much as cheap air transport is doing today. The synergy between migration and technology is epitomized by the development of tin alloys for high-speed crankshaft bearings on steam engines: by the late nineteenth century, the bulk of the world's industrial tin was coming from British Malaya, where tin mining had been pioneered by Chinese entrepreneurs and Chinese immigrant laborers a century earlier.

The speed and reliability of steamships also tightened the links between overseas Chinese settlements and their communities of origin in China. Sojourning and return became more realistic possibilities as the takeover of maritime routes by steam transport made migration corridors more efficient transmitters of people, goods, money, and information. By the early twentieth century, information channels included "overseas Chinese newsletters" (*qiaokan* or *xiangxun*) designed to fill the need of emigrants to keep up with hometown events and people. The aims were to strengthen their loyalties to compatriots and kinsmen, and of course to encourage remittances.

Crucial to these developments was the British crown colony of Hong Kong, which served not only as primary steamship port but also as a base for a broad range of migration services. Aside from the recruitment (and impressment) organizations described previously, numerous institutions emerged to serve the interests of migrants and their home families. One such was the merchant houses called "gold-mountain firms" (*jinshan zhuang*), which did a varied business with the United States and other countries through correspondent branches abroad. Some of their trade included the kinds of Chinese goods (such as home-style foods) that made Chinese life abroad more tolerable, but even more important were services such as the transmission of funds back to families and creditors in China. Accordingly, these firms served as anchors to both ends of the migration corridors. Other essential migration services included charitable organizations for the repatriation of migrants' bones or "spirit boxes" if they were to die overseas. Repatriation of migrants themselves, returning from periods of indenture or retired because of sickness or age, was handled through Hong Kong's Tung Wah Hospital. Regional associations (*tongxianghui*) with branches in Hong Kong cared for returning sojourners. These services, along with the remittance business, ensured that

human needs were served at both ends of the corridor and that migration remained a viable family enterprise.[41]

New Directions, New Venues

Mass migration effected the worldwide expansion of Chinese emigration. In contrast to their almost exclusively Southeast Asian venues before the mid-nineteenth century, Chinese migrants now dispersed around the globe. Making this dispersion possible were the changing technology of maritime commerce and the treaty-imposed system of recruitment on the China coast; its deeper causes were Western industrialism, the development of "settler societies" (principally in the Americas and Australasia), and imperialism. Asian labor, principally Chinese and Indian, made possible Europe's exploitation of its colonial mines and plantations. At the same time, in the settler societies of North America and Australasia, the collision of Chinese and European migrants, amid bitter disputes between capital and labor, touched off intense competition and, ultimately, persecution and exclusion. In societies where African bondage had only recently ended (notoriously Peru and Cuba), Chinese indentured laborers suffered under a persisting culture of slavery. In the Dutch and British colonies of Southeast Asia where African slavery had not existed, treatment of indentured labor was not significantly better. Accordingly, the expansion of Chinese migration to new venues, beginning in the mid-nineteenth century, was a story of harsh working conditions and, in some cases, bitter ethnic hostility. Meanwhile, the migration of merchants and artisans to Southeast Asia continued the centuries-old Chinese pursuit of economic opportunity.

North America and Australasia

Chinese emigration to the settler societies proceeded in tandem with European emigration to these same venues. The Chinese in these societies, during the period of mass migration, were never free from the hostility of white working-class immigrants, who saw them as formidable competitors who threatened to take jobs from them by working harder for less money. At the same time, ranchers, farmers, and capitalists were not only glad to have them but actually imported them to relieve an absolute labor shortage, which (if cheap Asian labor had not been available) would have given workers a bargaining advantage, which employers naturally wished to avoid. Competition for jobs was matched by competition for treasure: Chinese, no less than Europeans, were dazzled by the lure of gold diggings, but their presence in the goldfields antagonized European miners. Such conditions were common to the settler societies in North America and Australasia, where European and Chinese immigrants met on harsh, often lawless frontiers. Not surprisingly, Chinese suffered in all these environments. To their disadvantage, by contrast with Southeast Asia, they lacked patrons: there were no colonial regimes with an interest in according Chinese elites favored status. Furthermore, the Chinese merchant bridgeheads were neither powerful nor wealthy enough to be effective brokers between their countrymen and white political power holders.

The 1848 discovery of gold in California lured prospectors from around the world, and Cantonese in the Pearl River delta responded quickly. Some 1,000 had reached San Francisco by 1850, another 6,000 the following year, and 20,000 the next. Some 10 percent (25,000) of California's population were Chinese by the time of the census of 1852.[42] Nearby Hong Kong quickly became the main embarkation port for south China emigrants headed for North America.

Early reports of the 1848 discovery probably had reached south China before the end of 1849, transmitted by Cantonese merchants who had set up shop in San Francisco that year. By 1850, perhaps 500 Chinese had joined the crowd of about 50,000 gold-hungry prospectors. By 1851, the San Francisco Chinese merchants were already busy financing immigration and helping newcomers find their feet. As the goldfields became depleted, railway contractors hired as many as 14,000 Chinese between 1865 and 1869 to build the Central Pacific line across the Sierra Nevada mountains.

Canada's gold rush began in 1858, and by the 1860s thousands of Chinese had migrated to British Columbia. Chinese emigration to North America had begun in earnest.[43] In the North American case, as distinct from early migration to the Caribbean and Peru, Chinese mass emigration was furthered by merchant groups that were in place from its early stages. These bridgeheads served as organizing nuclei for Chinese communities, which distinguished the North American experience from that of the plantation-centered societies of the Caribbean and Peru, as will be seen in chapter 5.

In Australia and New Zealand, labor shortage and gold fever interacted in similar ways. Britain had stopped exiling convicts to Australia in 1840, an event that signaled an acute labor shortage among the sheep ranchers of New South Wales. Importation of Chinese workers had been discussed as far back as 1828. The British government objected, however, as did the local authorities, to the government's playing any role in bringing Asian labor into the colony, though eventually it was conceded that private persons might import such labor at their own expense. Ranchers then turned to a British labor agent in Xiamen who dispatched 120 Chinese on a British ship in the summer of 1848, alleviating the labor shortage. Finally, in 1849, London gave formal permission to import Chinese, and shipments of workers began to come in from Xiamen, Hong Kong, and Singapore. During the next three years, nearly 1,000 Chinese entered the port of Sydney, some 400 more went to Hobart (Tasmania) and 225 to Moreton Bay (Queensland). Most were spoken for by Australian employers.[44]

Beginning with the first big gold strike in 1851 near Melbourne, Chinese began to arrive in larger numbers, including many who traveled on their own resources or on credit tickets. Because of a high capitation tax on Chinese, imposed on shippers in 1855 by the Victoria colony, many immigrants were landed at Guichen Bay in the colony of South Australia and then had to hike more than 250 miles to the goldfields in Victoria. One group of more than 600 "were all walking single file, each one with a pole and two baskets," wrote an observer. "They stretched for over two miles in procession. I was half an hour in passing them."[45] By 1857, with gold fever at its height, 25,424 Chinese (more than 20,000 of them miners) were counted in the colony of Victoria, of whom only three were women. At this point, Chinese numbered 6.4 percent of the colony's population. Returns to China accounted for most of the ensuing reduction of Chinese, who by 1871 numbered just under 18,000 and twenty years later only 9,377.[46] Much of this decline resulted from anti-Chinese legislation.

In their regional origins, Chinese gold seekers in Victoria closely resembled the early migrants to the North American gold rush: the largest numbers came from Guangzhou and its hinterland, known as the "three counties" and "four counties" (*sanyi* and *siyi*). In neighboring New South Wales (the Sydney area), Chinese migrants represented more varied origins, including, besides the previously mentioned groups, migrants from Dongguan (east of Guangzhou) and the Xiangshan (Zhongshan) area (north of Macao).[47] And as in North America, regional origins became the basis of associations to serve the interests of migrant communities.

In Australia, as in North America, Chinese merchants (some of whom represented branches of Hong Kong firms) were closely involved with the immigration process. In the gold rush areas, merchants found their principal market among the Chinese gold miners themselves, for whom they provided not only familiar Chinese foods and miscellaneous goods but also vital services such as banking and remittance of funds homeward.[48] Probably some of these merchants were also involved in financing the fare of poor Cantonese immigrants who had to travel on credit tickets. As in North America, Cantonese merchants in Australia were linked continuously to their home territories through Hong Kong, which was becoming the center of a worldwide network of migration.

The West Indies and Peru

The colonial ports of Hong Kong and Macao were attractive to labor exporters because they were freer from Chinese official interference than the treaty ports, where, despite extraterritorial privileges for foreign firms, there remained the dangers and inconveniences of hostile reactions by the populace (as at Xiamen in 1852). British administrators of Hong Kong were caught between humanitarian demands coming from the home country and clamor from the British colonies (in the West Indies particularly) for cheap labor. The result was an awkward mixture of regulations designed to prevent the export of unwilling migrants, laws governing the facilities on passenger ships, and a seemingly unstoppable process of coerced recruitment. We have already seen that "voluntary" was a slippery word in the context of unenforceable regulations. Euphemisms, in the service of such potent economic forces, were the verbal currency of the times. And the credit-ticket system no doubt invited winks and nods as prospective emigrants were being vetted, whatever the intentions of the Hong Kong authorities.

Chinese indentured migrants sailed to the West Indies from south China ports by way of the Sunda Straits and the Cape of Good Hope and across the South Atlantic to the Caribbean.[50] Sugarcane cultivation in the Caribbean colonies of Britain, Spain, and France had made refined sugar an article of mass consumption in the industrializing societies of Europe. Until the mid-

nineteenth century, sugar plantations had relied on African slaves, but the abolition of the Atlantic slave trade deprived the Caribbean plan-tocracy of their accustomed pool of cheap labor. Because competition for labor drove freely negotiated wages up, former slave owners sought alternative sources of workers who could be imported under some form of legalized bondage that would restore their control over the workforce.

Chinese indentured emigrants to the Caribbean during the nineteenth century went mostly to Cuba (about 124,000) and secondarily to the British West Indies (about 17,800).[51] In both venues, transport of indentured Chinese substantially ended during the 1870s, in Cuba because of the international outcry over coercive recruitment at the port of Macao and brutal treatment within the colony, and in the British West Indies because of increased costs resulting from state regulation of contract terms.[52]

In Peru, the end of African slavery occasioned a crisis in the plantation economy because neither the Spanish nor the Indian population would do wage labor. The importation of Chinese indentured workers began in 1849. Those brought to Peru traveled generally from Macao. Between 1849 and 1874, European and Peruvian vessels carried about 90,000 Chinese to Callao, Peru's main seaport.[53] The survivors who disembarked were, if not all contracted for by a single employer, lined up in slave-market style and offered for sale (i.e., nominally, sale of the contract to be paid in installments) to labor agents at dockside. Agents would then dispose of the migrants to the ultimate employers. Most (probably 80 percent) were destined for plantations of cotton or sugar, where formerly African slaves had labored, but some particularly unfortunate ones were destined to mine and pack guano: aged bird manure, a natural fertilizer collected on islands along the coast. The sufferings of the guano workers drove many to suicide.

Mass immigration of Chinese to Peru continued from 1849 to 1874. The period from 1856 to 1861 was an intermission, due to the government's determination to end a traffic in contract labor that was notorious for its abuses. The need for labor was so great, however, that importation of Chinese was resumed in 1861 and lasted another thirteen years until finally brought to an end amid the international outrage that forced Macao out of the coolie trade.[54]

The Pacific Islands

Migration to islands of the South Pacific was a product of European imperialism. Modest numbers of indentured Chinese laborers were introduced to several locations, most notably Tahiti (about 1,000 in the 1860s). A later wave of free immigrants (including some families of formerly indentured men) arrived in Tahiti from 1907 to 1914, after which the Chinese minority began to act like a settled, organized community. By the 1960s, those of mainly Chinese descent numbered about 10,000 out of 85,000 inhabitants and had become a prominent business elite in this French territory. In British-ruled Fiji, where Indian immigrants filled the indenture niche, Chinese came as free migrants (starting with a group of returnees from the Victoria goldfields).[55] Generally, Chinese immigration into the South Pacific, though small in numbers, was widespread, a natural result of colonization by Europeans, who recruited indentured labor and, through linkages with the world market, offered niches for energetic and resourceful traders.

Mass Migration to Southeast Asia

The new conditions of the mid-nineteenth century changed profoundly the patterns of Chinese migration to Southeast Asia. Venues of migration included all the colonial territories of Southeast Asia plus Siam, but the host regimes were themselves changing rapidly: the Straits Settlements, for example, were the bridgeheads for British penetration of peninsular Malaya, where the rapid development of tin mines and of sugar and rubber plantations stimulated new demands for immigrant labor and offered new opportunities for immigrant entrepreneurs.

Once the Dutch had regained possession of the East Indies after the Napoleonic Wars, they began to extend their control from Java into the outer islands. By the 1850s, Bangka and Belitung (tin mines) and by the 1860s Sumatra (tobacco and later rubber plantations) required ever larger numbers of unskilled workers. The mines of Bangka had been operated by Chinese labor since the mid-eighteenth century on the *kongsi* model, similar to that of Borneo as described in chapter 2. Under that system, workers had been recruited from among Hakkas in Guangdong by Chinese middlemen of the same dialect group. The manner of their recruitment and their work system, which ensured that every member had a stake in the enterprise, were what made the *kongsi* model work so

well in the early stages of migration. "The whole of the labourers work on terms of equality," wrote a British observer of Bangka in 1820, "the older and more experienced directing, and the younger and more active performing the operative part, while all share equally in the profits."[56] By mid-century, however, the communal aspects of the *kongsi* system began to give way to more authoritarian management. Chinese headmen (the Peranakan "officers" of the Dutch and the mine or plantation managers operating under them) were in effect mere functionaries, responsive to the demands of the colonial government rather than to the interests of the *kongsi*. The personal recruitment that had prevailed earlier was replaced by more impersonal methods. The most common route of migration was now via the Straits Settlements (Singapore and Penang) rather than directly from China.

It was not long before direct recruitment of indentured labor for Dutch possessions was disrupted as Chinese back home became aware of the harsh discipline, high mortality, and scanty rewards of work in the East Indies. In the Deli region of Sumatra, which had just come under Dutch colonial rule, Dutch entrepreneurs began a tobacco plantation in 1864 and promptly set about importing Chinese labor via Singapore. The ensuing story resembled that of the tin island of Bangka: for a labor-recruitment and management system run by Chinese *kongsi*, there was substituted one run by Europeans. In the stiff competition between the Dutch tobacco planters in Sumatra and the Malayan mine and plantation operators, the Dutch were the losers. It was generally believed on the China coast that the European employers in Deli tobacco plantations treated their workers more harshly than did the Chinese employers in Malaya. Although treatment of labor in the two venues was probably not much different, it was true that employers and supervisors in Malaya were always Chinese, while in Deli there was some contact with European managers, whose arrogance stirred resentment and contributed to the bad name of the Deli plantation system (which Zhang Zhidong's envoys confirmed earlier in this chapter). Many Chinese immigrants who transshipped at Singapore were dead set against being taken to the Dutch possessions; many were nevertheless forced at gunpoint onto sailing ships bound for Sumatra. The Chinese government discouraged emigration to Deli, and the Straits Settlement labor brokers (generally brotherhood *kongsi*) favored the Malayan Chinese labor importers. Accordingly, Chinese emigration to Sumatra was much slower than the demand warranted. The result was that Javanese were imported as the bulk of the plantation labor force, and Sumatra never became the venue of such mass Chinese migration as flowed into the west-coast provinces of Malaya.[57]

Mass migration to Malaya and the Straits Settlements, the areas where even today Chinese form the largest fraction of the population anywhere outside China, can be dated to the British "Forward Policy" in the peninsula, from 1874, when Great Britain saw the profitable tin industry menaced by civil war in the western Malay states and intervened to impose order. With British "residents" at the elbows of local sultans, and British troops on hand to keep the peace, tin production soared and large numbers of workers were recruited from China to work the mines. Such an influx, at the rate of more than 100,000 annually through most of the period 1882–1932, made Chinese the dominant ethnic group in Malaya's west-coast states.[58] The British resident in Perak reported in 1882 that Chinese immigrants had increased to perhaps 50,000 and were "still arriving in crowds." By 1897, the Chinese population had reached 90,000, almost even with the Malays.[59] Singapore and Penang, the principal Straits Settlements, also drew masses of Chinese during the late nineteenth century. Singapore was rapidly developing into a major transshipment port for world trade, drawing Chinese into a wide range of occupations. Besides gambier and pepper cultivation, they increasingly found urban employment in manual, commercial, service, and craft work. In Penang, the attraction was initially sugar cultivation, but there too the docks, shops, and crafts of Georgetown, the main settlement, absorbed most immigrants. "The Chinese are everything," wrote an English observer of Penang in 1879: "actors, acrobats . . . schoolmasters, lodging house keepers, . . . firemen, fishermen, goldsmiths," and 116 other occupations. By 1901, Penang counted 97,000 Chinese (out of a total population of 244,000), and in the same year Singapore (with much the same mix of callings) had 165,000 out of a total of 230,000.[60]

Singapore drew immigrants from virtually every port and from every dialect group on the China coast, a majority of whom had probably transshipped in Hong Kong. This varied human stream was met by an equally varied group of agents at the Singapore docks: brotherhood middlemen who spoke the dialects of those they were meeting and would round them up for distribution into the job market. As a colonial commission described the scene in 1872,

> Two steamers within a week or two of one another landed in the Settlement 3,200 Chinese coolies. . . . Of such [persons] and their movements neither the Government nor the Police have any knowledge, nor have they any control over them, they land

and know of no governing authority but that of the Secret Societies [i.e., brotherhoods], to whom they are soon affiliated, or of those employers of labour who make their own terms with them and draft them off to their plantations.[61]

An immigrant who had paid his ship passage or who had an employer (often a compatriot or kinsman) to settle the debt for him was able to escape this system and become part of the local scene. If he had a debt and nobody could be found to take it over, he was transshipped to Penang or taken up-country by brotherhood mining recruiters or (if unlucky) was impressed into passage for Sumatra. How the Singapore colonial government sought to rationalize and humanize this machine will be taken up in the next chapter. It is enough to point out here that by the 1870s this massive immigrant traffic was impinging on a colonial society run largely by Chinese social elites and controlled or organized very little by European power. It was Chinese recruiting and disposing of Chinese. Not until a new approach to mass immigration had been forced on the Singapore colony by the increasing anarchy in its streets were the raw abuses of the system addressed.

Mass Chinese immigration came to Siam at a time when the kingdom was depopulated as a result of recurrent warfare and had more resources than it needed to feed its people. It was an environment made to order for migrants. Siam had entered a phase of rapid economic growth after the Bowring Treaty, forced on it by Great Britain in 1855, had opened the kingdom to free trade. Labor was in demand, trade was thriving, and the preference of the Thais for agricultural, military, or bureaucratic callings left many niches in which Chinese immigrants could flourish.[62] These included (in addition to unskilled labor) skilled trades, commerce, and brokerage of many sorts. Changing mechanics of emigration to Siam were closely tied to the development of shipping. Once Hong Kong had been connected by steamer lines to the various treaty ports up the coast (an event of the 1860s), the colony became a transshipment point for Chinese migrants of every dialect group: Hokkien (from Xiamen), Teochiu (from Shantou), and Cantonese (from the Pearl River delta area, now conveniently linked by regular steamers to Hong Kong). Hainan island was similarly linked in 1886 and thereby furnished with convenient travel to Siam. Immigrant traffic came largely via Singapore until 1876, when direct steamer service was established between Hong Kong and Bangkok.[63] Inevitably, mass migration affected the relationship between Thai society and the Chinese.

Having considered the paths and mechanisms of mass migration, we turn in chapters 4 and 5 to the effects of this migration upon the societies, politics, and cultures of Chinese communities overseas, and to the equally important effects it had upon the homeland. The central issues will be how differing natural and human environments affected the prospects of immigrants, and how Chinese mobilized their adaptive skills to survive in them.

Notes

1. Note on numbers: All estimates of total migration from China to destinations worldwide must be considered highly tentative because of the ways they were collected. For example, departures from Chinese ports were counted by units of "one passenger one time." "Passenger" and "emigrant" were used loosely at different times. The same holds true for arrivals. Therefore, one *person* could be counted multiple times both departing and returning. We may also assume that, as with other kinds of work, the quality of record keeping varied widely among locations. Finally, there were reasons why a migrant or his shipper might want to avoid a count. The final abodes of migrants cannot be resolved statistically on the basis of the evidence. Nor does the term "emigrant" in these works or in mine necessarily mean "settler."

With those caveats in mind, here are some estimates:

* More than 19 million departures to Southeast Asia and other South Pacific and Indian Ocean venues, 1846–1940 (McKeown 2004)

* 6.3 million departures from Hong Kong to all points, 1868–1939 (Sinn 1995a)

* 14.7 million departures from Xiamen, Shantou, and Hong Kong, 1869–1939 (Sugihara 2005)

* 341,000 departures from Hong Kong to San Francisco, 1868–1909 (Sinn 1995a)

2. McKeown (2001), 69.

3. Hsu (2000), chap. 1; Wakeman (1966), chaps. 14 and 15.

4. Drescher (1994); Vink (2003).

5. Ingram (1911).

6. Cohen (2005), 42 et passim.

7. For the economic context, see Lewis (1978), 14–16.

8. Yap and Man (1996), 126–29.

9. Richardson (1982), 172.

10. Richardson (1982), 279–80.

11. Clementi (1915), 80–81, 245–46.

12. Clementi (1915), 357–58.

13. Look Lai (1998), 171–74, quoting Beaumont (1871).

14. Vink (2003).

15. Liu (1966), 2: 691–97. On this episode, see Yen (1985), 154–68.

16. Breman (1989), chap. 1.

17. Mei (1979), 477, citing a memorial of Lin Zexu (1839).

18. Wang Sing-wu (1978), 93–96, presents samples of actual credit tickets.

19. Wang Sing-wu (1978), 14.

20. Ch'en (1929), 64–67.

21. Heidhues (1996), 172; Ch'en (1923), 13–14; Yen (1985), 38–41.

22. See chapter 4 on "affinities" and "affinity groups."

23. Reid (1970); Yen (1985).

24. Yen (1985), 41.

25. Wang Sing-wu (1978), 15; Sinn (1995a, 1995b).

26. Wang Sing-wu (1978), chap. 4

27. House of Commons (1860), vol. 69, Paper No. 1, Inclosure No. 2.

28. Chen (1985), ser. 1, vol. 3: 976–1000. The *Maria Luz* episode is also related in Stewart (1970), chap. 7.

29. For Peruvian ships out of Macao, see Stewart (1970), 62–75. For British Hong Kong figures, see Wang Sing-wu (1978), 125, 178.

30. Stewart (1970), 27–28.

31. Clementi (1915), 31–32.

32. Look Lai (1998), 95.

33. Look Lai (1998), 92–96, citing a Parliamentary Paper of 1875. The editor notes that some sixty-eight such mutinies are known actually to have occurred between 1847 and 1874.

34. Wang Sing-wu (1978), 165–71.

35. Yen (1986), chaps. 4–6.

36. Morse (1910–1918), 1.402, quoting Lord Clarendon, foreign secretary; Yen (1985), 44–52.

37. Wang Sing-wu (1978), chap. 4.

38. Wang Sing-wu (1978), 22–37.

39. Tsai (1986), 24–29. Note, however, that the U.S. Senate, as a condition for ratifying the Burlingame Treaty, added a clause denying that the right to immigrate implied a right to be naturalized. Maltz (1994), 229.

40. Watts (1911).

41. Sinn (1995b), 45–50; Sinn (2002) (cited with permission).

42. Price (1974), chaps. 1 and 2.

43. Lai (1992), 7; Mei (1979), 476; Hsu (2000), 29.

44. Wang Sing-wu (1978), chap. 7.

45. Wang Sing-wu (1978), 273.

46. Wang Sing-wu (1978), 270–71.

47. Yong (1977), 189.

48. Yong (1977), 46.

49. Wang (1978), 128.

50. Cuba Commission (1993), 21.

51. Engerman (1986), 272.

52. Look Lai (1993), 48, 58–61.

53. Stewart (1951), 74.

54. Stewart (1951), chap. 2.

55. Yee (1974).

56. J. Crawfurd, quoted in Jackson (1961), 31.

57. Jackson (1961), 73; Reid (1970), 289. By 1905, the east coast of Sumatra had some 99,000 Chinese and by 1930 about 190,000.

58. Reid (1970), 289; the turning point was the Treaty of Pangkor (1874), a decisive step in British dominion over the Malay states (Purcell 1967), 110.

59. Purcell (1967), 114, 117.

60. Vaughan (1974), 15; Purcell (1965), 232, 234; figures rounded off to nearest 1,000.

61. Jackson (1961), 71, quoting *Straits Settlement Labour Commission Report*, 1890.

62. Skinner (1957), chap. 2.

63. Skinner (1957), 42–43. Although more Cantonese, Hokkien, Hailam, and Hakka were pouring into Siam, Teochiu remained the most numerous dialect group. Skinner (1957), 45–53, explains continued Teochiu dominance.

CHAPTER FOUR

Communities in the Age of Mass Migration:
I. Southeast Asia

As steam transport and Western treaty privileges furnished the means and the motivations for mass migration, it became harder for long-settled Chinese immigrant societies to absorb newcomers into their ranks. Accordingly, substantial communities of newcomers ("Totok": pure blooded), Chinese speaking, in touch with their *qiaoxiang* and concerned about events there, grew alongside the old creolized ("Peranakan": locally born and creolized) populations. Interactions among successive migrant waves form a major theme in the history of Chinese overseas.

Beginning with the mass migration of the nineteenth century, migration corridors attained their modern form: new technologies of transport and communication made travel in both directions cheaper and faster, remittances faster and safer. As a result, the corridor became a more robust social organism that extended the emigrant community more durably in space and time. At times, adverse politics or economics constricted corridors or even closed them down as depression or war intervened. Meanwhile, Chinese abroad were being challenged by shifts in world economic patterns and in colonial administration.

Changing Colonial Policies and Chinese Adaptation

The transformation of the colonial world and the Chinese place within it took about a century, beginning with the British incursion into the Straits of Malacca in the late eighteenth century as promoters of free trade. The competitive animus of European imperialism soon appeared in the rivalry among Britain, Holland, and France, each seeking to expand its colonial territory in order to open markets and extract resources. Led by Great Britain, Europeans also sought freer access to Chinese trading ports, a quest that culminated in the Opium Wars and the treaties that concluded them. Linking Southeast Asia to the European industrial system required more direct and rationalized forms of colonial administration. These trends coincided with—and in large measure depended on—the emigration of myriad Asians to fill the demand for labor in plantations and mines, whether as indentured or free laborers. Siam, though not directly colonized, adopted free trade under British pressure and also became the venue for a greatly increased Chinese presence. The age of mass migration required that both the new migrants and the old settled communities adapt to the conditions of more direct European supervision.

The Dutch East Indies

During the eighteenth century, while Indonesia was still ruled by the Dutch East India Company, the economic roles of Peranakan Chinese shifted from middlemen in the China trade to intermediaries between the colonialists and the native population.[1] Apart from their activities as tax farmers, referred to in chapter 2, Chinese now leased whole villages from the Company, taxed the inhabitants, and paid a portion to the Company as rent. This niche as rural tax collectors gave Chinese virtually unlimited power over Indonesian farmers, a role that made them understandably unpopular not only with the natives but, ironically, with the Dutch. Chinese also controlled the

marketing of imported goods as well as outright tax farms. By the end of the eighteenth century, their wealth overshadowed that of both the Dutch and the Indonesians.[2]

Once administration of the Indies had been taken from the Dutch East India Company in 1799 and placed under direct control of the home government, there began an era of reforms aimed at more effective revenue collection and more direct administrative control. As mentioned earlier, during the Napoleonic Wars the Indies had come briefly under the sway of the French and then of the British; both occupiers were concerned to rationalize colonial administration. How Chinese dealt with the nineteenth-century reform programs is an impressive story of adaptation.

As British governor of Java from 1811 to 1816, Stamford Raffles bent his formidable energies to installing what later was credited to him as "modern colonial administration" in the Indies, though the full effects of his reforms were not realized for several generations. "Reform" to Raffles meant considering the cultivator as a private agent who farmed state land in return for "rent," degrading the native aristocracy into agents of the colonial state, and furthering "the happiness of the people" (by "people" he meant the indigenous Indonesians, not the Chinese, whom he considered tricky and hard-hearted) by applying Adam Smithian precepts of free trade and private landholding, which Raffles expected would work to the mutual benefit of people and state. He tried to free the Indonesians from both native aristocracy and Chinese middlemen by abolishing tax farms and rental concessions and by collecting taxes directly in money. But in the cash-poor village economy, tax money had to be furnished by Chinese moneylenders, who sometimes demanded land as security; thus, more wealth than ever passed to the Chinese, who became the essential middlemen for the transition to a money economy. Raffles considered the 100,000 Peranakan Chinese to be ten times wealthier than all the Europeans in the Indies.[3]

After the Dutch regained control, they saw an export economy as the most promising route to a profitable colony. This was to be achieved through a "cultivation policy" in which Indonesian farmers were forced into what amounted to compulsory labor in plantations, turning over prescribed quotas of export crops—sugar, coffee, tobacco, and tea—to the colonial government as taxes in kind. Because the colonial government was unable to collect and process the crops at the local level, it entrusted the job to agents at commission. These middlemen would hire workers, set up processing mills, and deliver a quota of the output at a predetermined price. Thus, the system was turned over to foreign contractors—including British, French, Bengalis, and, of course, Chinese. Because labor was extracted from the farmers by force and the government advanced cash up front for machinery and building supplies, the contractors got very rich. Indeed, the cultivation system expanded the economy as a whole, opening up commercial niches all over Java that were quickly filled by Chinese businessmen.[4]

Impoverishment of Indonesian farmers and a shortage of food crops led to famine in 1840, after which the "cultivation system" was phased out in favor of liberal free trade, which lasted through the remainder of the nineteenth century. Export crops were to be sold freely within Java, and land could now be bought by private capitalists. Indeed, the growing economy of the Dutch colony during the mid- and late-nineteenth century meant opportunity for Chinese in many sectors as they shifted their roles from one moneymaking sector to the next. As foreign trade expanded, imported goods reached the Indonesian masses through Chinese retailers, and exportable goods produced by Indonesians had to be sold through Chinese. Opium sales through Chinese tax farms siphoned off much of the Indonesians' profit, and ready cash was supplied by Chinese pawnshops.[5]

Adaptation to the phases and institutions of economic growth over three centuries was a Chinese success story. Nevertheless, Chinese ability to spread into the niches of the rural hinterland and dominate its economy continued to depend on the favored position of the elite Peranakan *kapitans*, along with their families and clients. The many varieties of tax farm, but particularly the opium franchise, enabled agents of the farms—thousands of low-status Chinese immigrants who became clients and protégés of the system—to bypass residence and travel restrictions in order to penetrate the rural scene and do business there, much as was happening in the Philippines around the same time.[6] Beginning in the 1880s, this privileged position was undermined by the Dutch "Ethical Policy," which aimed to loosen the financial grip of Chinese moneylenders and tax farmers upon the Indonesian peasants. Dubiously "ethical," however, the new policy set about abolishing the opium tax farms only to make the drug a state monopoly. In succeeding decades, the cultural attitudes, political orientations, and business strategies of Peranakan Chinese in the Dutch East Indies would undergo substantial changes as a result.

The Philippines

The Spanish encouraged an increased Chinese migrant flow beginning in the 1850s with the expectation that the Chinese would work in agriculture and build up the cultivation of sugar and other exportable crops. The Chinese, however, did not oblige but got into trade as soon as they could. As in the Dutch East Indies, mass migration and changing colonial policies shifted Chinese niches toward middleman roles in the rural economy during the late nineteenth century. The shift was from maritime trade and toward trading between countryside and cities: buying rural produce for urban consumption or foreign export and selling imported goods to the country folk. In all these sectors, immigrant Chinese displaced Mestizo and Indio traders and began to dominate the Philippine commercial scene. Some Chinese also became franchised tax farmers (in the colonial fashion we have seen elsewhere but newly to the Philippines). These franchises included opium, which, in contrast to the Dutch Indies, was legally salable only to Chinese.[7] The expansion of Chinese traders into the Philippine interior was mirrored throughout Southeast Asia: in the countryside, "you will see the Chinese hawker everywhere; he will go to the last nook and corner and he will offer his goods."[8] And in the cities, Chinese displaced Mestizos as the commercial middle class.

When, if at all, do the Mestizos of the Philippines drop out of the history of Chinese emigration? By the nineteenth century they already regarded themselves not as Chinese but as Filipino and felt culturally closer to the colonial Spaniards than to the unacculturated Chinese immigrants. Their own distinctive culture contained elements of both Hispanic Catholicism and indigenous beliefs. That they could not become Spaniards meant that their course could lead only toward being "Filipinos"—a national identity that precluded reference to Chinese ancestry. As Hispanic culture spread into the Indio population through Catholicism, Mestizos found it easier to make common cause with that majority group of Filipinos. Eventually, a common Filipino nationalism obscured any vestige of Mestizo identity as a separate cultural or demographic group. The hero of the Philippine Revolution, Jose Rizal, was a Chinese Mestizo five generations removed from a Catholic Chinese ancestor and his Mestiza wife. Rizal's wealthy father had changed his registration from Mestizo to Indio, following the temper of the period.[9] The Filipinization of the creolized descendants of Chinese immigrants was a special kind of ending to the emigration story. Only in the Buddhist countries of mainland Southeast Asia (Thailand, Burma, Cambodia, and Laos) has there been such a degree of assimilation, and probably in none of these is the loss of Chinese identity as complete as in the Philippine case.

Malaya

British power began to penetrate the independent states of the Malay Peninsula in the 1870s in response to violent feuding among Chinese tin-mining brotherhoods and among the rival sultans who sponsored them. The tumult was bad for trade and also for the developing tin industry, which had powerful investors in the Straits Settlements (prominently including Chinese) and in Great Britain and which yielded a lucrative export tax to the colonial government. The resulting placement of British colonial "residents" at the elbows of Malay sultans, to "advise" on all administrative decisions, soon halted the fighting and subjected the Chinese mining brotherhoods to direct colonial control. Once their freewheeling style was no longer acceptable to the British, Chinese *kapitans* such as Yap A-loy ran their communities under their supervision.

In the British Straits Settlements themselves (Penang, Malacca, and Singapore), the nineteenth century saw Chinese populations brought under more direct colonial rule, but only very gradually. The old *kapitan* posts of the Portuguese and the Dutch were abolished in 1826 in favor of a British-style judicial system, but not until 1855 was that system able to keep up with the needs of the growing settlements, particularly Singapore, which had already grown to 30,000 inhabitants by 1836.[10] Meanwhile, indirect control survived by default. Although the formal rank of *kapitan* was gone, a prominent Singapore Baba merchant from the group of Hokkien Malacca sojourners was known as "master of the pavilion" (*tingzhu*): this was a reference to the Hokkien leaders who, as we observed in chapter 2, governed the Blue Clouds Pavilion in Malacca. In Singapore this was not a distinction conferred by the British, but was customarily held by the leader of the dominant Hokkien family whom the British used as intermediaries with the Chinese community.

Although the British considered the brotherhoods unruly and dangerous, they used them as tools of indirect governance during much of the nineteenth century. As enforcers for the wealthy merchants who ran the opium tax farms, the brotherhoods were a de facto part of the colonial

revenue system. Without "an irregular body of spies and intelligencers" to cow smugglers and, if necessary, punish them, the opium monopolies of the tax farmers could not have been sustained. The tax-farming merchants themselves became, in practice, the patrons or even the heads of brotherhoods, a fact well known to the British. Thus, the brotherhoods had become an essential adjunct of colonial control.[11] They also served as agents of labor importers and so acquired a lucrative niche in channeling new immigrants to mines and plantations throughout Southeast Asia and enforcing contracts of indenture. They served thereby as vital links in the colonial economic system before other mechanisms, British and Chinese, were developed to govern the immigrant population.

Only after violent brotherhood riots (principally between societies of rival dialect groups) in the Straits Settlements as well as the Malay Peninsula, along with evidence of appalling mistreatment of immigrants by their brotherhood handlers, were the British finally persuaded to suppress and eventually to outlaw brotherhoods as "dangerous societies." An ordinance of 1869 began the crackdown, and a stricter ban in 1889 marked the societies definitively as unlawful.

In this process emerged a new organization of direct British rule: the Protectorate of Chinese, headed by a Chinese-speaking British official stationed in Singapore with deputies in the other Straits Settlements and the Malay states. The first protector, William Pickering, was appointed in 1877. Besides registering the brotherhoods, the Protectorate served as a paternalistic dispenser of justice in civil disputes, filling a role something like the Chinese local gentryman (a figure lacking in immigrant communities). In this respect, the Protectorate was an effective substitute for the brotherhood headmen. At the same time, the Protectorate undertook to enforce more humane treatment of immigrant labor, to prevent kidnapping and forced confinement of immigrants, and to improve working conditions in plantations and mines. Such enforcement was an uphill struggle.

In reaction to more direct British governance, the Chinese community itself began to develop alternative methods of organization that would be more acceptable to the colonial state. That leading Chinese merchants began to withdraw from involvement with the brotherhoods in the late nineteenth century probably reflected nervousness at the swelling influx of poor immigrants and at the limits of their own control. It may also have owed something to the proliferation of regional, occupational, and surname associations that provided safer liaisons to the immigrant poor. Although some of the tax-farmer elite continued using the brotherhoods as enforcers, increasing colonial pressure against the brotherhoods after the 1860s made elite patronage seem risky.[12]

The Kingdom of Siam

The advent of mass migration to nineteenth-century Siam was slow to provoke contrary reactions among the Thai elite, because by this time Chinese had become well integrated into Thai society and essential to the kingdom's foreign trade and prosperity. Nevertheless, the eruption of brotherhood-led riots showed that mass migration had brought greatly increased brotherhood membership to Siam, as elsewhere in Southeast Asia. By late century, more direct control in the form of a Straits-model Chinese Protectorate was considered but not enacted. Control of Chinese brotherhoods became a police responsibility, however, as it had in the Straits. These measures were aimed at the lower classes of immigrants. That it was a matter of class rather than ethnicity is shown by the ease with which the monarchy co-opted successful and talented Chinese into the royal administration, notably as local governors in areas of peninsular Siam where numerous Chinese had immigrated to work in the tin industry. Noble ranks were conferred on these officials and on prominent Chinese merchants as well. Although there was strictly speaking no "officer system" in Siam (because of the monarchy's flexible outlook on ethnicity and the notably free assimilation of ennobled Chinese into the monarchic administration), the conferral of Thai ranks on Chinese of wealth and ability created a useful stratum of bicultural middlemen. It was not ethnicity or culture that mattered to the monarchy but rather how well Chinese fit into its political and social system.[13]

By the sixth reign (1910–1925, Rama VI), mass migration and its consequences for Chinese visibility and separateness became targets for a newly ethnicized and nationalistic "Thai" monarchy. Indeed, one authority claims that the category of Sino-Thai identity, long respected by the monarchy, was purposely erased under Rama VI. In its place was promoted an essentialized "Thainess" deemed more suitable for a modern nation-state. Earlier monarchs had regarded Chinese as just one of the many ethnic groups making up the empire, all qualified to receive "royal protection." In other words, "race" had not been a political issue in Siam until Rama VI made it one.[14]

Affinity Groups and Cultural Templates

Overseas Chinese associations were the formal expressions of affinity groups, of which four basic types can be distinguished (though in practice they combine and overlap to produce an array of institutional forms). The affinities, the primary colors of the Chinese cultural palette, were *compatriotism* (common regional origins in particular provinces, counties, towns, and villages, typically distinguished by dialect), *kinship* (real or notional), *corituality* (shared devotion to particular deity cults), and *brotherhood* (as manifested in "secret societies"). Although all were historically rooted in Chinese social usages brought from the mainland, they have been used adaptively, not to replicate exactly the old Chinese society (which was impossible) but to serve as flexible templates to meet the needs of communities in a wide variety of overseas venues.[15] Associations commonly have embodied two or more of these affinities, which is why leadership in Chinese overseas communities is interlocking: a man may be prominent in several associations, and therefore embody affinities in different spheres of life. A kinship organization might be linked with a province or county of origin (the Yongchun Tan, for example, the Tan-surnamed immigrants from Yongchun county). A regional organization was commonly associated with patron deities, as was an occupational guild. Because (as we observed in chapter 1) an occupational niche in a particular town was generally filled by people who shared dialect and regional origins, we can regard these guilds as connected with both compatriotism and corituality. In the discussion that follows, the interpenetration of affinities will be a central theme.

Compatriotism

The ideograph for "*bang*," the word for an immigrant subpopulation from a particular county or province who shared a dialect, is the same as that for "help," an apt symbol of the traditional spirit of compatriotism: mutual aid among fellow-townsmen far from home. Before the age of mass migration, there were areas (such as colonial Malacca and Batavia) where one dialect group dominated the Chinese community and its merchant elite became community leaders. Later, in the age of mass migration, there emerged a multiplicity of dialect-based organizations as the regional origins of the population became more diverse.

In the Straits Settlements (Penang, Malacca, and Singapore), mass migration dated from the founding of Singapore rather than from the Opium War. Soon after the British acquired the island (1819) and, five years later, the Dutch colony of Malacca (1824), many Malacca Baba merchants remigrated from that commercially lethargic port city to Singapore, which was already receiving an increasing stream of new arrivals directly from China. The remigrants now became the merchant elite of the new colony (although until the mid-nineteenth century they considered themselves sojourners there and were brought back for burial in Malacca).[16]

The special characteristics of this small, wealthy group of Malacca remigrants enabled them to become leaders and patrons not only of the newly arrived Hokkiens who needed them as brokers with the British colonial government but also of immigrants from other dialect groups (principally Teochiu, Cantonese, and Hakka). Although the British abolished the post of *kapitan* in 1826, the creolized Hokkien continued to exercise many of the same functions, including tax farming. As new migrants directly from China began to swell the population, the Malacca sojourners had to define their relationship with them.

By the time they began to remigrate to Singapore in the mid-1820s, the Malacca Baba merchants were in a position to become successful middlemen between the British colonialists and the Chinese population. Their success rested on different aspects of their creolized culture. They owed their usefulness to the colonial authorities to their cosmopolitanism (especially their experience dealing with Westerners), which included, for some, rudimentary English, perhaps acquired by them (or more likely by their sons) at Malacca's Anglo-Chinese College.[17] Their link to the Chinese community depended on the ritual side of their Chinese heritage: their long-standing devotion to familiar patron deities of China-coast society, dating back to the earliest days of Malacca's Blue Clouds Pavilion. Although the Baba were partly Malayanized and spoke a special Creole patois, the Malay component did not extend to the practice of Islam. The ritual side of their identities, which was squarely in the Hokkien tradition, became their link to the thousands of new Hokkien migrants now arriving in Singapore directly from China. Making the most of their culturally marginal position, a few Baba remigrant families were able to lead the Hokkien *bang* and, by extension, the

Chinese community until the early twentieth century through their marginality: establishing status in each cultural context by levering it from the other.

Because Hokkien were the largest and wealthiest dialect group in the new colony, they were in a position to lead and patronize other groups. An example is the temple founded in 1838, the Temple of Heavenly Blessings, thanks to donations from a coalition of Malacca Babas and wealthy Hokkien junk owners trading to Singapore. This temple, still to be seen in Telok Ayer Street, celebrated familiar China-coast deities, primarily Tianhou, "Empress of Heaven," or, in her popular representation, "Mazu," a deity worshipped as the protectress of seafarers. For Chinese living in Southeast Asia, she protected not only safe voyages to and from China but also Chinese maritime enterprise throughout the Nanyang. She served in effect as protectress of the corridor. The new temple initially served members of all dialect groups, though by 1860 Hokkiens signaled their primacy by establishing their regional lodge within the temple precincts.[18] Nevertheless, the temple's broad aspiration shows up on its memorial stele, erected in 1850. As a whole, this stele suggests not only the essential ritual basis of compatriotism but also an early attempt to reach beyond narrow particularism toward a pan-Chinese migrant identity.

Stone Inscription Commemorating the Establishment of the Temple of Heavenly Blessings (1850)[19]

"The Tianfu [Heavenly Blessings] Temple in Singapore, where the Empress of Heaven [Tianhou, Mazu] is worshipped, was jointly established by us Chinese (*wo Tangren*). In the twenty-third year of the Jiaqing reign (1818/9) British officials came to open up this area. They examined its geographical features and found that it could serve as a place for the merchants to gather. Hence they broke through the brambles and thorns, opened up clearings, and dredged the harbour and the tributary creeks. Then ships began arriving like clouds, and people from everywhere came by many routes, all gathering here and trading with each other. [The port] developed and throve with each passing day and has became a great metropolis within only a few years. We Chinese sailed from the China mainland and engaged in trade here. It is the Empress of Heaven who mercifully blesses our voyages and helps us to cross the water so that we can live and work in peace and contentment, with material goods in abundance so that the people can live in comfort. These are all due to the protection of the Deity.

"We Chinese were grateful to Her and sought ways to repay Her kindness. Thus we held a public discussion and decided to build the Tianfu Temple in the southern part of Singapore. . . . The work was completed in the twentieth year of the Daoguang reign (1840/1).

"This temple is majestic and presents a splendid sight. The middle hall is to worship the statue of the Empress of Heaven. . . . The eastern hall is to worship the God Guandi [the patron saint of merchants], and the western hall is to worship the God of Protecting Life (Baosheng). We worship the Goddess of Mercy (Guanyin) in the back hall, which also serves as the place where our Chinese native-place association [*huiguan*] holds meetings. It is broad in scale and new in structure. The Gods and the people communicate in harmony. The populace have expressed satisfaction with it. The reason we called this temple 'Tianfu [Heavenly Blessings]' is that the secret protection of the gods is like the 'blessing' from 'heaven.'

"To celebrate the completion of the temple, we erect this stele to give an account of its founding. We also inscribe the names of the donors in perpetuity. The purpose of this inscription is so that people in later generations who cherish righteousness can have a record to rely on, to ensure that the sacrifices continue forever.

[Names of the Donors]

"The tablet was erected by the directors and general managers on an auspicious day, in the sixth month of the thirtieth year of Daoguang (1850)."

Kinship

Given that the process of emigration in the colonial age did not involve entire kinship units (seldom entire families much less lineages), overseas kinship associations often were formed on the basis of common surnames. Many of these common surname groups also shared compatriot origins, though generally not verifiable patrilines. In this way, it was possible to solicit cooperation among larger numbers of men who were not related in a true patrilineage. In some instances, when same-surname immigrants from a particular county or village were too few to support an association (as were the

Cantonese in early-nineteenth-century Singapore), a critical mass was achieved by reaching across several prefectures (though still within the same dialect group).

That surname associations existed before the age of mass migration can be seen from the ancestral shrines they founded. One such shrine in Batavia was established by men of the Tan (Chen) surname in 1757 and was maintained by a kinship association headed by the elite "officers" of the Hokkien Peranakan community.[20] In Penang, 102 immigrants of the Khoo (Qiu) surname founded a surname association (*kongsi*) in 1835. This too was run by a management committee of merchant elite. Two features of such surname associations illustrate the differing needs of elite and commoners. The elite needed a format through which to transmute wealth into social status that did not rely on the colonial system and its "officer" ranks. Like regional associations, the surname associations furnished the immigrant elite with a purely Chinese set of status markers. For the common man, however, the surname association probably did not go beyond providing a ritually correct funeral for deceased "kinsmen" who could not afford to have their remains shipped back to China.[21]

The surname association might be considered a spurious or manufactured kinship group since members shared no common progenitor—save a notional "ancestor" of the same surname from the remote past with an imposing reputation. We have already seen multisurname associations, amalgamated under a single notional surname in Hokkien and Cantonese regions in China, formed to protect poor lineages against rich and powerful ones. Certainly, the transfer of this template overseas was a response to the same kind of vulnerability. Spurious or not, it was an adaptation of the kinship affinity template to deal with the realities of immigrant life.[22] Even back in China, the creative use of kinship affinity (often in cases of internal migration) could bind people into associations that bore only nominal relationship to the classic patrilineal descent group: "kinship" relations could be affirmed by the construction of a genealogy that reached back to a supposed common progenitor.

Surname associations overseas could be constructed on regional frameworks of differing scale: from rural townships, to counties, to prefectures, to groups of prefectures, to dialect-based *bang*. Compatriotism and kinship thereby reinforced each other in ways that could be adapted to the local realities of community structure, available leadership, and financial resources. Surname associations were able to draw financial support from rich "kinsmen" by selling prominent positions for their ancestral tablets around the altar of the surname group's "ancestral hall." Thus, a potent corituality informed the surname association and the regional association.[23]

Corituality

Like the other affinities, corituality was a channel for community linkage across social classes, though it also tended to reinforce the status of the merchant elite. As just mentioned, placement of ancestral tablets in a surname association's hall had to be paid for, with places of honor at a stiff premium; this aspect of ritual participation was only for men of means. For poorer "kin," payment of modest dues was required for the most basic benefit offered by the surname association: a decent funeral. The class "reach" of a merchant elite was facilitated by investing the leading merchant with a ritually significant title, such as "master of the pavilion," as in the case of the Blue Clouds Pavilion in Malacca, or "master of the incense burner."

Burial ritual, requiring at least a graveyard, lay at the center of immigrant social structure. The provision of cemetery space was a basic service provided by compatriot associations; control of this finite resource was a potent status marker. In some situations, access to cemeteries enabled the elite of a dominant dialect group to maintain their position among other such groups (as was the case in Batavia, where the survival of the privileged Hokkien *kapitan* elite was sustained by control of this precious asset). Burial ritual could also undergird alliances among smaller dialect groups. By establishing communal cemeteries and the committees to care for them, small dialect groups could band together to serve their common interests. These might involve alliances to compete against a powerful rival group, such as the dominant Hokkien in Singapore. Forging new symbolic group identities to promote practical interests was part of the adaptive life of migrants. It is striking that such a basic element of Chinese culture as burial ritual could be mobilized for this purpose and even reconfigured for it.[24]

Brotherhood

The first person a nineteenth-century emigrant was likely to meet as he disembarked in Singapore, the major transshipment point for migrant laborers, was an agent of one of the local brotherhoods. This man, who would speak the same dialect as the immigrants from a particular region in China, would pay the recruiter (*ketou*—likely also a brotherhood member who had traveled with the immigrants aboard ship) the price of the passage plus a commission. He then would herd the immigrant and others like him into a holding shed, there to await transfer to the labor force of a plantation or mining company. Surveillance and placement of immigrant labor was an important economic niche filled by the brotherhoods. Another (as we saw earlier) was the strong-arm protection of the economic niches of monopoly franchises such as tax farms.

Brotherhoods (*kongsi*, Mandarin *gongsi*, or *hui*, commonly called "secret societies" in Western writings) originated in Taiwan and along China's southeast coast and had spread to Southeast Asia by the late eighteenth century. They probably were outgrowths of traditional village mutual-assistance societies, now adapted to a period of population growth and labor export. The "Triad Society" (Sandianhui) or "Heaven and Earth Society" (Tiandihui) were among the classic names of such sodalities throughout the world. Bound to one another by blood oaths, brotherhood members in China were typically young, marginalized men, displaced from their hometowns and in need of mutual support and protection. By contrast with the lineage, which was by definition multigenerational, the brotherhood mimicked the single-generational sibling bond. Its internal structure was hierarchical in the sense of older brothers governing younger: symbolically a more egalitarian pattern than the lineage though still providing a rationale for authority.[25] Among Chinese migrants abroad, the brotherhood was in many respects a substitute for a kinship group in a period when most Chinese emigrated as single males, abruptly separated from their lineages back home and hence vulnerable to many forms of oppression.

By the early decades of the nineteenth century, brotherhoods had become a major force in Chinese emigration as recruiters, distributors, and controllers of labor. Prominent merchants remained behind the scenes either as senior members or as patrons; and recruited fighting gangs among the rank and file. Enforcing indenture contracts and channeling new immigrants to employers willing to buy those contracts was an essential link in the migration process. Although the brotherhoods were described by colonial authorities as a law unto themselves and a danger to public order, in fact the colonial governments worked through them to impose a measure of order among the growing Chinese laboring class.[26] For the poor immigrant, the brotherhoods provided a measure of protection from other dialect or occupational groups, and for the merchant elite, they provided a bulwark of class power.

In Southeast Asia, brotherhoods (among some other social groups) were known as *kongsi*: signifying a management committee for a joint-stock enterprise but, by extension, the enterprise as a whole. The connotations of *kongsi* are mutuality and shared assets, conceptions well suited to the ideology of a brotherhood. The single-generational format was notionally more egalitarian than a lineage, yet (as in a Chinese elder-younger sibling relationship) power could be very unequal in practice.

The brotherhoods' involvement in managing labor in a frontier environment lends their historical picture a certain ambiguity. On the one hand, there was the coercive aspect: the forcible and fraudulent sides of recruitment, in which the brotherhoods were certainly involved in south China; the buying and selling of the passage debt incurred by migrants (which amounted to buying and selling human labor); and the forcible detention of workers in filthy "baracoons" to await transfer to their ultimate employers. On the other side of the coin were the armed protection of pioneer camps in the jungles of the mining districts (as already discussed in the case of Borneo); the solidarity of one dialect group against another in guarding precious economic turfs, the help extended to any of their number arrested by the colonial police, and the sharing of economic risks and benefits in new mining ventures—all aids to survival amid the lawlessness of frontier life. As mass migration brought hundreds of thousands of new workers to Southeast Asia and the New World beginning in the nineteenth century, the proliferation of brotherhood *kongsi* was an effective adaptation to a perilous environment by a vulnerable population.[27]

Brotherhood members were most closely tied by compatriot bonds, and these ties commonly led to single-dialect brotherhood membership. Bloody feuds between Hakka and Cantonese brotherhoods in the Malayan tin fields were the dominant pattern, no doubt playing out hatreds left over from feuding in Guangdong before, during, and after the Taiping Rebellion.[28] It is ironic that immigrant brotherhoods may have been reenacting the very feuds from which they had fled overseas in the first place.

Structural Changes in Chinese Communities in the Age of Mass Migration

Mass migration had far-reaching structural effects on overseas Chinese communities. One was that immigrants fresh from China arrived in such numbers and so rapidly that they could not be assimilated into the old creole or bicultural societies. Instead, these immigrants constituted new populations that sustained lively corridors with their old *qiaoxiang*: corridors that strengthened their sojourning mentality and preserved their Chinese culture. Relations between China-oriented newcomers and the old creole populations could be competitive, but there were also significant areas of cooperation.

Relations among Compatriot Groups

As Chinese populations became more diverse, compatriot groups distinguished by dialect acquired a defining role in social and economic organization. Although colonial authorities commonly blamed communal violence on the multiplicity of compatriot groups, segmentation of the community by dialect was a valuable adaptive resource for expanding the immigrant economy.

The segments of a population bounded by compatriotism I call "primary communities" because, beyond the family, they are the basic ascriptive units of social action.[29] They exist nearly everywhere among Chinese overseas, and although their power has been eroded by the passage of time and by the spread of Mandarin speech, dialect compatriotism has been historically the most powerful organizing factor among migrant populations both within China and overseas. Overseas, compatriotism preceded the emergence of a national ("Chinese") identity and has survived as one important qualifier of "Chinese" identity to the present day. Supradialect forms of community organization (nationalist or pan-Chinese movements) I call "secondary" because despite their powerful affective and integrative force at certain historic junctures, their building blocks have been the more durable primary communities. The relationship between primary and secondary communities is not alternative but nested. An individual's identity reflects his belonging simultaneously to communities with differing functions and on ascending scales of organization.[30]

This nesting effect has enabled timely responses to environmental demands: the narrower identity of the primary community defines and divides dialect groups in ways that preserve occupational specialties, and the broader secondary identity of "Chinese" serves the interests of the immigrant population as a whole in its relations with the majority populations within which it lives. The interaction of such nested identities has long provided a flexible framework for sojourner society.

It is a well-remarked feature of Chinese communities, whether at home or abroad, that particular compatriot groups are identified roughly with specific clusters of economic activity in particular locales. Despite considerable overlap and competition, the patterns of dominance within particular trades have been distinctive, as we saw in chapter 1. In regions where a number of dialect groups live side by side, the mosaic occupational pattern has been particularly appealing for sociological study.[31]

Preserving an occupation within a compatriot-group turf followed naturally from particularistic recruitment, which operated first through kinship (taking a son, younger brother, or nephew into one's shop and training him in the business) and then through compatriotism (hiring fellow villagers or at least fellow dialect speakers) sustaining dialect homogeneity among one's employees. Thus, the argot peculiar to a trade became identified with a specific dialect. In addition to kinship groups, dialect-based trade associations contributed to cartelization by persuading their members to buy up firms that were in danger of falling into extradialect hands.[32] Such business involution is typical among the dialect-based primary communities in Southeast Asia. Involution served the migrant economy by reinforcing the migration corridors of regional groups for purposes of recruitment, chain migration, and remittances. Compatriot specializations that began in the age of mass migration can be studied in many regions. In the Dutch East Indies (and still in Indonesia), for example, Hokkien were identified with large-scale trade, as in the earliest days of their settlement. Cantonese, whose mass emigration began in earnest in the nineteenth century, dominated the skilled artisan trades: they prospered as machinists, hardware retailers, small-scale industrialists, hoteliers, and caterers. Teochiu were known as successful plantation workers and market gardeners. Those inveterate frontier dwellers, the Hakka, have been described earlier as resourceful miners who made the transition to urban trades in many venues.[33]

The term *bang* denoted both shared dialect and a hierarchic, cross-class internal organization. Although *bang* leaders were drawn from the top ranks of the merchant community, their cross-class role was exercised through the temple cults they shared with the small shopkeepers, artisans, and manual workers. The connection between a *bang*'s leadership and its temple cult was symbolized by the physical inclusion of its regional lodge within the precincts of the temple (as may be seen today at the Tianfugong in Singapore, or the Khoo temple in Penang). In a less obvious way, a *bang*'s cross-class character was expressed also through its affiliated brotherhood.

The picture just presented shows how immigrant compatriot groups divided up economic territory so as to minimize overlap and competition. Nevertheless, *bang* turf wars did occur during the nineteenth century, especially in niches that were both lucrative and exclusive. One was the opium tax franchises, over which fierce competition could emerge.[34] Another was tin mining in the Malayan jungle, where regional wars were waged by armed brotherhoods representing different dialects or home counties. Such conflicts persisted until the British established control over the Malay Peninsula in the 1870s. Inter-*bang* fighting diminished sharply after the British outlawed brotherhoods in 1890, depriving the opium farms of their armed retainers, who in any case had moved increasingly beyond the grip of the merchant elite. This decline in conflict was one precondition for the institutionalization of the supradialect organization or "secondary community."

From the mid-nineteenth century, Singapore had developed significant cooperation across dialect-group boundaries. When the first Chinese school (the Chongwen'ge) was established in 1849, the directorate included contributors not only from the Malacca Babas, but also from a wealthy Hokkien-speaking immigrant, along with the leader of the Teochiu group (Teochiu speech is closely related to Hokkien). Cooperation also took the form of a counteralliance among minority regional and dialect groups to balance the power of the majority Hokkien. Initiated in 1854, this alliance included a broad span of Guangdong regional groups, comprising not only Cantonese speakers but also Hakka, Hailam, and Teochiu. Clearly, the urge toward dialect-group exclusivity was balanced by the need to compete successfully against a powerful outside entity. And by the 1860s, even ambitious Hokkien recognized that to lead the entire Chinese community required not only the headship of the Hokkien *bang* but also benign patronage of other dialect groups to create a reciprocal sense of obligation. The British encouraged this kind of cross-dialect cooperation in Singapore and rewarded it with honors and titles, a policy that paid off in civic peace. Riots between Hokkien and Guangdong brotherhoods in 1854 were jointly mediated by the Hokkien and Teochiu *bang* leaders.[35] The lower classes, too, sometimes cooperated within the format of the brotherhoods: although commonly the vehicles for interdialect conflict, they also could incorporate members from several dialect groups, especially on the basis of shared occupation.[36]

Higher-level forms of secondary community emerged as a result of local conditions and for particular historical reasons. One such form was the "consolidated lodge" (*zong huiguan*), a federation of compatriot groups representing the entire Chinese population. Such communities formed early in the history of Chinese in North America. Consolidated lodges spoke for them where a legal and economic buffer was needed to defend "Chinese" interests against the white majority in which they were embedded. Such was the group in San Francisco, known to the Chinese community as the *Zhonghua Zonghuiguan*, or Chinese Six Companies. It was emulated in Chicago and New York, each of which formed a similar consolidated lodge. Hiring lawyers to protest oppressive immigration laws or to represent Chinatown in public forums such as the Joint Special Committee (the "exclusion" hearings of 1877), the consolidated lodges waged valiant (though mostly losing) battles against anti-Chinese movements. Occasionally, they were successful in obtaining federal court protection against unconstitutional state court decisions.[37] They embraced primary communities of immigrants from a number of counties around the Pearl River delta, speaking different local varieties of Cantonese, each group too small to wield influence on its own. In these cases, the relative closeness of the dialects was no doubt helpful, though particular compatriot feelings divided the community internally over many issues (see chapter 5).

Another form of secondary community, Chinese chambers of commerce, arose in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. The pattern was one of federated management committees made up of leading members of all the *bang* of a city. The one in Singapore, founded in 1906, was dominated by the Hokkien *bang* (the largest), with assigned fractions for the other *bang* in proportion to their population. Chairmanship rotated among the *bang* with the Hokkien and all the rest sharing it at pro-rata intervals. It is not coincidental that contemporary urban society in China was going through the same process of cross-dialect, cross-guild formation of secondary communities, largely as a reaction to foreign imperialism and energized by economic nationalism.

The idea of chambers of commerce came from China through the consulates of the Qing government. The late-nineteenth-century catchphrase "commercial warfare" (*shangzhan*) against other nationalities found its way from China to Southeast Asia and the settler societies very quickly.[38] Secondary communities arose again in response to Japanese aggression in the twentieth century, especially on the eve of the Pacific War, as we shall see in chapter 6. They are usually associated with threats to the Chinese nation or to all Chinese in a foreign venue who have to cope, as a group, with hostile majority populations. Since the onset of "new migration" (1960s to the present), they have been organized on the scale of entire venue nations or in formats even wider (see chapter 8).

Old Settlers and Newcomers: Peranakans and Totoks

Although there were elements of friction and competition between newcomers and the old settlers, there were also ties of patronage and brokerage in which the elites of the established communities helped newcomers gain a foothold in foreign lands. Patronage and brokerage worked along several tracks: established business elites recruiting newcomers as laborers or shop attendants through dialect, regional, and kinship bonds and brokering relationships with the colonialists, a role for which the old-timers were well equipped by their long acquaintance with the languages and mores of Europeans. And under the "officer systems" still in force in Southeast Asia, the creolized elites were still the source of the *kapitans*, who had important services to perform (notably registering marriages and assigning burial plots) as well the monopoly franchises that they still enjoyed, particularly the tax-farm businesses that required ample manpower at the lower echelons. In an era when the colonial powers were expanding their effort to extract resources from Southeast Asian possessions, established Chinese businessmen were supplying labor to plantations and mines by importing new immigrants from their home regions.[39]

On Java, the most populous of the Dutch-ruled islands, old and new Chinese communities began to form separate societies only in the early twentieth century. The deep historical roots and the numerical preponderance of the old creolized (Peranakan) society gave it a stability that even mass migration could not greatly affect. Even by the late twentieth century, the Peranakan population remained 50 percent more numerous than the Totok. On the outer islands, particularly Sumatra, Bangka, and Borneo, where Chinese settlement developed later, the relatively small Peranakan group was far outnumbered by the newcomers, and less bifurcated societies emerged from the mix.[40]

The cultural persistence of the old Javanese Peranakan families had originated in the Dutch colonial system, as discussed earlier. The power and privilege of its leading elites, the titled headmen of the "officer" system, had worked to the advantage of the Peranakan group as a whole through patronage and protection. The colonialists' carefully crafted policies of keeping Chinese separate from the native population gave Peranakans a sense of being at least second-class citizens between Europeans and Indonesians. Although a creolized version of Malay was their daily spoken language, the Peranakans considered themselves unambiguously Chinese: the archives of the Batavian "Kong Koan" (Mandarin: *gongguan*, "public office," the official headquarters of the *kapitans*) show that record keeping was maintained in a local version of written Chinese and that social distinctions between Peranakans and non-Chinese were carefully maintained until the late nineteenth century.[41]

By the 1890s, however, changing Dutch economic policies, particularly the end of the old opium-farm system, had begun to undermine the privileged position of the Peranakans and force them to adapt by diversifying their businesses and finding new niches in which to survive. At the same time, the rapidly solidifying Totok communities were proving to be aggressive competitors, as can be seen throughout Southeast Asia. Institutions such as Chinese-language schools and newspapers distinguished the growing Totok communities from their more numerous Peranakan neighbors.

The story of how the Peranakan creoles were affected by the emergence of Chinese nationalism and by the development of the China-oriented Totok communities will be told in chapter 6. Suffice it to note here that historical conditions predisposed the newcomer communities and the old acculturated population to find separate adaptations to twentieth-century challenges.

In the Philippines, as we have seen, liberalized Spanish policies enlarged the Chinese community and transformed its economic niches. From about 1828, the colonial authorities tried in several ways to boost the profitability of their colony, including promotion of export crops such as sugar. It occurred to them that Chinese might be imported under contract to supply the workforce for such

crops. Nevertheless, though Chinese immigration swelled rapidly after mid-century, few of the newcomers took up plantation labor. Instead, the new immigration policy created an energetic new trading community. Chinese were now permitted (beginning in 1839) to travel freely outside the Manila area, to which they had long been confined; they proceeded to spread throughout the provinces to become entrepreneurs, processors and dealers of cash crops, and small shopkeepers in the villages. Immigration picked up after 1848 because of the opening of Hong Kong and rose even faster in the 1870s with the establishment of regular steamship service between Hong Kong and Manila. Although Hokkien remained the largest dialect group, they were joined by increasing numbers of Cantonese through Hong Kong. The Chinese population as a whole grew from 5,700 in 1847 to perhaps 100,000 by the 1890s, distributed in every province but with some three-fourths living in and around Manila.[42]

The effects of mass immigration on the Chinese Mestizo population were profound: competition from new immigrants forced most Mestizos out of retail and wholesale trading, and their role in the production of export crops (as landowners, an old specialty of Chinese Mestizos) became even more pronounced. The Chinese retailer and his *sari-sari* (general store) were soon to be found in myriad villages throughout the Philippines. The thoroughness with which the new wave of immigrants spread their commercial networks through the Philippine backcountry was pictured by American political scientist J. R. Hayden, who trekked through the largest Philippine island, Mindanao, in 1931:[43]

> Through the centre of the Island the trail, which in places had to be hacked open by Bolos, wound through virgin forests inhabited by primitive peoples. . . . [I]n the heart of this wild country was found a small *tienda* [store]—just a counter, a dozen shelves and a place to sleep. The proprietor, a Chinese, was absent, but we met him on the trail, returning from Davao with two Monobo *cargadores* who carried on their backs his slender stock-in-trade. . . . This pioneer merchant was typical of the enterprise and determination which have brought such a large proportion of the trade of the frontier areas of the Far East into [Chinese] hands.

But that "pioneer merchant" was not really on his own. He was the slenderest tendril of a far-spreading tree of Chinese commerce, reaching perhaps from a shipper at Xiamen or Hong Kong, to a transshipment agent at Manila, to the maritime harbor of Davao, through the warehouse of a local middleman, to that lonely cabin in the forest fastness.

British policies in the Straits Settlements tended to sustain the central position of their creolized Chinese, but the onset of mass migration eventually forced the Baba to choose new kinds of middleman roles. In Singapore's early decades, the Baba and the new immigrants found ways to promote common interests through shared cultural orientations. Their common worship of Hokkien deities and their use of temples as community centers provided a ritual framework for collaboration. Founding and managing Chinese schools was another such framework.[44] By the 1880s, however, the Baba and the China-born began to draw apart, each to its own cultural-linguistic pole. English-medium education attracted many Baba families, and business careers began to give place to the professions. To the extent that the Chinese literate tradition remained attractive to the Baba, it was approached through English or Malay translations. Meanwhile, Chinese-speaking elites gravitated toward status-enhancing connections with the Qing Empire. The newly installed (1877) Chinese consulate in Singapore proved a useful link to the Qing Empire and purveyor of official Chinese ranks and titles.

Not only Baba creóles but also Straits-born children of immigrants, who were legally British subjects, had to negotiate among the cultures in which they lived. As in the Dutch East Indies, there was competition for their allegiance. The British sought to co-opt the newcomers by conferring honorary titles such as "justice of the peace" on leading figures of all dialect groups. Financial support of civic projects could buy places in the colonial status system for rich Chinese of all dialects.[45] Beijing, too, began to cultivate wealthy Southeast Asian Chinese for their allegiance and, more important, their money. New Chinese consulates throughout Southeast Asia gave the Qing court a channel through which to cultivate the new immigrant population. Purchasing honorary ranks and titles gave immigrants a foothold in the status order of the old country, which served simultaneously as a mark of distinction in their new abodes.

For the Straits-born whose parents were immigrants, it was possible, even adaptive, to live symbolically in both the colonial and the Chinese cultures. As a British official saw it, the Chinese British subject "has to wear two faces as it were in his every day life. He presents one side to the Europeans and one side to the Chinese." Nevertheless he noted with alarm their "growing tendency" to draw closer to the China-born majority (hence the importance of competing by conferring honors on them).[46]

Some emigrants managed to represent themselves successfully in two cultural worlds. A prominent Straits Chinese magnate, Cheang Hong Lim (Zhang Fanglin), is an example of a successful second-generation Singaporean whose hybrid culture linked him to China and the new immigrants, even as he sought the favor of the British colonialists. As intercultural broker-entrepreneurs, his generation served as successors to the old Malacca Baba community leaders: Cheang, like them, was Straits-born but he was more culturally Chinese. His Hokkien father had immigrated to Singapore in the 1830s, had grown rich as a provisioner to the British navy, and had acquired an opium-farm franchise. Hong Lim, who took over the tax farm, became notorious for a massive opium-smuggling plot aimed at ruining his business rivals. Although as a Straits-born British subject he could not be deported (as were some coconspirators) and was too influential a community figure to imprison, the government forced him to sign a humiliating apology. Cheang was, if not the headman of a brotherhood, certainly the patron of one. Yet this wealthy and ruthless businessman bought and ingratiated his way into both the colonial and the Chinese status systems and acquired honorary titles in both. His lavish charities are memorialized in public places of today's Singapore. A fulsome epitaph (composed by the Chinese consul) displays the symbolic sheen he had cultivated in both British and Chinese worlds.

Epitaph for Mr. Cheang [Hong Lim] (Zhang Fanglin), who was awarded the Qing Imperial honorary ranks of Grand Master for Glorious Happiness and Expectant Salt Intendant (c. 1894)[47]

"Written by Huang Zunxian, . . . Chinese consul-general in Singapore. . . .

"The personal name [of Mr. Cheang] was Guiyuan; he was known by [the courtesy name] Fanglin, and also took the courtesy name Mingyun. . . . His ancestors made their home in Fujian, where they resided in Changtai county for generations, until his father went to Nanyang as a merchant and settled in Singapore. His great-grandfather Yi, his grandfather Yushui, and his father, Chao [Zhang Sanchao, known in Singapore as Cheang Sam Teo] were all honored [posthumously] by the title 'Grand Master for Glorious Happiness'; and his great-grandmother Chen, his grandmother Wang, and his mother Yen were all honored with the designation 'First-ranking Consort' [all these ancestral decorations Cheang Hong Lim purchased (to display his filiality) from the Chinese government]. Since his father came to Nanyang and made a fortune, his family became influential and wealthy. He was the oldest of the four sons and inherited his father's business.

"According to British law, it was strictly forbidden to sell opium and liquor privately; to carry on those businesses, rich merchants had to pay a high tax, somewhat like the salt trade back in China. Those who undertook this profession hired [brotherhood] spies, spreading a fine net to search and confiscate [illegal goods], in order to control the entire market. . . .

"But during the fifteen years that Mr. Cheang held the office, he adopted a policy of leniency. He permitted merchants to sell 'opium-quitting pills.' A man was not punished unless he had privately peddled the merchandise and taken bribes. When Mr. Cheang discovered that somebody had engaged in private selling, he personally went to the man's house and told him: 'We know what you have done. If you hand over the items you are concealing, I will not punish you.' In this way, everyone felt both shame and gratitude. . . .

"As for his service to Great Britain: The authorities first appointed him Kapitan at the Haimen new territory, then Justice of the Peace, then a member of the Advisory Council. . . . He performed his duties honestly and neither protected anyone illegally nor left the straight path of the law . . . Mr. Cheang was rich and generous. He donated funds to many charitable causes including hospitals, orphanages, and old-people's homes. . . .

"After I was appointed an emissary to foreign lands, I travelled from Japan to America. Most of the countries I passed through, such as Cuba and Peru, and India and Aden on my way to the West, have overseas Chinese and Chinese consuls. The Chinese in the Nanyang islands number many millions. Some of them have been there for four or five generations, and those who came more recently have been there for several decades. I am personally delighted that they still preserve Chinese customs such as the calendar, clothes, and funeral and wedding ceremonies.

"Nevertheless there are some who are being gradually influenced by foreigners. For instance, they no longer wear their hair in queues, and the style of their clothes has changed. They look down upon traditional rituals and teachings and they regard their kinsmen as if they were strangers. But Mr. Cheang, having lost his parents when he was a child, showed filial piety in all

respects. The work he composed, *Familial Instructions of Mr. Mingyun*, embodies the principles of loyalty, honesty, filial piety, and friendship."

Chinese Overseas Capitalism in the Late Colonial Period

In early and mid-colonial times, the most profitable occupation for Chinese had been the revenue farm, and by the mid-1800s, the most important revenue farms were monopoly franchises to retail opium. Marketing the drug was hugely profitable, and (as seen earlier) it created the greatest Chinese fortunes. In the Dutch East Indies, opium was sold mainly to the native population. In Malaya and the Straits Settlements, the consumers were principally Chinese laborers, a market that grew rapidly as mass labor immigration gained momentum from the mid-nineteenth century on. Revenue farms were important generators of both capital and patronage for the Chinese elite. The fortunes they generated were invested in many forms of enterprise, including maritime trading, processing of crops (sugar and rice), and tin mining. Because franchise holders enjoyed close ties to colonial government, they were able to offer patronage and protection to many groups in the Chinese community, including lower-level merchants and the ubiquitous brotherhoods.

When European colonialists began to administer their possessions more directly and extract wealth from them more intensively, Chinese businessmen had to adapt to changing circumstances. From maritime shippers, to middlemen and moneylenders in the countryside, to commodity traders, they shifted course with the changing tides of colonial policy. In Malaya, the availability of investment capital in the Straits Settlements spurred the development of tin mining. By the mid-nineteenth century, groups of up to 15,000 Chinese were operating mines, with capital from Malacca Chinese merchants and labor management from brotherhood headmen.[48] As British power expanded in peninsular Malaya after 1874, Chinese tin-mining ventures took advantage of the increasingly secure back country to expand their operations. They operated on a small scale (about seventy miners per digging) and with simple equipment. The brotherhoods that controlled mining labor could mobilize their men as fighters in the event of armed challenge. Like their compatriots in the Borneo *kongsi*, they generally worked on a share basis rather than on salary. Mining in Malaya is an example of the kind of economic niche occupied by Chinese immigrants in default of competing sources of labor among the native population.[49]

The trend toward abolishing opium revenue farms was undoubtedly the gravest challenge faced by the upper stratum of Chinese capitalists. Diversification was already under way by the late nineteenth century as revenue farmers invested profits in other sectors, particularly extractive and processing industries such as the tin and rice businesses. By the turn of the twentieth century, new Chinese investors who had no ties to the revenue farms had entered the field. Chinese investment in rice milling, by ex-revenue farmers as well as newcomers, had developed Siam, French Indochina, and Burma as sources and Singapore as an entrepôt. A growing world demand for rice (including a huge market in China itself) enabled overseas Chinese to dominate the trade through vertically linked businesses including procurement, milling, and shipping, all linked through family and dialect ties. By 1930, Chinese controlled the entire rice-milling industry in Siam, and 80 percent of that in Indochina. In Malaya, two-thirds of tin mining and one-third of rubber processing were in Chinese hands (figures that fell significantly in the Great Depression).[50]

How Chinese commercial elites adapted to the challenges of the early twentieth century is illustrated by Jennifer Cushman's study of the Khaw (Xu) enterprises in Siam and Malaya. This Sino-Thai family got its start in tax farming in the mid-nineteenth century under the Siamese monarchy, taking over the tin-mining concessions of southern Siam and becoming, in the process, chiefs of Siamese regional governments in the upper Malay Peninsula, a region under heavy imperial pressure from Britain. Through lineage and affinal connections, the Khaw also established a base in Penang. The Penang connection not only made possible the vertical integration of the Khaw tin business but also proved essential to the financing and diversification of Khaw enterprises in the face of competition and political pressure from the British and their Chinese clients in the Straits Settlements. What had begun as a lineage-based firm founded on the old patron-state opium-farm model evolved into a broader "group" of companies, based on carefully nurtured affinal and dialect connections (and eventually co-opting some token Westerners to the Board of Directors). Cushman suggests that these adaptations were modeled on firms of other Southeast Asian tycoons (such as Oei Tiong Ham of the Dutch East Indies) who had adopted some Western business

methods, reaching beyond the family-firm model for more effective financing and more technically specialized management.[51]

The success of large-scale Chinese commercial networks at competing with Western and Japanese interests to the point where they owned broad sectors of the Southeast Asian economy should not obscure the fact that the vast majority of Chinese overseas businesses, then as now, were small, family-based shops. Although large firms adapted to competition by adding Western-style management and financial devices to the family model, small family businesses remained the basis of most Chinese commercial livelihoods. Small retail and artisanal "shop houses," with the family working downstairs and living upstairs, were the archetype of the broad lower stratum of business premises in southern China as in Southeast Asia; and from small scale to large, the imprint of the family firm can be seen on most Chinese businesses, even in the present day. Indeed, *ceteris paribus*, it is possible to see the small Chinese business as a commercial outgrowth of the rural "estate household" or *jia*, to which all contribute and by which all are supported.

Omohundro's ethnography of Chinese business in a Philippine provincial city (Iloilo) in the 1970s illustrates the endurance of this model and how it has been adapted to conditions abroad. The inner circle, or owner-directorate of a firm ("found equally in a small tin shop or in a large Manila-based corporation"), was identical to the male proprietor's extended family down to the third generation. This core group was "where the money is held, where the decisions are made, where all responsibility lies, where the company is transmitted to the next generation, and where the profit accumulates." Outside it are ranged the hired Chinese employees, including trusted managerial, accounting, and sales personnel and minor partners who are not kinsmen, yet farther outside are Filipino hired hands and Chinese apprentices. Such an enterprise brings in outsiders for technical and specialized services, but power and profit are grasped tightly by the family.[52] This pattern has, of course, been maintained not only through the long habitude of established family firms but also by continuous refreshment of the immigrant population by new arrivals from China.

Chinese business, whether overseas or in China, historically has operated through affinity ties: kinship for internal business management and compatriotism (dialect and region) for external commercial networks.[53] Whether small-scale business or large, family ownership and management has been the norm, with inheritance through the male line. Although modern restructuring may bring outsiders into management, ultimate control is usually kept within the founding family. In large-scale networks, dialect has been the essential linkage. It should be borne in mind that these affinity ties, though obviously adaptive for business efficiency and competitive survival, have at least one maladaptive side effect for an immigrant minority: they project an impression of ethnic exclusivity or even of superiority—shutting out others or hiring them only for menial work—which can brew resentment and hostility among indigenous populations. This impression may be an unavoidable "cost of doing business," but, as we shall see in chapter 7, the cost can be high.

Japan's suzerainty in Taiwan after 1895 created new opportunities in intra-Asian regional trade, opportunities well served by ambiguities of nationality. Although Beijing had conferred Chinese citizenship on overseas "sojourners" in 1909, these sojourners could bear simultaneously the nationality of their country of domicile or, indeed, of several countries. Foreign nationality, particularly the extraterritorial rights held by all the major foreign powers, gave commercial advantages to Chinese international merchants, including protection from taxation and police harassment inside China. Merchants in Japanese-occupied Taiwan relied on their acquired Japanese nationality for protection while doing business in Fujian and throughout Southeast Asia.[54] Here again we see the use of marginality to lever business advantage, each side of an actor's identity serving as a fulcrum to lever advantages for the other.

From the late nineteenth century until the Great Depression, capitalism also flourished along the old corridors to *qiaoxiang* in China. Xiamen, historic epicenter of the Hokkien migration, is a case in point. Chinese capitalists in Southeast Asia used Xiamen as a site for profitable investments, particularly in regional infrastructure and urban real estate. But the unique value of *qiaoxiang* ties emerged as businessmen used their native places as sites to which capital could be shifted, short or long term, to take advantage of currency differences or to avoid ruinous taxation by colonial governments. Tax avoidance was particularly crucial during the years after World War I, when colonialists raised levies on Chinese businesses to make up for war losses. Colonialists' crackdown on Chinese privileges (the "Ethical Policy" in the East Indies, the shutdown of opium farms in Malaya and the Straits Settlements, and discriminatory laws against Chinese in the American-ruled Philippines) may also have spurred the outflow of Chinese capital to Xiamen, Hong Kong, and other *qiaoxiang* ports.

By the 1920s, overseas Chinese capital overshadowed Western capital in Xiamen industry and commerce. Substantial investments were made in transport: railroads and road building to link Xiamen to various neighboring *qiaoxiang*.

Returning emigrants to Xiamen set about erecting sumptuous dwellings, in hybrid Sino-Western style, on the offshore island of Gulangyu, which had long been the residence of foreign consuls and traders. It was a perfect venue for returned emigrants who had become accustomed to the urban amenities of colonial ports and to living among foreigners. Xiamen and Gulangyu thus joined Hong Kong and Shanghai as a flourishing Sino-foreign enclave, another gateway to China's urban modernization. Indeed, in Xiamen, returning capitalists worked closely with local urban officials (one even becoming mayor in his own right) reprising a pattern begun more modestly by their predecessors in imperial days.[55]

Labor in the Age of Mass Migration

Because most common folk could not afford to pay up front for ship passage, the credit-ticket system (sometimes called "assisted migration") or outright contract indenture were common mechanisms of paying for travel and reimbursing creditors by labor over time. The results were a bonanza for shipping companies and labor brokers in addition to the ultimate employers of labor, namely, the mining and plantation enterprises of Southeast Asia. As described in chapter 3, many indentured workers were recruited by force or fraud, and their plight was made particularly cruel by loss of contact with their families. For others, however, the indenture system served as the same kind of calculated investment that many settlers in the New World made in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries.

Conditions of labor varied considerably throughout colonial Southeast Asia. Both Chinese and European employers were criticized for their treatment of indentured workers as if they were slaves (as seen in chapter 3)—often worse than slaves, who at least were considered permanent property of their owners and hence an investment worth protecting. It was well known that employers and foremen found ways to keep immigrant workers in bondage even after their contracts had expired. Indeed, the specialty niche of labor headman furnished some old immigrants (*laoke*) with a source of profits through side businesses such as gambling and opium sales. Like most coercive regimes, the indenture system created profitable niches for middlemen.

Beijing's increasing involvement in international diplomacy since the 1870s included investigating conditions of Chinese laborers around the world, particularly in the Caribbean and Southeast Asia. The author of the following report, Qian Xun, accompanied China's first ambassador, Xue Fucheng, to Europe, where he became one of China's early consuls abroad. While serving on the staff of the Chinese ambassador to the Netherlands, Qian was sent to the Dutch East Indies to report on the Chinese community there. Having been promoted ambassador in his own right, he offered his views to the throne, which passed them on to the Office of Foreign Affairs (*Zongli yamen*). Among the notable features of Qian's report are the great disparity in wealth and status among the Chinese themselves and the oppression of some Chinese by their own countrymen. Although all Chinese suffered under discriminatory Dutch laws, some were able to prosper as middlemen, while others were doomed to lives of misery as manual laborers under the thumb of Chinese labor contractors.

Memorial from Qian Xun, Ambassador to the Netherlands, about the Overseas Chinese in the Dutch East Indies (1908)[56]

"In 1906/7, I was assigned by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the Ministry of Education, and the Ministry of Agriculture, Industry, and Commerce, to visit the island of Java to inspect industrial and commercial affairs. . . . Last year, having been appointed ambassador, the condition of the overseas Chinese was a matter of deep concern to me. . . .

"About the sorry plight of overseas Chinese workers, a memorial was submitted by the newly promoted ambassador Lü Haihuan. Recently, the Dutch government has revised regulations several times in order to show its concern. However, the results are not satisfying and the overseas Chinese keep appealing. When I was on the island, I personally heard more than ten cases; the embassy received over a hundred official and private letters complaining about the miserable life of overseas Chinese workers. If what they asserted is true, then their suffering is really unspeakable. Most of these overseas Chinese workers were deceived and sold by cunning

people in China. They were taken to the British colony, Singapore, from which they were transshipped to other foreign ports. In Guangdong and Fujian they are called 'piglets,' because they are not treated as human beings. Two years ago when I went to Singapore, I inquired of several 'piglets,' whom the consul Sun Shiding had just redeemed, and realized that there were grounds for what was being said.

"Some places in the Dutch colonies . . . grow tobacco; others . . . operate tin mines. They need an ample supply of workers and rely on those 'piglets.' Ignorant people were attracted by the rumor of 'making a fortune overseas,' and some even went there without being recruited. In the early days, one or two clever persons became rich. More recently, however, several hundred thousand people have gone abroad each year, but none have been known to come back or to open businesses overseas. We do not know how many ended in unmarked graves.

"It is only fair to say that, although Westerners despise Chinese workers, the overseas Chinese also do injury to their own kind. The Dutch who own the tin mines and tobacco plantations choose some Chinese who have been there for a long time and with whom they are satisfied, to be overseers, managers, or labor brokers (*baolan ren*). These selfish Chinese do such cruel things as reducing workers' food and increasing their work loads. They even incite workers to gamble and lend them money until the workers fall into debt and are sent to officials to be punished. Such men are hateful indeed. Although the contract has a time limit, the workers have to work several times longer to make up any missing hours during the contract period when they could not work. Even after the contract has expired, [these Chinese headmen] cite all kinds of regulations and will not obtain exit permits for the workers. So they have to stay there the rest of their lives. All over the world, whenever there is a harsh environment, or work to be done in hot sun and heavy rain, the Chinese are hired, because the white people are too weak physically, and the black and brown people have limited understanding. Wherever Chinese workers are recruited, they are treated harshly. The British and Americans treat them thus, but the Dutch are even worse. The reason is that there are [Chinese] middlemen of the sort mentioned above, who cheat their superiors and abuse their inferiors."

Conditions in British Malaya and the Straits Settlements improved somewhat after the establishment of the Protectorate of Chinese, whose agents in the Malay states were charged with investigating and regulating the condition of imported labor. The following is excerpted from a report by one of the Protectorate's local officers who took testimony from Chinese immigrant workers in sugar and rubber plantations in 1910. Reports of the treatment of workers vary considerably among economic sectors (mining, rubber, and sugar) and between regions. Yet in general they reflect the weakness of the Protectorate's enforcement powers and the disadvantage under which illiterate indentured workers confronted their employers. Particularly harsh conditions prevailed under a system known as *"rumah kechil"* (Malay for "small room," i.e., a hut)—a mode of subcontracting portions of a plantation to *laoke* headmen. Evidently, this stratum of Chinese petty labor bosses (such as those in the report by Qian Xun) felt no compunction at profiting from their compatriots' misery and even deepening it:

Treatment of Indentured Workers in British Malaya Under the *Rumah Kechil* System (1910)[57]

"TREATMENT [OF INDENTURED LABORERS]

"77. In the case of indentured labourers employed on estates situated on the Kurau and Krian rivers the comparative isolation of the estate has enabled the employer (which term includes both the manager of the estate and the headman of the "rumah kechil" to treat the indentured labourers with a severity (it might in some instances be termed ferocity) which would be impossible on estates less difficult of access. I attribute the cruelty and abuses which have surrounded and, to judge from the evidence taken and personal enquiry made under this Commission, still surround the system of indentured Chinese labour on the Krian estates, to the situation of the estates as above stated and to the "rumah kechil" system. Under this system, which obtains, I believe, in the Federated Malay States in the Krian [region] only, and is coeval with sugar planting, sections of an estate are let out for cultivation to Chinese, styled the towkays or headmen of the "rumah kechil," for cultivation, the crop being purchased at a fixed price by the owner of the estate. Many of the indentured labourers are distributed amongst these lessees or contractors and are housed in small lines, or rather huts, from which the cultivation system "rumah kechil" takes its name. Indentured labourers handed over to the headmen of "rumah kechil" are entirely at their mercy, the owner or if, as in the case of Ban Kok Heng Estate, he is non-resident, the manager,

concerning himself very little with the affairs of such labourers. There appears to be no proper system of inspection of the "rumah kechil" or check on the accounts of the labourer with his immediate employer, the headman of the "rumah kechil."

"78. The condition of the indentured labourers in what is termed the head kongsi—i.e., those labourers who are employed on that portion of the estate cultivated by the owner himself—appears to be no better than that of their fellow labourer working for the headman of a "rumah kechil" judging by the case which recently occurred on Kwong Li Estate (on the Kurau river) . . .

* * * *

"EVIDENCE No.25.

Ban Hock Estate [plantation], 29th May, 1910

The following report is made to Mr. Ridges, Protector of Chinese, in my presence:

Tan Men Sam, sinkheh [new immigrant], age 29, Krian 556/09, Singapore 12008: I came with Tan Ki Heng, (No.571/09, Singapore 12023/09) and 559/09, S.12011/09, Vhu Chham Hui. Vhu Chham Hui on 16th of 11th moon was beaten to death by Kang Thau [*gongtou:* labor boss], Tan Ah Kau; "rumah kechil" No.10 (not present). I arrived at the estate on 23rd of 8th moon (i.e., 5th October last) at 6 a.m. On the 16th of 11th moon I saw Tan Ah Kau strike Vhu Chham Hui with an iron bar used for hammering changkul heads. He struck him on the chest and also broke his left leg. This took place in kitchen of "rumah kechil" [the barracks for workers]. Whether we work or not we are beaten. If work is not quite up to mark, no name is given for the day's work. I was beaten for first time 10 days after my arrival. My thumbs were tied together and I was beaten with handle of hammer as the second instalment of a punishment I had received in the field that same day, because I did not walk fast enough going out to work in morning (5:30 a.m.). I was struck going out to work with a stick. Tan Ki Heng saw it. Tan Ah Kau struck me. Tan Ki Heng has also been struck several times. Tan Ki Heng comes from another place, but speaks same dialect. So did Vhu Chham Hui, he came from same district as Tan Ki Heng. Vhu Chham Hui was beaten at 6 a.m. He wished to take a day off and the Kang Thau would not allow it."

As the abuses practiced under the indenture system became known on the China coast, labor for Malayan mines and plantations became harder to recruit. Increasingly, from the 1890s, planters sought a substitute through the use of agents termed *"kangany*"—a Tamil word for a labor-recruiting middleman, used to recruit Indian workers for Malayan and Burmese plantations. Elsewhere in C. W. C. Parr's report of 1910, just quoted, the author recommended that plantations adopt the *kangany* system, which was already used in Malayan mining enterprises. Its advantage lay in the fact that veteran laborers "trusted by the employer" would return to China to recruit "relatives or men from the same village." Such recruits "would give little or no trouble to the employer, and, being amongst friends, would in most cases remain on the estate long enough to amply compensate him for the outlay in advances for passage money." This system was expected to make coercive or fraudulent recruitment unlikely and to secure more decent treatment by labor foremen.[58]

A Note on Emigrant Chinese Culture

In venues worldwide where Chinese emigrants have had to adapt to local conditions, Chinese cultural capital is invested flexibly, opportunistically, and suitably for particular contexts. In the homeland itself, there is no such thing as "pure" Chinese culture but, rather, culture only as practiced in particular times and places. Understanding the adaptive realignment of cultural practices requires that we (like the migrants) find a way to dissociate cultural traits from the concrete institutions or contexts in which we usually see them, in some supposedly "normal" form, back in China.

Here are some examples from ethnographic studies of Southeast Asian Chinese (by students of Raymond Firth) around 1950: works by Maurice Freedman, Alan J. A. Elliott (both on Singapore), and T'ien Ju-k'ang (on Sarawak).[59] Characteristic of all these studies is a flexible reassortment of elements of Chinese culture to meet conditions overseas. Freedman writes, "Moving overseas, the principle of agnation [patrilineal kinship] survives but, instead of binding together local corporate groups of patrilineal kinsmen, it becomes rather the basis for activity in associations and for constructing vaguely defined loyalties between persons bearing the same surname." Freedman calls this "memorialism rather than ancestor worship" (because kinship is not institutionalized in corporate groups of real agnates). He infers that "certain practices and ideas in relation to dead

forebears have persisted independently of the broader aspects of the kinship system which, in homeland conditions, seem to have depended on these phenomena for their support . . . certain elements in ancestor worship have become separated off and enjoy a life of their own, as it were, independently of those other elements which were dropped when their kinship basis was destroyed." So although household, not lineage, is the basis of kinship in Singapore, "nevertheless it is here that one may observe some *processes and principles* which seem to suggest a sturdy continuity with their society of origin."[60]

T'ien comes to a similar conclusion in his study of Chinese communities in Sarawak: ". . . the observer can see the dialect relationships shot through with strands of neighbourhood, of clanship, and of occupational identification. . . . The clustering of a number of . . . different social relationships [dialect, kinship, local origin, and occupation] which is demonstrated in the dialect Associations in Kuching is common to all overseas Chinese communities." The local clan of China "suffers a sea-change on the voyage to Sarawak" . . . [in that the] "sense of mutual solidarity" is greater than at home.[61]

And Elliott, in Singapore, finds that "elements from the vast background of religious ideas and beliefs of China are selected for institutionalization by the emigrants to the South Seas."[62]

In these selections, the ethnographer describes how cultural elements have been reconfigured and recombined to undergird social groups far from their homeland contexts. It is the *"processes and principles*" that bear watching. Emigrants in their adaptive struggles have dissociated these cultural elements from their supposedly "normal" social matrices and put them to work, as needed, in the venue environments where they now live. Earlier in this chapter, I referred to compatriotism, kinship, corituality, and brotherhood as "the four primary colors of the Chinese cultural palette." Is it more likely that, among Chinese overseas, we can glimpse these "primary colors" in their pure form rather than firmly attached to longstanding social organizations? It seems that even in China, their basic nature has been masked by too rigid an association with supposedly normative "traditional" social institutions (like Freedman's agnatic lineages or long-established, ritual-encrusted deity cults). Particularly in the context of Chinese overseas communities, these primary colors can be visualized, as they attach, detach, and recombine themselves (opportunistically and adaptively) to cope with the challenges of frontier life. As P. Steven Sangren has pointed out, ethnographers must seek out the "deeper levels" of cultural habits that lie beneath particular organizational forms. The specific affinities (compatriotism and so on) are not so much "normative" models as protective coloration for migrant practices that (while unorthodox as compared to their forms back home) have their own particular adaptive functions and goals. The point, Sangren suggests, is that "operational norms" are more important identifying traits of Chinese social practice than are "formal features" of organizations. The combination and recombination of these norms are capable of "generating a variety of adaptive responses."[63]

Notes

1. Phoa (1992), 10.
2. Furnivall (1944), 46–48.
3. Furnivall (1944), 47, 72, 73, 78.
4. Furnivall (1944), 143.
5. Furnivall (1944), 213–14.
6. Rush (1990), 100.
7. Wickberg (1965), chap. 2 and 115; Wickberg (1997), 161.
8. Wickberg (1965), 68 (quoting *Report of the Philippine Commission*, 2, 227–29).
9. Wickberg (1965), 33–34.
10. Turnbull (1989), 36.
11. Blythe (1969), 56 (citing a British judicial officer in Penang, 1835); Purcell (1967), 111.
12. Mak (1981), chap. 7; Trocki (1990), 180.
13. Skinner (1957), 143–54; Kasian (1992).
14. Kasian (1992), 116.
15. I have not listed *occupation* as a separate type of affinity group because (in most cases) it is a subcategory of compatriotism.
16. Lim (1995), 90.
17. Founded in 1818 by William Milne of the London Missionary Society.

18. Lim (1995), 94–101; Yen (1986), 11–16.

19. Chen and Chen (1971), 57–63. On the Mazu cult, see Watson (1985).

20. Salmon and Lombard (1980), 106.

21. Yen (1986), 74–75.

22. Lim (1995), 104.

23. On the scales of surname affinity, see Freedman (1957), 92–98.

24. Zeng and Zhuang (2000) (on *bang* alliances in cemetery management); Li (2003) (on cemetery management in Batavia).

25. Ownby (1996), chap. 1.

26. Yen (1985), chap. 4.

27. Trocki (1990), chap. 2.

28. Carstens (1993), 126–27; Blythe (1969), 173–76.

29. Crissman (1967) calls them "sub-communities" or "segments," which seems to privilege unduly the whole "Chinese" community as the unit of reference. For another skeptical view of "Chinese Community," see Benton and Pieke (1998), 12.

30. For example, Crissman (1967).

31. Cheng (1985); Tan (1990); Mak (1993).

32. Cheng (1985), 89.

33. Skinner (1967), 102–3.

34. Trocki (1990), chap. 6.

35. The case of Cheang Hong Lim. Lim (1995), chaps. 2 and 4.

36. Lim (1995), 55–56.

37. *Yick Wo v. Hopkins* (1886), *Supreme Court Reporter*, 118 U.S. 355.

38. For contemporaneous developments in China, see Skinner (1977a), 547–53.

39. Rush (1990), chap. 5; Godley (1981), chap. 1.

40. Skinner (1967), 105–6.

41. Blussé and Wu (2002).

42. Wickberg (1965), 61.

43. Hayden (1942), 699–700, as quoted in Purcell (1965), 541.

44. Lim (1995), 94–99.

45. Lim (1995), 55.

46. Lee (1991), 187.

47. Chen and Chen (1971), 305–7.

48. Wong (1965), chap. 1.

49. Wong (1965), chap. 2.

50. Brown (1994), 123–41; Fukuda (1995), 50–51.

51. Cushman (1991), chap. 3.

52. Omohundro (1981), 139–40.

53. Wong (1996), 19.

54. Lin (2001a).

55. Cook (1998), chap. 5, 241, 252, et passim.

56. Chen (1985), 1: 286–91.

57. Federated Malay States (1910) (excerpts reproduced by permission).

58. Satyanarayana (2001). It is nonetheless uncertain how well these goals were met: in the Indian case, some *kangany*, as patrons and social superiors, ensnared recruits in debt peonage and kept them in a state of subjection hardly better than the paraslavery of indenture.

59. Freedman (1957); Elliott (1955); Tien (1953).

60. Freedman (1957), 224–27 (emphasis added).

61. T'ien (1953), 19.

62. Elliott (1955), 166.

63. Sangren (1984), 410. Sangren (1984), 407, also points to the "elusive" quality of "Chineseness" inherent in practices such as decision by consensus and the rotation of ceremonial offices within hierarchical organizations as more significant characteristics of Chinese corporations than the supposedly normative forms of particular affinity groups (such as the corporate agnatic lineage). His main point is that affinity-group ties are malleable and bent to different purposes, not rigidly linked to specific organizational templates.

CHAPTER FIVE

Communities in the Age of Mass Migration:

II. Exclusion From, and In, the Settler Societies

Chinese settlements in the colonial societies and in the settler societies were marked by contrasting ecologies. Colonial societies included much of Southeast Asia (particularly the Dutch colonies), the Caribbean, and Peru. Settler societies included North America and Australasia. In Southeast Asia, Chinese immigration was initially organized around merchant elites who served as middlemen in early colonial regimes or independent kingdoms. The patronage and protection afforded by merchant bridgeheads helped new immigrants gain economic footholds. Settled elites headed communities that enjoyed privileged status in relation to indigenes in much of the region. Later waves of migrants were sometimes absorbed or patronized by these elites and sometimes displaced them economically. The colonial regimes used established Chinese settlers as labor recruiters and overseers in mining and plantation enterprises, importing hundreds of thousands of indentured laborers to work under harsh conditions in tropical venues (such as Java, Sumatra, Bangka, and Malaya). The human cost of these enterprises rivaled that of the paraslavery in the Caribbean and South America. Chinese immigrants in the settler societies (North America, Australasia) suffered too, but differently and in a very different ecology.

The Settler Societies in Nineteenth-Century History

Nothing affected Asian immigrants in venue societies as decisively as the characters of the states that ruled them. In the end, capitalists who employed those immigrants, and groups that competed with them, could pursue their interests successfully only under an accommodating state power. Whether contracts of indenture could be enforced, whether corporal punishment was forbidden or condoned, whether civil rights were protected or denied: all depended on a state's constitutional structure and history.

Colonies of Britain (the West Indies, British Guiana, and Malaya) and of the Netherlands (the East Indies) were answerable to their home governments for the profitability of their regimes. Hence they were pressed to operate mines and plantations by keeping costs of production low. Their commitment to importing and controlling the cheap labor of indentured workers could lead to work regimes hardly distinguishable from slavery. Seldom were such conditions moderated by any qualms of conscience back in the colonial metropoles. In states with a history of chattel slavery (Cuba, British Guiana, Peru, and the Dutch East Indies), treatment of indentured workers was particularly harsh.

In the settler societies of North America and Australasia, which were initially colonies but whose climates were mainly temperate, most of the immigrant population was European. Although forced labor still existed when the Chinese began to arrive in these societies (African slavery in the southern United States and convict labor in Australia), their governments were on the brink of abolishing it. In fact, in the United States, hostility to slavery played a curious and ironic role in the Chinese immigrant experience, as we shall see shortly. In neither of these venues did indentured

labor gain a foothold, although both the American South and northern Australia had climates suitable for plantation production.

Yet neither North America nor Australia-New Zealand treated Chinese immigrants decently. From the late nineteenth century until the mid-twentieth, both tried their best to keep them out and to limit their freedom and civil rights if they got in. This chapter will explore the reasons why, despite having abolished forced labor, these societies sought to repel Chinese immigrants and, failing that, to deny them civic status, to derogate their human dignity, and to restrict their chances to make a living.

From the mid-nineteenth century to the mid-twentieth, tens of millions of Europeans and Asians migrated from their homelands. For the Europeans, North America and Australasia were the main venues. As for Chinese, many set out on their own initiative along familiar routes to Southeast Asia. Others were recruited as indentured laborers to plantation and mining economies in Southeast Asia and the Pacific islands and to similar ones in the Caribbean and South America that were losing their African slaves. Indians were recruited for the same kinds of indentured work and (particularly in the Caribbean) joined the Chinese as laborers on tropical plantations. As seen in chapter 4, imperialism had not only gained access to abundant cheap labor in India and China but also seized lands in Southeast Asia and the West Indies where large numbers of such workers could be used profitably. As Arthur Lewis has pointed out, productivity per worker in plantations and mines being low, wages were correspondingly low and could attract only labor that earned equally low returns, or lower, in the home country.[1]

By contrast, the temperate, sparsely populated areas of North America and Australasia attracted millions of Europeans seeking livings in farming and herding and (from the mid-nineteenth century) in industry. These "settler societies" also attracted East Asians, both merchants and laborers: principally from China and later from Japan and Korea. Here Asian immigrants confronted environments quite different from those in colonial plantation territories. Immediately, they ran into competition with European immigrants for essentially the same economic niches. In these meeting grounds of ethnically diverse migrants, Chinese had to cope with a fiercely competitive situation where racial hostility and political opportunism put them at great disadvantage.

Settler societies in North America and Australasia modeled their public life on England's tradition of rule by consent. Their governments were based on representation and their laws on the English Common Law. But ideals of formal equality and legal due process yielded readily to the economic insecurities and racial attitudes of immigrants from Europe who continued to swell their populations. In western North America and in Australia, the discovery of gold in the mid-nineteenth century brought Europeans and Chinese into direct and often violent competition. This was just the beginning of the road toward exclusion movements and to the long-term marginalization of Chinese.

We can reach a clearer understanding of North American exclusion movements by examining Australian reactions to Chinese immigration. Two problems were seen: first, how to provide for the needs of sugar planters in the tropical north of the continent—a need to be met, purportedly, by indentured laborers from abroad—and, second, how to ensure that imported labor in the north did not migrate to the temperate south to compete with white labor for jobs and civic status.

A prominent British colonial officer who had visited Australia around 1870 had dire premonitions about a Chinese threat. Writing in *The Times* of London in 1888, Sir George Baden-Powell warned that Chinese meant trouble: Australia was the size of Europe with a population the size of Portugal. For its future prosperity, it needed to attract immigrant workers. But would all those immigrants be likely to sustain British culture and politics in the new colony? The problem was that British immigrants could never withstand the climate of the tropical north or work for plantation wages. Hence, for the productivity of Queensland, "some form of 'black' [i.e., nonwhite] labour is necessary." But Chinese, whether indentured or not, would never do. "If permitted freely to land, they would very speedily substitute Chinese for British civilization." The difficulty was that Chinese seemed able to work efficiently in both tropical and temperate climes. Bring them to Queensland today, confront them in Victoria tomorrow. For tropical Australia, it would be better to import indentured Indians, "for the Hindoo will not willingly leave the tropics, or go to work in those temperate latitudes where white labour is possible."[2]

This shrewd estimate bears out and amplifies Arthur Lewis's distinction between tropical and temperate labor ecologies. It was not merely market forces that affected the division of labor between tropical and temperate venues of migration, at least not in a colony as climatically diverse as Australia. True, dark skin was associated by colonial officials with cheap, tropical labor. But

Chinese could operate effectively in both climates, as demonstrated by their extensive migration and adaptability within China and throughout Southeast Asia. And as immigrants from a potent state ruling a self-confident culture, they not only would compete with white labor but also, in the end, could overwhelm Australia's British civilization. Judging by the current of cultural insecurity that ran beneath the "White Australia" policy of the new colony, such an outcome was never far from the minds of British Australians in the decades following the gold rush. In more populous North America, this demographic insecurity, though present, remained a minor theme. True, the end of southern slavery would entail a labor problem. Some contract Chinese workers were recruited by southern planters after the Civil War, but they never replaced freed slaves in sufficient numbers to be a major productive force. In western North America, as in Australia, labor was in short supply until the mid-nineteenth century. The decline and abolition of slavery in the southern United States and the termination of the convict system in Australia led to small-scale experiments at introducing Chinese indentured workers, particularly for construction of railroads. Nevertheless, most Chinese immigrants borrowed their travel cost, expecting to repay their debt, with interest, from earnings abroad.

Chinese Life and Labor in the Settler Societies

As in Southeast Asia, Chinese immigrants to North America were mostly male sojourners. Corridors to their homelands were assiduously maintained, and through them flowed money, trade goods, information, and the two-way human traffic of the sojourner society. And as in Southeast Asia, the merchant bridgehead provided a stratum of patrons and middlemen for immigrant Chinese. A small group of newcomers, businessmen from the wealthier cities of the Pearl River delta, were already doing business in San Francisco by the time the first boatloads of immigrant workers disembarked. With these traders as a nucleus, a segmented Chinese society based on regional and dialect organizations developed very quickly. Nevertheless, relations between the merchant leadership and the white majorities were tenuous. Because the Chinese merchants afforded them no necessary service, governments had little incentive to protect them, much less favor them. Although Chinese labor was important to many white entrepreneurs, the white working class considered Chinese to be dangerous competitors for scarce jobs and scanty wages.

In both North America and Australasia, the placer gold deposits were quickly depleted. Miners were then thrown on the job market; competition for diggings was followed by competition for alternative niches in the economy. Chinese were able to prove their usefulness in several occupational niches: first railroad building, then diking and draining river deltas, then agricultural labor and manufacturing. In each of these, they were found by entrepreneurs to be reliable, hardworking, and cheap.

Immigrants to the western United States and Canada were drawn largely from two groups of counties in Guangzhou prefecture: the relatively commercialized "three counties" (Mandarin: *sanyi*) from the periurban region next to Guangzhou city, and the more rural "four counties" (Mandarin: *siyi*) west and south of the Pearl River delta. Both county groups are Cantonese speaking.[3] Paradoxically, they seem to have been divided by their common language, for the rivalries among the counties were bitter, especially between the "four counties" and their supercilious "three counties" neighbors. The former were largely agricultural and poor, the latter more commercialized and rich. Many *siyi* farmers had labored seasonally in the busy commercial and manufacturing centers such as Shunde and Foshan, others in the seaports of Macao and Guangzhou. Among the *siyi* was Taishan (then called Xinning), the county that ultimately sent more migrants to North America than any other.[4] Two other groups formed a small minority: the Hakka, and the Xiangshan (later, Zhongshan) immigrants from the county bordering the Portuguese colony of Macao.

Accomplished merchants as the *sanyi* were, opportunities for Chinese business in the New World cannot be compared with the dense network of niches that flourished in Southeast Asia under the patronage of colonial or monarchic governments. Nothing comparable to the revenue-farm system existed in North America or Australasia, nor had any Chinese merchants such wealth and standing as to be sought by political authorities as essential collaborators. Indeed, in the settler societies there were no similar middleman roles. Accordingly, the merchant elite could offer their communities only limited protection.

Nevertheless, a modest merchant bridgehead had been planted: by late 1849, several hundred Chinese, mainly merchants, had migrated to San Francisco, probably because trade in the

Guangzhou area had been disrupted by the opening of the treaty ports. Enterprises included not only the typical miscellaneous-goods shops but also some more substantial firms dealing in imported Chinese luxury goods and catering both to Chinese and to white Americans. Small neighborhood shops served as venues for community organizations. Some of these shops had been established in time to send back news of the gold strike of 1848 and to provide services to the compatriots who responded by the tens of thousands. These services included sending letters and remittances to the home folks, providing temporary lodgings, serving as debt collectors for lenders back in Guangzhou, and even recruiting Chinese labor for the California job market. By 1849, Chinese businessmen in San Francisco were able to mobilize 300 countrymen to form a neighborhood association and the following year to send a Chinese delegation to President Tyler's memorial service.

By 1851, San Francisco merchants had formed the first of an array of native-place lodges. The situation was complicated, however, by the simultaneous existence of large- and small-scale lodge organizations: the large-scale claiming identity from a group of counties, the small-scale generally from a single county. The small were nested within the large, forming a flexible structure of shared regional identities that could be put to different uses, depending on the scale of the problem to be addressed.[5]

The best example of this "nested" structure was the cooperation of six small-scale lodges to found an overarching umbrella organization for the purpose of settling disputes among regional groups and, more important, of serving as an intermediary with white American society and a spokesman for the entire Chinese community. This group was known by Americans as the Chinese Six Companies, or in Mandarin as *Zhonghua zonghuiguan*. Leadership rotated among the headmen of the six component lodges.[6] This umbrella organization resembled in certain respects the chambers of commerce among Chinese in Southeast Asia (not formed until the early twentieth century), which were also umbrella organizations composed of the representatives of dialect groups. Like the chambers of commerce, the Six Companies' role went beyond commerce to politics.

Serving as principal intermediary with American officials and as de facto judicial authority within the Chinese community, the Six Companies organization in its early days assumed a role analogous to *kapitan*. It differed, however, in that it was not a status conferred by the dominant political power, nor had it any special economic franchises. It lacked a powerful patron who valued the Chinese community sufficiently to accord its leadership a modicum of power, prestige, and security. Accordingly, the heads of the Six Companies were neither as rich nor as powerful as the "officers" in the colonial world. The closest American counterparts to colonial patrons were the great entrepreneurs (such as the railway builder Charles Crocker) who employed Chinese labor very profitably and defended the Chinese stoutly during the exclusion hearings of 1877. These capitalists were, however, powerless to stem the tide of anti-Chinese sentiment. By the 1890s, the inability of the Six Companies leadership to protect the community from exclusion laws had cost it much prestige.

The merchant bridgehead, represented collectively by the Six Companies, was characterized by its ascribed link to its regional constituents: the individual immigrant was considered to be a member of his regional lodge simply by virtue of his place of origin—implying also a shared subdialect. Through this compatriotism, the merchant leadership sought to extend its influence throughout the immigrant ranks.

In the early years, what later became known as "Chinatown" was not primarily a residential settlement. Before Chinese were driven into urban centers by persecution and violence, Chinatown was largely a regional center of goods and services. Labor contractors, dry-goods shops, wholesalers of Chinese agriculture and fishery products were the nodes of economic life. Temples were ritual sites where immigrants prayed to homeland deities for health and success. Socializing and recreational centers—restaurants, gambling houses, opium parlors, and brothels—served a mostly male Chinese clientele who had left parents and often wives and children in the homeland. Shops that were branches of Hong Kong firms served as agents for remitting money back to these families.[7]

Origins and Effects of Exclusion

Within a year, the gold strike of 1848 had attracted 100,000 mostly male newcomers to California from all over the world. By 1860, the numbers had more than tripled.[8] Chinese, who made up about 9 percent of the California populace by 1860, faced a chaotic society. The mountainous backcountry was virtually lawless, with little demarcated ownership of land. Face to face with a rough crowd of white gold prospectors competing for the same quick riches, the Chinese stood out as vulnerable targets for the frustrations and insecurities of other ethnic groups. In the goldfields, violence against them was endemic. Very early, they were driven from new placer diggings to depleted sites that whites had abandoned. Bill after legislative bill burdened them with discriminatory taxes to discourage immigration. Yet until the passage of the first exclusion act in 1882, Chinese flowed into California at an increasing rate.

The road to Chinese exclusion ran through a long series of public and private actions beginning shortly after the earliest group of gold rush immigrants arrived and continuing until the early 1900s. During nearly sixty years, anti-Chinese rancor sparked mob violence, including assaults, arson, and murder; court decisions burdened them with special restrictions; legislation deprived them of the normal civic freedoms (the right to testify in court, to serve on juries, to vote, and to own land); and in the background roared a ceaseless barrage of written and spoken abuse. The formal structure of exclusion, keeping new immigrants out and persecuting those already in, endured until 1943, when at last it began (slowly) to be dismantled.

Physical bullying of Chinese was encouraged by a California court decision of 1854 that barred them from testifying against whites, with the result that even as eyewitnesses to murder, they could not give evidence. Based on old legislation against Indians and blacks, this decision eventually was embodied in a statute of 1863 and applied to civil as well as criminal cases. For neither person nor property was there security for Chinese in California.

Nevertheless, the courts sometimes frustrated the anti-Chinese fervor of western legislatures. In 1857, the California Supreme Court struck down a special tax on shipping companies carrying Chinese immigrants on the ground that regulation of foreign commerce was a national, not a state, prerogative. The Federal District Court (Northern California) did not bar Chinese witnesses. Enforcement of discriminatory taxes against Chinese was, by and large, blocked by state courts, but the law barring Chinese from testifying in court against whites withstood all challenges, even after the Fourteenth Amendment and its "equal protection" clause came into force in 1868. The right of Chinese to testify was not finally acquired until 1872, when the California legislature, faced with the Federal Civil Rights Act of 1870, repealed the old prohibition. After state efforts to bar Chinese at dockside had been blocked (most famously by a decision overturning an 1870 statute demanding a @500 bond of every immigrant woman considered to be a prostitute), it became clear that immigration was reserved to federal regulation. If Chinese immigration were ever to be limited or stopped, it could not be through legislation by a state government. And so it was that the anti-Chinese movement in the western states turned to Washington, where eventually it found a sympathetic response.[9]

What gave the decisive push toward federal exclusion legislation was the rising militancy of the white workforce, its impact on California state politics, and its consequences at the national level. Anti-Chinese agitation during the 1860s already was reacting to Chinese in urban workplaces, principally in light industry (cigar and shoe manufacturing) and semiskilled jobs. Here was direct competition with the lower strata of the white labor force, and competition for jobs turned out to be an even more powerful energizer of white hostility than competition for gold. Boycotts of Chinese-made goods had begun at least as early as 1859 and became a favored instrument of the "anticoolie clubs," organized ward by ward in San Francisco, to combat the Chinese presence in ways just skirting the boundaries of legality; the movement escalated to mob attacks on Chinese and torching of shops with Chinese employees. Even white businessmen felt threatened by Chinese who had followed the typical pattern of learning a trade under an employer, then carrying away their skills to open their own competing establishments. Trade unions, already struggling to achieve an eight-hour day, predictably felt menaced by Chinese workers.[10]

Politicians fed hungrily on this stew of economic competition and racial hostility. The 1867 California elections pitted Republicans against Democrats for the leadership of the anti-Chinese movement. Democrats, sensitive to the connection of racialism with slavery and trying to distance themselves from the defeated Confederacy, found that targeting Chinese was a safe way to appeal to the fears of white workingmen and in the process to free the party from its history of protecting southern slavery. Republicans, already stung by taunts that they favored Chinese suffrage just as they did black suffrage in the Reconstruction South, fought to certify their anti-Chinese credentials,

but to no avail: their candidate for governor (a publisher and railroad lobbyist) had waffled on the Chinese issue. The Democrats' sweeping victory of 1867 ended a seven-year Republican grip on state government. Their triumph was based largely on the Chinese "threat," for which the Republicans were held accountable.[11]

Balked by the courts in their efforts to exclude Chinese through state legislation, California activists turned to Washington for relief. The superheated political atmosphere of the 1870s made their job easier. With the completion of the Central Pacific Railroad in 1869, some 10,000 Chinese were laid off; many collected in San Francisco and found manufacturing jobs.

By then, a nationwide economic depression had brought harder times, and the battle between capital and labor intensified. In a classic standoff, businessmen were pushed to cut labor costs by driving wages as low as possible, and with a buyers' market in labor, this goal seemed attainable if cheaper sources of labor could be found. In California, unemployment rose to perhaps 20 percent so that every niche found by Chinese labor seemed to white workers a mortal threat. The Chinese were believed to be able to live at subsistence level and work for wages too low for any white man. The result was a widespread movement, beginning in California but spreading nationwide by the late 1870s, to force Chinese out of the labor market entirely. These struggles over economic niches, whether in mining or in industry, farming or fishing, stood in stark contrast to the old pattern of Chinese immigration to Southeast Asia, where the ruling powers needed the Chinese as tax collectors, commercial middlemen, and wage laborers. No such empty niches existed in the settler societies.

Anti-Chinese appeals to Congress began in April 1876 with public hearings held by a committee of the California Senate. The question was begged by the committee's charge: to inquire "as to the number of Chinese in this State, and the effect their presence has upon the social and political condition of the State" and as to their effect on the entire country "if such immigration be not discouraged." The committee's "findings" (summed up in a "Memorial" to the U.S. Congress) alleged that the Chinese in the United States came from "the dregs of [China's] population" and included a large "criminal element," the true extent of which, because of the Chinese predisposition to perjury and other methods of flouting the laws, could never be revealed. Those males who were not criminals were contract slaves. Whether or not actual contracts of indenture existed, the Chinese were by nature and tradition "serfs," and "servile labor to them is their natural and inevitable lot." Against such lowly people, white workers could compete only at the cost of becoming virtual slaves themselves. So much for the males among them. The few females were "of the vilest and most degraded class," in a state of bondage more horrific than that of former African slaves. The classic stereotypes about Chinese followed: that they shipped all their earnings back to China, that by their inherent nature they could never assimilate to American ways, and that China's vast population would soon inundate this nation until the "freemen" were swamped by their numbers. Praiseful mention was made of Australia, where the colonies had recently tried to exclude Chinese by law and "in some instances by force." The Memorial begged Congress to stem the tide by enacting laws and abrogating treaties, after which those Chinese still in the country would give up and go home.[12]

Congressmen from the western states pressed the case on Capitol Hill, and the following October a "Joint Special Committee" of the United States Senate convened in San Francisco. Witnesses testified from all sides of the issue: backers of the exclusion movement, civic leaders, clergymen and local politicians, and agricultural and railroad developers. A "scientific" witness testified as to the inferior status of the "Mongolian race" in the hierarchy of human types. A civic-minded San Francisco matron asserted that Chinese were depriving young "boys and girls" of chances for decent jobs, with dire social consequences. Missionaries, ship captains, and old China hands offered views on the qualities of China and her people.

Anti-Chinese testimony centered on three main themes: 1) status anxiety among working-class whites, 2) the supposition that Chinese were slaves in fact though not in name, and 3) the labor-capital conflict of the early industrial age.

Status Anxiety

A number of witnesses testified that white laborers were unwilling to work alongside Chinese. The laboring man "dislikes to work beside a Chinaman" because he feels "that the Chinaman is not his social equal. He feels that he is degrading himself in associating with that class of people." White children sent out to work as domestic servants say, "I am not going into anybody's house and work with Chinamen."[13] Decades earlier, similar language had been directed at Irish immigrants in the

eastern states. No white immigrant group was as badly treated as the Irish. Despised and abused for their alien ways and their Catholicism, and deemed inassimilable to American culture, they made do with the most menial of jobs when they were lucky enough to get jobs at all. "No Irish need apply" was a common tag to job postings in the decades preceding the Civil War.

In the eastern United States, Irish immigrants had found themselves sharing the bottom rung of the social ladder with freed or escaped blacks from the South. Their response, however, was not to make common cause with their fellow sufferers but to attack them as competitors for scarce jobs. Beyond jobs, however, was the painful issue of social status. "I have been in this country 16 years," said an Irish workingman after a murderous riot against blacks in Philadelphia in 1842, "and if it was not for the infernal naygurs, I could find work enough." But it was not just unemployment that rankled: those "naygurs" got what they deserved, he said. "They have no business . . . to live among white folks." A Philadelphian in the 1860s observed, "The Irish hate the Negroes, not merely because they compete with them in labor, but because they are near to them in social rank. Therefore, the Irish favor slavery in the South, and for the same reason the laboring class of whites support it—it gratifies their pride by the existence of a class below them."[14] Thus, stigmatization of blacks was the catalyst that enabled Irish immigrants to transform themselves psychologically from a despised underclass to membership in a white superior class. Among the Irish in California, this all-too-understandable but tragic displacement of racist stigma was now turned against the Chinese.

Origins of the "Slavery" Belief

Although many participants in the anticoolie movement were Irish, anti-Chinese clamor could be heard among members of every white ethnic group. And status anxiety was clearly not the only psychological source of such hostility. Another was hatred and fear of slavery. The status of Chinese immigrants in the period before exclusion has been a subject of some confusion because expressions such as "coolie" and "slavery" were often used to show why Chinese exclusion was a reasonable, necessary, even an urgent policy. In the California legislature, the "slavery" issue had been raised as early as 1852: Chinese immigrants were declared to be, without exception, in bondage to their employers. Unless some means were found to keep them out, enslaved "coolies" would soon swamp the American republic.[15] To the anti-Chinese zealots, any form of indebted labor looked like slavery. Indebtedness aside, however, the association of unfree labor with nonwhite races, an association created and maintained by the long history of African slavery, sharpened the slave image projected on Chinese in California.[16]

Underlying Americans' suspicion of Chinese immigrants were questions of who financed their transoceanic travel and who controlled their work in the United States. Since the early days of their immigration, it was known that indentured contract laborers were being brought from China to the Caribbean and to Peru under conditions hardly different from slavery. California had been admitted to the Union as a free state (one in which slavery was not permitted) by the Compromise of 1850. Nevertheless, along with most "free-soil" partisans, Californians evidently saw no incongruity between antislavery feelings and racial hostility toward blacks. It was as if the evil of slavery had tainted the very people who were its victims, and so it developed with the Chinese, once they became associated with images of slavelike status.[17]

How did such status become associated with the Chinese? The answer lies in the changing understanding of indentured labor. One of the supposed "truths" about Chinese immigration was that it came about through a process not far from enslavement and that they were in total subjection to their masters. The rhetoric of exclusion was full of such language, which implied that most Chinese who left their country had done so under compulsion and were in no sense free men. If not free, then they must have been enslaved.

In fact, indentures had been common in early colonial America. They had financed much of the early British migration because the cost of ocean transport was beyond the means of most emigrants. Emigrants would engage themselves to work for a "master" for a set term of years in return for their shipping fare. Indentured "servants" (actually manual laborers rented out to individual planters) had been part of the Virginia Company's complement in the seventeenth century, and only when it began to be replaced by African slavery did the institution of indenture die out in the southern colonies.

In the background was the decline of bound labor in Great Britain and its parallel decline in societies settled by British immigrants. In early modern Britain, labor had been formally "free," though commonly governed by coercive relationships between employer and employee.

Accordingly, the distinction between freedom and unfreedom was not as clear as it later became. During most of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, indenture was such a common way to finance migration that a degree of unfreedom was readily accepted in the American colonies. Nevertheless, as African slaves began to supplement indentured workers and then to replace them, the free-unfree distinction increasingly was associated with race. At the same time, indenture was becoming less important as a way to finance migration to America because the cost of transatlantic passenger fares was declining in relation to European per capita wealth. Meanwhile, the ideology of free labor (for whites) flourished among the colonial population, and imprisonment for debt was no longer acceptable in colonial law.[18] The antislavery movement was evidence of the moral unease that this racial distinction aroused in both Britain and the United States. By the 1830s, antislavery had triumphed in British colonies and, three decades later, in the United States. By 1867, the freedom from bondage that had long been accepted in practice for whites became law for blacks through the "Antipeonage Act," enacted to give legislative form to the Thirteenth Amendment to the Constitution, which banned forced labor entirely.

Forestalling an initiative to introduce contract labor into the new state, the California legislature already had rejected, in 1852, a proposal to make Chinese indenture contracts enforceable in California courts. Slavelike contracts of indenture that bound labor to a particular employer for a term of years were neither acceptable nor enforceable in the "free states" and soon nowhere in the country. Into other migrant venues, however, such as the Caribbean and Peru, the "coolie trade" had brought Chinese under the sort of slavelike conditions described in chapter 4. These were societies in which state power could be used to enforce such contracts, just as state power enforced African slavery in the southern United States.

What, then, really was the Chinese status in the United States? The evidence indicates that most were indebted for the cost of their passage but while bearing this liability were personally free; and that the mechanism of this form of debt was the "credit-ticket" system. The cost of transpacific transport was beyond the immediate resources of the great majority of would-be migrants. Nevertheless, borrowing at interest was thoroughly familiar to the Chinese population, whether rural or urban. In the case of migration, borrowing money against one's future labor seemed an acceptable risk for the lender and an acceptable burden for the borrower. It was a moneymaking prospect for both sides, with the expected value added to come from the higher wages available in the migrant's new place of work. Financing could be provided from the sending side or from the receiving side; Chinese merchants or labor recruiters in San Francisco would provide funding through a Hong Kong broker, or a debt originating in Hong Kong could be collected by a Chinese merchant in San Francisco. The migrant arrived indebted for the cost of travel, plus interest, but not necessarily bound for a set length of time or to a particular employer. His personal freedom to change employers was not abridged (as it was in pure indenture contracts), nor did his obligation to his creditor go beyond payment of the debt plus interest.

Railroad companies (which had to estimate the scale and duration of a project) devised a variation on the credit-ticket system: a contractor in North America or Australia would commission a broker in Hong Kong to sign a group of men at a certain salary to work for a term of five or ten years, expenses for their ocean passage to be deducted from wages until the debt was paid. Workers were organized in groups, with headmen serving as labor bosses (essentially *gongtou* or *ketou*). What was lacking was state enforcement of the worker's bondedness to his employer. A worker who absconded simply lost the accumulation of any pending wages. In contrast to Southeast Asia, South America, and the Caribbean, in neither North America nor Australasia did the state punish the absconded debtor. Credit ticket was a step short of a true indenture system.[19]

Credit tickets seldom were formalized in written contracts, which probably explains why few such contracts have been found.[20] A physical credit ticket itself commonly served as a substitute for a contract.[21] It entitled the migrant to board ship and also indicated to the agent who met him at destination the identity of the original creditor. Further, it identified the migrant by name and by native place so that he (and his debt) could be handed off to the corresponding native-place lodge at the destination port.[22] But lacking a judicial system that would enforce indentures, what compelled a migrant worker either to remain with his employer or to settle his debt?

Several factors assured the creditor that his investment would be recovered with interest. One was surety provided by the migrant's kin back home, based primarily on land. Another was the practice (found in Australia and Southeast Asia as well as in the railroad-building gangs of California) of sending a headman (*ketou*) with a group of migrants to serve as their foreman and debt collector. Yet another was the hardheaded practice whereby a migrant's regional lodge had to give him a debt-

clearance chit before any shipper would take him back to China. With debtors enmeshed in such networks of supervision, the repayment of passage debt with interest seems generally to have satisfied all parties. In this respect, the "slavery" stigma was a red herring.[23]

This stigma was, however, also associated with American racial attitudes toward nonwhites in general, dating back to the early nineteenth century. By then, a general hostility toward blacks—whether slave or free—had accompanied the expansion of the frontier into what was then called the "Northwest," the states of Ohio, Indiana, and Illinois that bordered the slave states of the old South. Neither the expansion of slavery nor the entrance of freed blacks was acceptable to white settlers. "Black laws" excluding Africans, slave or free, and denying those already in the territories the right to vote, to testify in court, or to marry whites (all restrictions later clamped upon the Chinese) were passed in all the newly settled states, the earliest in Ohio in 1802. For the majority of white settlers, distaste for slavery evidently took second place to fear and hostility toward blacks *as blacks*. A state senator in Illinois made it plain that race, not slavery, was the issue: "Their residence among us, even as servants . . . is productive of moral and political evil. . . . The natural difference between them and ourselves forbids the idea that they should ever be permitted to participate with us in the political affairs of our government."[24] And in the Ohio debates of 1850, a Free-Soiler insisted that the United States "were designed by the God in Heaven to be governed and inhabited by the Anglo-Saxon race and by them alone."[25] The rhetoric of the age transmuted this miasma of self-righteousness into a vision of free, white citizens building a society undefiled by alien races and their degraded, inassimilable ways. Opposition to the extension of African slavery had been voiced by a Pennsylvania Congressman, David Wilmot, when he introduced in 1846 what became famous as the "Wilmot Proviso" to prohibit slavery in the territories just taken from Mexico. He reassured the House that he did not oppose slavery out of any sympathy for the slaves but rather to ensure a whites-only society in the West. "I plead the cause and the rights of white freemen [and] I would preserve to free white labor a fair country, a rich inheritance, where the sons of toil, of my own race and own color, can live without the disgrace which association with negro slavery brings upon free labor."[26]

White migrants to California brought this race-conscious free-soil ethos from the midwestern states, whence many had migrated. Proposals to exclude Chinese, phrased in terms virtually identical to those of midwestern legislation excluding blacks, were used by Californians who had the midwestern "black laws" in mind and cherished the same whites-only vision of the future.[27] Accordingly, hostility toward both Africans and slavery fueled Californians' fear and hatred of the new nonwhite immigrants. Thus did Chinese immigrants shoulder part of the long-lasting social burden of African slavery.

Nor did the "Party of Lincoln" promote civic and social equality for freed slaves. Its prewar message had centered on the nonextension of slavery but stuck to language free of civic equality. Republican politicians knew it was political suicide to advocate equality for emancipated blacks and that ideals of free labor had to be represented clearly as a whites-only formula for developing the West. No wonder Democrats and Republicans in postbellum California competed tirelessly for the anti-Chinese vote. In the electoral campaign of 1867, both parties attacked the Chinese relentlessly: "[An] evil that should be restricted by legislation" (Republican); "[We] protest against . . . populating this fair state with a race of Asiatics—against sharing with inferior races the Government of the country" (Democrat). Democrats pointed to "negro domination" of the Reconstruction South along with Chinese immigration to California (which had occurred on the Republicans' watch) as examples of their opponents' wickedness.[28]

The earliest violence against Chinese in the gold diggings had exposed a link between such notions of racial superiority and fears that labor might lose the struggle with capital.

Labor, Capital, and the Chinese

The goldfields were a crucible in which broad issues of class, ethnicity, and ideology were fired and fused. By 1855, a miners' convention declared that if Chinese "are excluded from the mines, our own laboring classes will for a long series of years have the advantage of capitalists."[29] Whether skilled or unskilled, the white laborer (particularly the immigrant) had good reason to fear that industrial capitalism would grind him ruthlessly into servile status. Because capital would turn to the cheapest available labor, Chinese (like freed blacks in the East and Midwest) seemed formidable competitors against whom free white labor could hardly sustain itself. Joining ethnicity firmly to

class, the “slave” label was quickly pinned on the Chinese, whose low wage expectations, frugality, alien ways, and skin color were sure signs of bondage.

The decades of the 1870s and 1880s, during which the anti-Chinese movement was at its height, were years of economic depression, labor unionization, and waves of strikes against the great capitalist employers in the industrial eastern and midwestern cities. Hostility to Chinese in this period must be linked to a general turn toward employer ruthlessness, particularly by the railroads. In California, the association of the “Chinese problem” with unemployment, shrinking wages, strikebreaking, and other grievances of the working class gave anticoolyism a respectable, indeed a heroic, appearance. Testimony in the state and federal exclusion hearings offered apocalyptic scenarios in which capitalist nabobs would rule supreme with the backing of nonwhite slaves. The effect of Chinese immigration ultimately would be “a community composed of the very rich and the very poor” such as in British India, where “the few white men who are there ride in palanquins, and are waited on by dozens of servants, while all the work is performed by an inferior class.”[30]

“Anticoolyism” was at the center of California labor activism in this period of intense competition for jobs. No matter that many Chinese were shown to be employed in jobs that no white workers would consent to take (notably the rough and dangerous work of building a railway over the Sierra Nevada and the muddy toil of diking and reclaiming the mosquito-infested swampland of the Sacramento delta). To the white worker without a job, it was apparent just where the Chinese were working. In manufacturing, Chinese were prominent in the cigar and garment industries, among many others. Especially were they to be found in companies that competed in the national economy, those particularly vulnerable to competition by big eastern firms and so particularly sensitive to labor costs. They were active also in farm labor and in fishing. As renters of farmland from white owners of large tracts, they hired labor from within their own dialect groups through brotherhood connections. Until about 1920, thousands of Chinese were settled in rural areas working on the large California fruit and vegetable farms.[31]

Facing wage competition and Chinese labor-recruitment practices, white workers felt threatened. The sinister allegations of capitalist schemes to force down wages by inundating the region with Chinese were another matter: such fears were fed by xenophobia and by the sort of social anxieties and “slavery” obsessions just discussed. By the 1880s, the internal politics of labor required the presence of a common enemy: the skilled trades sought to maintain their dominance of the union movement, partly by focusing the hostility of the unskilled white workers on Chinese (and later on Japanese) immigrants.[32] Thus, many engines were driving the anti-Chinese juggernaut, all of them fueled by racial hatred, a deep-laid tribalism that focused status insecurity and economic fears by scapegoating a vulnerable group.

Such tribalism, harnessed shrewdly by the major political parties, had spread nationwide by the 1880s and soon found expression in federal legislation. Exclusion of Chinese laborers emerged through a long series of federal and state laws, beginning in 1882 with a ten-year federal ban on the immigration of Chinese manual workers (merchants, diplomats, and students were exempted). After a series of extensions and elaborations, the ban was cemented in place by an act of 1902 permanently excluding Chinese laborers. This unexampled action against a particular national group was to last for sixty years. Although the original Exclusion Act allowed those who had returned temporarily to China to reenter the United States with a certificate, a further congressional law of 1888 (the Scott Act) abolished this privilege. A return visit to China thus became a one-way trip. With this cornerstone of sojourning dislodged, the population of Chinese in the United States began actually to contract, as many left permanently for home. From its peak of around 136,000 in 1883, by 1900 the Chinese population had diminished to about 90,000. As years went by, their communities were continuously diminished by repatriation and by death.[33]

Social Impacts of Exclusion

For Chinese immigrants, persecution affected both occupation and residence. Driven out of most manufacturing jobs by the 1890s; threatened and bullied out of fisheries, mines, lumber camps, and construction; and sometimes murderously attacked by white mobs, many Chinese in the western states sought refuge in city Chinatowns. Although not completely safe refuges, Chinatowns (particularly that in San Francisco, by far the largest) offered security in numbers and employment in economic niches that did not compete with white labor. As the exclusion era proceeded through the 1880s, the urbanization of Chinese intensified as occupations in agriculture and mining grew increasingly dangerous. Widespread anti-Chinese violence swept through the western states during

the 1880s. A Wyoming labor dispute between Chinese and white miners exploded in the "Rock Springs Massacre" of 1885, in which some twenty-five Chinese were shot to death. By 1910, some 76 percent of Chinese were urban dwellers, a figure that rose to about 90 percent by 1940.[34] Anti-Chinese violence forced many to other parts of the United States, so that by 1890 about 10 percent lived outside the West. Chinatowns began to grow in railroad cities such as Chicago, New York, and Boston.

These Chinatowns housed an overwhelmingly male population. Not only did the exclusion laws exclude females with particular rigor, but the social and economic contexts of migration produced a largely male immigrant group. In the first place, the common picture of Chinatown as a "bachelor society" is misleading, because (as of 1890) approximately a quarter of Chinese men in the United States were, in fact, married. Of these, approximately nine-tenths were *living as bachelors*. Between 1890 and 1940, around two-fifths of male Chinese in the United States were husbands living apart from their wives.[35] Because of social expectations and economic necessities, their wives were back home in China. The wife of a sojourning worker was expected to stay home to raise children and care for her husband's parents. This social norm affected virtually all emigration from south China to Southeast Asia as well as to North America and Australasia before the twentieth century. Beyond simply sustaining himself overseas, the sojourner was expected to remit money home and also to repay the loan by which he had paid his passage. This meant living on a shoestring and not bringing a family member for whom work would be hard to find.

Nevertheless, conventional social expectations were not the whole story: rational division of labor was a central factor in family economic strategy. Home-based work by south Chinese women was not limited to housekeeping, but included market-oriented projects such as tending silkworms, spinning silk and cotton, and raising livestock. The picture of sojourning males earning money and remitting it to idle female dependents was not the norm in south China but the exception. Both sexes remained essential to family livelihoods and to family migration strategies.[36]

Partly for these reasons, and partly because of exclusion, the sex ratio in American Chinatowns was grossly skewed. In 1890, it was approximately twenty-six men to every woman. By 1900, the ratio declined to about eighteen to one, probably because of men returning to China in response to the strictures of exclusion.[37] Sex ratios began slowly to normalize from the 1940s, after exclusion was repealed, and reached parity after 1965 as immigration laws were reformed and more urbanized emigrant-sending communities began to supplement the old rural Cantonese paradigm (see chapter 8).

Exclusion-Evasion as a Business Niche

"Chinatown," wherever found, was a response not only to physical insecurity but to other needs as well. One of Chinatown's functions was maintaining the human networks needed to evade the exclusion laws. Goods in great demand are famously hard to prohibit. The demand in this case was for labor export to the United States; however meager the wages of Chinese immigrants, regular remittances to their families in China could make the difference between destitution and survival. So it is hardly surprising that a steady though diminished current of immigration persisted even in the face of harsh laws doggedly enforced.

Evasion of the exclusion laws got a sudden boost from the San Francisco earthquake and fire of 1906, which destroyed reams of municipal records, including (most important) birth certificates. American birth was the only basis for a Chinese to claim citizenship. One result of the fire was the "paper son" scheme, by which a would-be immigrant would claim to be the son of a purportedly American-born Chinese whose birth certificate had been lost in the great fire. Such a notional citizen could have married and conceived children on visits home. The "father" would furnish a now adolescent or adult "son" with an identity script describing his family, his house, and his village in minute detail—all to be memorized by the "son" for getting through the interrogations by which immigration officials sought to trap fraudulent entrants.

This ingenious procedure was one commercial niche among many others generated by the intense demand to enter the United States. Other profit-making businesses included outright human smuggling, or bribery of immigration officials. They all required secrecy and social cover, legal assistance, underground networks (the brotherhoods), and a safe environment in which to employ illegal immigrants and shield them from discovery. For these purposes, Chinatown was reasonably secure, given the language barrier and the ignorance of Chinese culture among white officials. Prominent merchants in Chinatown quietly ran smuggling (complete with false identity papers) as a

profitable business.[38] White lawyers made good money on behalf of would-be immigrants with legally defensible cases. America's Chinatowns, on a smaller scale, paralleled aspects of Chinese communities in Southeast Asia, where the migration process generated profit for layers of middlemen, where migrants were received and channeled by rich merchant patrons and their client brotherhoods, and where labor brokerage was a lucrative business niche.

In the United States, the exclusion system itself produced numerous economic niches in which the Chinese community could profit by the effort to evade it (the immigration authorities admitted that they probably failed to catch some 90 percent of fraudulent entrants).[39] But this was a darkly shadowed success story: for the thousands of Chinese who entered the United States illegally, successful immigration meant being trapped in a life of insecurity and subterfuge. Burdened by false identities, illegals were isolated as much by this disability as by outright discrimination.

Across North America, the occupational balance in Chinese communities from the 1880s on was weighted toward service and shopkeeping. Laundries, restaurants, and miscellaneous-goods stores, along with service industries such as opium sale, gambling, and prostitution, furnished livelihoods to many Chinatown residents during the exclusion era.[40] These niches were viable largely because they did not compete with either white labor or white capital. The laundries spread through the white residential areas, their distribution regulated by guilds, with Chinatown serving as their social and retail center; restaurants served both Chinese and white-tourist clienteles; and the miscellaneous-goods merchants provided the familiar foodstuffs needed by the Chinese community itself. Depleted by the return of many thousands to China, the Chinese community in the exclusion era was a diminished version of its preexclusion self both in numbers and in occupations. Only gradually did some immigrants manage to break through these strictures and become entrepreneurs on a larger scale.

Australia's Route to Exclusion

The Australian gold rush ran roughly contemporaneously with California's; nevertheless, the scripts were not identical. Gold was discovered in the southeastern colonies in 1851; thousands of venturesome Cantonese boarded ship and hastened to the scene. Although some Chinese contract laborers had been imported as early as 1848 to relieve the labor shortage during the phaseout of the convict system, most Chinese diggers were credit-ticket immigrants, indebted but (like their California counterparts) not in bondage. Typically, a group of prospectors was led by an entrepreneurial headman who arranged passage and served as middleman for collection of debts.[41]

As in California, the rapid buildup of Chinese numbers in the goldfields (more than 20,000 in the colony of Victoria by 1857 despite legal barriers erected to keep them out) stirred white prospectors to violence.[42] But the Australian response was subtly different from the American. The Australian perception of "the Chinese threat" included "slave labor," but less obsessively than in the United States. Instead, the newcomers were declared to be "a pagan and inferior race," which, if the influx continued, could bury "a comparative handful of colonists" under "a countless throng of Chinamen."[43] But more than an imagined influx of slaves, Australians feared racial mixing and the ensuing pollution of the small, insecure British colony by "inferior" Asian blood.[44] Whereas miscegenation was more keenly dreaded by Australians, the force of the "slavery" stereotype in California shows how deeply Americans had been affected by the degrading effects of African slavery on all concerned.

Before the goldfields played out, numerous short-lived bans were emplaced to keep Chinese numbers down; most were based on discriminatory taxes, and most were thwarted by the ingenuity of shippers and the determination of Chinese diggers. Furthermore, Australian views of the Chinese were not uniformly negative. J. A. Patterson, a reporter for *The Argus*, Melbourne's leading newspaper, had been sent by his editor to survey the current condition and future prospects of gold mining in Victoria. His account is among the less biased among Australians' views of Chinese in gold rush days. When his articles were written, the first wave of diggers had already receded. Many of the old alluvial sites had been abandoned by European miners, who considered the returns on the depleted deposits not worth their labor. It was here, as in California, that Chinese capitalized on their comparative cultural advantages: the cooperative work style, the long-term bottom line, and the willingness to sacrifice present comforts for future profits. Although the author displays the usual condescension of the era ("John Chinaman") along with some orientalist exoticisms, his account lacks the hostility of many of his contemporaries.

An Australian View of Chinese Goldrushers (1862)[45]

"Guildford was long the main Chinese village in the colony, some five or six thousand Chinamen, and one Canton woman, the wife of a travelled shipwright of that city, having formed the population of the 'Camp.' . . . In this valley there had been rich alluvial diggings, but it had been well worked out, by European diggers before the advent of the Chinese. The sinking, however, was easy, the average returns were good, and occasionally the finds were very large. Here the Chinese drew together, and, in large associated bands, they introduced the system of paddocking, or stripping the superincumbent soil, taking out the wash-dirt bodily, and then restoring the ground to something like its first condition. It is understood that many of these men were brought in by capitalists of their own nation, under contract to work for small wages for a fixed period, and then gaining their emancipation. This probably was the case, but whether bond or free, 'John' was alike frugal and saving when he was out of luck or in debt, and equally enterprising and liberal when in good fortune. Rapidly the camp grew, in regular lines of streets, narrow and primitive, but highly populous and busy, while the whole valley was alive with Chinamen as they swarmed in their paddocks and holes.

"As a rule 'John' contented himself with a calico tent of small dimensions, but he shaded it ingeniously from the sun by constructing a verandah of gum saplings, on which a platform of boughs and leaves was constructed . . . protecting the promenaders as they passed from shop to shop, or the tea-dealer as he sat at his unglazed window and tasted his own wares, or the barber as he plied his instrument on the poll of a customer in the doorway, or the smoker in the little opium den as he lay on his straw, in the sight of all who passed and dreamt the sun-light away. . . .

"They associate in large bodies to carry out, cooperatively, some large paddocking enterprize; they patiently labour in worn-out ground, with tub and cradle, where an European could not earn salt to his soup; they wash up the sweepings of the public roads; they accept as part wages at Ballarat leave to fossick [dig] about in the refuse of the wash-dirt—not a particle of gold escaping them. . . .

"In the days of its greatest glory, 'the Camp' had its permanent theatre and circus performers, and in every street its temples devoted to Joss [pidgin colloquial for the sculpted image of a Chinese deity] were numerous. All the arts flourished in it—down to the making of alloyed gold —as they did at home. The restaurants, the tea-houses, the gambling saloons, the cobblers' stalls, the tailors'shops, were as they are in Canton. . . . Of late, however, 'the Camp' has been greatly shorn of its glories, and become but the semblance of what it was three years ago."

Settlements in New Zealand were not very different. An 1883 account of a frontier Chinese community in the goldfields of South island describes "the southernmost Chinese settlement in the world": a tiny village (the "Round Hill" diggings, also known as "Canton") with rudely constructed cabins clustered on either side of a corduroy log road. Twenty-three "Chinese huts" housed thirty-nine residents, mostly male. The little settlement looked forlorn, but it was neither uncivilized nor isolated. Among its facilities were a "teahouse" (named "Da'an": great tranquillity) that also served as a restaurant, another teahouse, a general store, and two more small shops (which also served as dispensaries of Chinese medicines). Ten miles eastward was the larger town of Riverton, located on the coast, with larger and better-stocked Chinese shops, run by "persons of education and substance"—the local Chinese merchant elite. The miners of Round Hill "used Riverton like a market town of their homeland," that is, as a shopping center for goods imported from China (via the seaport of Dunedin), and as a social center to gossip, gamble, and relax with a little opium in the better-appointed parlors. Riverton also contained small Chinese temples staffed by Daoist priests. Evidently, these communities were too small and poor to support a regional lodge. Nevertheless, an identifiably Chinese life was maintained—at a standard of comfort probably not much lower than that of the rural Pearl River delta.[46]

As in California, however, there was violence in the goldfields. In the colonies of Victoria, New South Wales, and Queensland, riots occurred from the 1850s to the 1870s, and Chinese immigrants had to make the most of their available resources to placate the white majority. One such resource was regular support of community charities—a tried-and-true strategy of merchants in China. Another was Chinese culture itself, adroitly used to charm their potential adversaries. Both strategies were employed in the gold-mining town of Bendigo from the 1870s to the 1900s. Besides donating to the local Benevolent Hospital and Asylum, the Chinese community participated in the annual Easter Fairs. Their signal contribution was a grand parade with spectacular displays of ceremonial costumes, "barbaric music," circus and opera performers, and a gigantic decorated

dragon borne by sixty men. The *Bendigo Advertiser* reported that the performance "was looked forward to by the public with the most gratifying anticipation" and evoked "the admiration of the thousands who witness[ed] it." Details had been worked out between the Chinese leadership and the fair organizers, and problems were resolved through negotiation. Anti-Chinese slurs from a white citizen were earnestly disavowed by the town fathers and the local press. The dignity of both sides thus carefully preserved, the annual Chinese Easter show became something of a liminal event, a carnival through which all could, for a time, transcend the meanness of the exclusion movement.[47] Such adaptive behavior could hardly have reversed the anti-Chinese tide but may have softened the impact of an "Anti Asiatic League" boycott against Bendigo Chinese retailers during 1909–1910 that, though it caused "considerable hardship" among the local Chinese, nevertheless has been described as "a minor anti-Chinese movement."[48]

Adapting to Hostility

From the beginning, Chinese immigrants in the settler societies found ways to adapt to the enmity surrounding them. Adaptation generally meant finding economic niches spurned by whites. In the goldfields, Chinese (like Mexicans, Indians, and blacks) were commonly barred from staking claims. Nevertheless, whites who wanted to shift to richer diggings were glad enough to sell their supposedly worked-out sites to Chinese who, with patient hand labor, profited from them. Working these "placer" diggings (sand or gravel deposits containing gold "dust" washed out of rock formations at higher elevations) needed only simple tools, little capital, and tedious, labor-intensive work. Chinese immigrants were used to working hard for low marginal returns. They also turned to service occupations for other miners, such as truck gardening, hauling wood and water, and operating small retail stores and laundries. In such work, many Chinese stayed on in the gold districts decades after they had been mined out. They also worked in deep-quartz gold mines, quickly mastering the new blasting technology that white workers wanted nothing to do with.

In railway work, too, Chinese shouldered dangerous or taxing work that whites shunned. Hammering, drilling, and blasting the Central Pacific Railway through the Sierras was work that fell to the Chinese. Recruited through labor agencies both within California and directly from China, Chinese flocked to the railway. During the peak years of construction, 1866–1869, as many as 11,000 were employed. Once the project was completed, some Chinese labored on other railroads through the 1870s and 1880s, moving through the West as the lines were extended.[49] Railway work was one of the few examples of immigrant labor contracts that specified a particular employer for a definite number of years. Contracted gangs of workers were recruited as groups, each headed by a middleman (*gongtou* or *baogong*) who kept the books, allotted pay, and provided food, a pattern of labor mobilization that immigrants found familiar from home. For the immigrants, the foreman was also a cultural intermediary who of necessity understood just enough English to communicate with both sides. Ironically, this essential middleman was the occasion for white workers' suspicion that the Chinese workers were abject slaves.

Charles Crocker (1822–1888), one of the great self-made American entrepreneurs of the nineteenth century, had migrated from his family's farm in upstate New York to Iowa and finally to California, where he, along with Leland Stanford and others, contracted to build the western railroads. Crocker managed the construction of the Central Pacific, which was completed in 1869, by a mostly Chinese workforce. Appearing before the Joint Special Committee to testify about his employment of Chinese, he was questioned by Congressman William A. Piper (D-Calif.), an early proponent of exclusion who believed that Chinese were brought to the United States in a "servile" condition and remained in bondage to their headmen.

Chinese Railroad Workers and the Question of "Servile Labor" (1877)[50]

"Q. When you employed Chinamen, did you employ the individual Chinamen, or did you employ some man to furnish you with a certain number of Chinamen? Did you employ your Chinamen that you worked on that [rail]road as individual Chinamen, or did you employ some boss Chinaman to furnish you with so many men?

A. [We] have always procured our Chinamen through the house of Sisson, Wallace & Co. here. . . . That house furnished us with Chinamen. They gathered them one at a time, two three, four of them in a place, and got them together to make what is called a gang, and each gang is numbered.

Q. Just like mules?

A. Well, sir, we cannot distinguish Chinamen by names very well.

Q. Like mules?

A. Not like mules, but like men. We have treated them like men, and they have treated us like men, and they are men, good and true men. As I say, we employed them in that way. They come together in gangs of twenty-five and thirty, as we need them to work on a job of work, and the account is kept with the gang, No. 1, No. 2, 25, 30, 50,100, just as it is. Each gang has a book-keeper to keep the account among themselves. We have a foreman and he keeps the account with the gang and credits them. Every night the Chinese book-keeper, who is one of the workmen and works in the pit along with the rest, comes up with his book, and he says so many days for that gang, do you see? and they count it up and they agree, and each puts it down. Then the Chinese keep their own accounts among themselves; but we keep an account with the gang. When the pay-day comes the gang is paid for all the labor of the gang, and then they divide it among themselves.

Q. Does the same thing obtain with the white men?

A. No sir; we get the individual names of the white men.

Q. You do not pay the individual Chinaman when he works for you?

A. We pay the head-man of the gang.

Q. Some head-man?

A. He is a laborer among them.

Q. You do not pay them in the same manner that you pay white men?

A. In the same manner except that we cannot keep the names of the Chinamen; it is impossible. We would not know Ah Siu, Ah You, Kong Won, and all such names. We cannot keep their names in the usual way, because it is a different language. You understand the difficulty. It is not done in that way because they are slaves.

Q. Is it not a kind of servile labor?

A. Not a bit. I give you my word of honor under oath here that I do not believe there is a Chinese slave in this State, except it may be a prostitute. I hear of that, but I do not know anything about it. If you do, you know more than I do."

In agriculture, too, Chinese found niches that were noncompetitive with whites. Reclaiming the swamps in the Sacramento–San Joachim River delta by building levees was a hard, mucky job, done by Chinese working for white entrepreneurs. From the 1850s to the 1880s, until the advent of mechanization, this backbreaking work was largely their province. Anyone familiar with the ecology of China's Pearl River delta, the homeland of so many of these immigrants, will recognize the scene: labor-intensive diking of swampy alluvial land to form the "sand-field" polder land that supports much of the delta's agriculture. Thus was the long familiarity of the south Chinese with polder techniques transferred profitably to the California environment.[51] Also adapted to the delta environment were south China patterns of labor organization. Workers were assembled by a labor broker, actually a merchant in the city whose profit, rather than from commissions, came from selling the workers rice and other necessities. Workers "form little communities among themselves [wrote one of their employers], forty or fifty or a hundred, and they are jointly interested in the contract" [i.e., jointly share in the proceeds and in responsibility for the work]. The same employer testified that such "harmonious" and effective labor gangs could not have been recruited among whites.[52] So, along with dike-building techniques, communitarian patterns of labor organization had been imported from the village and lineage culture of south China.

Two developments narrowed the span of available niches for Chinese: the completion of the Central Pacific Railway project in 1869 and increasing violence against Chinese by white workers. As a result, San Francisco's Chinatown had grown from less than 3,000 in 1860 to more than 12,000 a decade later. By the late 1870s, some 30,000 are estimated to have concentrated there, many of them engaged in manufacturing industries such as cigar making.

Coping with Exclusion

In the settler societies exclusion was not just a system for keeping people out. Along with immigration control went a host of discriminatory measures to limit the freedom and rights of those

already in the country. Exclusion carried with it various demeaning civic limitations. In the United States, the Nationality Act of 1790 had allowed citizenship through naturalization to "free white persons," amended in 1870 to include blacks. The amended act, however, did nothing for Chinese. Thus the insult of exclusion from the country was compounded by rejection within it.[53] The only way to become American was to be born on American soil—a privilege restricted to relatively few because only exempt classes (merchants, diplomats, and students) could bring wives into the country, a rule enforced more zealously because of the "Page Law" of 1875 (which claimed only to be targeting prostitutes but which, in practice, allowed immigration authorities broad powers to exclude Chinese women generally). Economic rights were also denied: beginning with California in 1913, state laws forbade Chinese (and other Asians) to own land.[54]

Chinese immigrants under exclusion adapted to its challenges in two modes: one was defensive: working in niche-specific businesses (laundries, restaurants, and miscellaneous-goods stores)—the Chinatown solution. The other was proactive acculturation to American life—absorbing values, connections, and techniques that enabled immigrants to survive or even prosper in American society. Chinese in America could follow both modes as occasions allowed.

Events in China were beginning to promote the more proactive approach. By the turn of the twentieth century, the immigrant was becoming aware that his plight under exclusion mirrored that of his homeland under alien rule. San Francisco's Chinese newspaper, *Chung Sai Yat Po*, blamed the indignities of exclusion on the fact that, in China, the Han were a conquered people crushed under the Manchu boot and accordingly were despised abroad,[55] hence the growing appeal of groups with reformist or revolutionary perspectives, such as the Emperor Protection Society (Baohuanghui—actually a progressive, constitutionalist group) led by the exiled Liang Qichao and Kang Youwei, and the revolutionary anti-Manchu movement of Sun Yatsen. These pan-Chinese organizations also included Chinese chambers of commerce in major cities and a kind of superbrotherhood: the Zhigongtang (Public Interest Society), an anti-Manchu revolutionary group, with chapters in the United States and Canada, that supported Sun Yatsen. These secondary communities were established atop the old native-place lodges, surname associations, and dialect-based brotherhoods. All had been guided and inspired by emissaries from China. Influences also spread in the opposite direction: in 1905, outrage over exclusion in the United States inspired a transpacific boycott campaign against American exports to China and Southeast Asia.[56]

The revolution of 1911 failed to produce a democratic China. Yet dethroning the alien monarchy was culturally liberating to Chinese overseas: the overthrow of the ultimate conservative authority allowed them greater freedom to acculturate to foreign ways. One very visible example was cutting off the queue, the symbol of deference to the Manchu regime that had been imposed on all male Chinese—and was a notorious object of derision among white Americans. To cut one's queue was nationalist, and it was an ethnic Han affirmation; but to a Chinese male in America, it was, perhaps more importantly, an act of acculturation.[57]

As immigrant identities were affected by Chinese events, some businesses in North America became more assertive. By the turn of the twentieth century Chinese commercial energies were already aiming beyond laundries, restaurants, and other Chinatown niches; and reached out to compete in the mainstream economy. In 1907, Chinese investors started the Canton Bank in San Francisco, which they represented as an assertion of Chinese business strength. "In the age of commercial warfare (*shangzhan*), banking is the mainstay of wealth and power," read their public share offering. "Wealth and power," associated since the 1860s with Chinese state-building, originally meant "wealth and power for the state." In the twentieth-century overseas context, however, it connoted both Chinese nationalism and ethnic pride. Plainly, the concept of "commercial warfare," now embraced by Chinese nationalists at home and abroad, was encouraging migrant businessmen to compete in American markets.[58] That same year, with Chinese government encouragement, merchants in New York established a Chinese Chamber of Commerce in line with efforts in China and Southeast Asia to stimulate Chinese economic competitiveness. Some returned to China to invest their capital in modern-style business enterprises in their *qiaoxiang*.[59]

As the proportion of those born in China diminished under exclusion and American-born slowly increased, Chinese Americans aimed at using their birthright and citizenship to claim a share of community power. As early as 1895, Chinese American citizens' associations emerged in California, starting with "Native Sons of the Golden State," founded by a Chinese American who had been denied entry to the white Californians' association of "Native Sons." In 1915 was formed

the nationwide "Chinese American Citizens' Alliance" with the express purpose of exercising all their civic rights.

Toward "White Australia"

Chinese in Australia suffered many similar trials and devised similar ways of coping with them. The differences are significant, however. Because Australia was not federated as a commonwealth until 1901, its separate colonies, through their own legislative bodies, were able to pass exclusion acts against Chinese. The British colonial authorities did not relish offending the Chinese government, but it did not block anti-Chinese legislation in Australian colonies. The agitation for exclusion laws came from many sectors of white society, not merely from the trade unions that feared the effect of "colored" workers on wage levels. By the 1890s, "colored" sometimes included varied groups: "Persians, Italians, Greeks, Armenians, Japs, Afghans, [and] Chinamen." In this respect, Australian perceptions foreshadowed the northern European preferences embodied by the "national origins" quotas established in 1924 by the United States.[60]

Australia's birth was notable in that the federation of the colonies into the Australian Commonwealth in 1901 was motivated by fervor to enact common and effective laws against Chinese immigration. Indeed, the new Parliament's first project was the Immigration Restriction Act, which was designed to stop Chinese entrants in their tracks. The actual method was suggested by London, which insisted that outright racially based exclusion was best achieved by indirection: rather than a straightforward ban, Australia was to adopt a "dictation test" of suitably unknown foreign languages as a screening device for would-be immigrants. This elegant subterfuge was adopted by the new Australian Parliament in 1901.[61] An official in the Department of External Affairs clarified the point in case any of his subordinates had missed it: "It is not desirable that [colored] persons should be allowed to pass the test, and before putting it to anyone the Officer should be satisfied that he will fail." (New Zealand's initial device for discouraging Chinese immigration was at least more straightforward: a confiscatory poll tax—though New Zealand ultimately did use a translation test.)

Basic to the White Australia policy was the perceived insecurity of a sparse British population in a vast colony half a world away from the imperial center. Australians feared, not surprisingly, for their very survival. Many feared not only immigration but outright invasion—if not by Chinese, then by Japanese (which in fact came all too close for comfort during World War II). How long could an isolated British colonial population survive the tyranny of distance? Baden-Powell's warning about Australia's being swamped by Chinese undoubtedly reflected attitudes he picked up during his visit. The argument was restated at greater length in Charles H. Pearson's treatise *National Life and Character*, showing how the "higher races" had reached the natural limits of their imperial expansion and could expect, in the long run, to be displaced by those "inferior races" (such as "Chinamen" and "Hindoos") who could thrive in the temperate zones as well as the tropics. A British historian, Pearson had immigrated to Australia, where he became active in politics and education. His book was influential among political leaders in Australia, one of whom became the commonwealth's first prime minister and an architect of the White Australia policy.[62]

Charles H. Pearson's Warning to the "Higher Races" (1893)[63]

"The fear of Chinese immigration which the Australian democracy cherishes, and which Englishmen at home find it hard to understand, is, in fact, the instinct of self-preservation, quickened by experience. We know that coloured and white labour cannot exist side by side; we are well aware that China can swamp us with a single year's surplus of population; and we know that if national existence is sacrificed to the working of a few mines and sugar plantations, it is not the Englishman in Australia alone, but the whole civilized world, that will be the losers. . . . We are guarding the last part of the world, in which the higher races can live and increase freely, for the higher civilization. We are denying the yellow race nothing but what it can find in the home of his birth, or in countries like the Indian Archipelago [i.e., Malaya and the Dutch East Indies] where the white man can never live except as an exotic. . . . We were struggling among ourselves for supremacy in a world which we thought of as destined to belong to the Aryan races and to the Christian faith. . . . We shall wake to find ourselves elbowed and hustled, and perhaps even thrust aside by peoples whom we looked down upon as servile, and thought of as bound always to minister to our needs."

In the United States, the fear of Chinese was economic (depression of wages and slave labor) and political (unsuitability for American democracy). In the North American setting, antipathy to Asian immigrants was widespread, but it was not centered on fear of cultural extinction through sheer numbers. Nor did it focus on fear of racial mixing, which seems to have been far higher on the list of Australian concerns. The likelihood that the white British bloodline would be darkened and eventually destroyed was an Australian anxiety even more powerful than that of wages and hours. In any event, the two anxieties merged in fateful synergy against Chinese.

For Chinese already in Australia, making money without bumping into White Australia was a daily challenge. In the early years of immigration, many Chinese merchants were attracted to Australia to serve the daily needs of the Chinese population. Their imports from China were largely for consumption by Chinese customers. Later in the nineteenth century, Chinese merchants pioneered a lucrative trade in fruit growing and marketing, with extensive plantations in Queensland and Fiji and wholesale outlets in Sydney and Melbourne. By the early twentieth century, Chinese controlled most of the banana business in the state of New South Wales; their Fijian bananas were plentiful in Victoria as well. Despite discriminatory laws against Chinese fruit growers and traders, the business raised the wealth and status of the Chinese urban elite. But how to invest the proceeds?

One result of Chinese commercial prosperity in Australia was the search for new, profitable niches for capital investment that would avoid triggering discriminatory laws and boycotts. The challenge was to find niches for investment outside the oppressive White Australia environment, whether in international trade or in China itself. One such venture was the China-Australia Mail Steamship Line capitalized by Chinese merchants in Sydney and Melbourne. Others exported capital to Hong Kong and China, where both labor and customers were plentiful. A number of enterprises were founded in this manner, the most famous of which were three department stores: Sincere, Wing On, and Sun, modeled on the fixed-price department stores of Sydney. With their new pattern of retail trade, these stores became hugely successful in Hong Kong and in Chinese cities.[64] Export of Australian goods to China was another string to the Australian Chinese bow: by the 1930s, China had emerged as the third-largest market for Australian products (after Britain and Japan). The role of Australian Chinese in servicing this market may have contributed to the looser enforcement of the exclusion laws during this decade.[65]

Flexible adaptation, using capital and skills from one environment to do business in another, making the most of niches where one enjoys a comparative advantage and shunning others are hallmarks of successful business generally. Migrant businesses in particular learn to exploit their marginality: finding unique opportunities in the marginal ground between jurisdictions and using comparative advantage in each to enhance one's position in the other.

Resisting discrimination in Australia had a unifying effect on the Chinese community, rather more than in the United States. For example, the "secret society" brotherhoods in Australia managed to avoid the "tong wars" that roiled the Chinatowns of America. Instead, they represented themselves as a "Chinese Masonic Society," under which umbrella they cooperated in the interest of the whole immigrant community.[66] United Chinese resistance through appeal to legislatures and the press was also based, as in the United States, on acculturated Chinese working with sympathetic whites to oppose discrimination through reasoned public dialogue. The Australian-born William Ah Ket (1876–1936), a Melbourne barrister, was active for more than thirty years as a professional advocate for Chinese rights by appealing to the sacred British principle of "fair play." He and a senior Australian lawyer argued successfully before the Victoria Legislative Assembly in 1907 against a "Factories Bill" designed to drive Chinese workers out of furniture manufacturing. Able to socialize with white Australians (and to marry an Australian woman) while serving as a prominent leader of the immigrant community, Ah Ket was effectively a man of two cultures: he sought not a hybrid middle ground but natural conjunction between Chinese and Western worldviews.[67]

Notes

1. Lewis (1978), 14–16.
2. Baden-Powell (1888). Sir George was the elder brother of the Boy Scout founder.
3. Speakers of closely related local dialects of the Guangzhou region.
4. Hsu (2000), chap. 2.
5. For Chinese organizations in California, see Liang (1906), Lai (1992), and Ma (1983, 1988).
6. Lai (1992), chap. 2; Hsu (2000), 29.

7. Ma (2000), chaps. 1 and 2.

8. Chan (1986), 35, 48.

9. McClain (1994), chaps. 1 and 2.

10. Saxton (1975), chap. 4.

11. Maltz (1994), 225; Saxton (1975), chap. 4.

12. California Legislature (1878), 57–66.

13. United States Congress (1877), 3: 264, 246.

14. Ignatiev (1995), 137.

15. Coolidge (1909), 31.

16. Bush (1993), 1412; Galenson (1984).

17. Saxton (1975), 36.

18. Galenson (1984); Bush (1993), 1412.

19. Credit-ticket financing had many variations in form, but reliable sources concur that it was not a form of slavelike indenture. See Sandmeyer (1991), 27–29; Campbell (1923), 29–33; Tsai (1986), 16–17; Cloud and Galenson (1987); and Li (1998), 20–23.

20. Wang (1978), 321, presents a translation of a "Memorandum of Agreement" between an emigrant and an emigration broker whose home office was in Shanghai, found in the historical archive of the Wells Fargo Bank in San Francisco.

21. Wang (1978) shows credit-ticket forms from Hong Kong.

22. Wang (1978), 93–95.

23. Cloud and Galenson (1987); Sinn (2004) bears this out.

24. Berwanger (1967), 31, quoting from *Senate Journal* (1828–1829), 182.

25. Berwanger (1967), 39, quoting from *Ohio Debates* (1850–1851), I: 679.

26. Berwanger (1967), 125–266; Saxton (1975), 19–20.

27. Saxton (1975), 19; Berwanger (1967), chap. 3.

28. Saxton (1975), 89, 91.

29. Sandmeyer (1991), 42.

30. United States Congress (1877), 3: 287.

31. Saxton (1975), chap. 1; Chan (1986), chap. 9.

32. Saxton (1975), 265.

33. Chan (1986), 46; Coolidge (1909), 498–501.

34. Chen (2000), 52–60; Lai (1992), 79.

35. Hsu (2000), 99.

36. Mazumdar (2003), 64–65.

37. Tsai (1986), 40.

38. Salyer (1995), chap. 3; Hsu (2000), chap. 3.

39. Hsu (2000), 71.

40. Lai (1992), 80–92; Chan (1986), chap. 2.

41. Wang (1978), 39–40, 89–92, 112 ff.

42. Yong (1977), 11; Wang (1978), 274 ff.

43. Melbourne (1855), 2: li.

44. Walker (1999), chap. 4.

45. Patterson (1863), 133–35.

46. Ng (1993), 2: 9–18.

47. Rasmussen (2004).

48. Yong (1977), 77.

49. Saxton (1975), chap. 3.

50. United States Congress (1877), 675.

51. On reclamation, see Chan (1986), chap. 5.

52. Chan (1986), 183–85 (quoting a large landowner who employed Chinese for reclamation during the 1870s).

53. Maltz (1994).

54. Hing (1993), 23, 30.

55. Ma (1990), 33.

56. See chapter 6.

57. Tsai (1986), 90.

58. Lai (1992), 93.

59. Chen Yong (2006), 165–69.

60. Markus (1979), 259.

61. Macintyre (2004), 142.

62. Macintyre (2004), 142; Cochrane (2005).

63. Pearson (1893), 16, 85.

64. Yong (1977), chap. 2.

65. Markus (2004), 53.

66. Cai (2004), 142–43. Cai suggests that the Australian brotherhoods' ability to collaborate resulted from a greater dialect homogeneity among immigrants to Australia, compared with the United States and Southeast Asia. However, there may have been other factors at work in the United States, considering that Chinese there had a similar level of dialect homogeneity (almost entirely *sanyi* and *siyi*).

67. Ah Ket (2003); Yong (1977), 68. On Ah Ket's comparison of Western and Eastern cultures, see Ah Ket (1933).

CHAPTER SIX

Revolution and "National Salvation"

The mass migration that emerged from the events of the 1840s and 1850s opened new relationships between China and Chinese overseas: a more intense interaction between overseas communities and their *qiaoxiang* regions; a new proportion between Chinese-speaking populations and earlier, acculturated Chinese inhabitants; and a heightened concern for the fate of "China"—the people, the culture, and the state—among Chinese abroad. The "nationalism" that had emerged by the early twentieth century was nevertheless complex and ambiguous. Questions of how "nation" was related to *qiaoxiang*, to ethnicity, and to nation-state underlay the "nationalism" of overseas Chinese communities, and the answers were shaped by their environments.

The East Asian Revolution

Once the old polities of Japan and China began remolding themselves into modern nation-states, the days of Western colonialism were numbered. In 1942, a century after the Treaty of Nanjing, which had implanted Western power in the port cities of China, the forces of imperial Japan ousted the Western powers from their colonial possessions in Southeast Asia and shredded their mystique. As Lee Kuan Yew, leader of independent Singapore, recalled years later, "British colonial society was shattered, and with it all the assumptions of the Englishman's superiority."[1] Indeed, nowhere in Asia could colonial power successfully be reimplanted after so stark a display of vulnerability. Although for purposes of its own, and with results not exactly as intended, Japan had indeed liberated Asia from Western domination.

Meanwhile, state and society in China were being transformed, beginning in the 1860s. The protonationalism that emerged from the "Second Opium War" began in the upper echelons of the literati elite: it sought the secrets of Western military and industrial technology to achieve a "wealthy state and powerful military." It was also evident soon enough that saving Chinese state and civilization would require more than weaponry: the framework of state power itself would have to be revamped. After a series of humiliating military defeats, a turning point was reached in 1895 after Japan's rapid victory over technologically updated Chinese forces. The victor's peace terms included cession of China's province of Taiwan. This catastrophe proved to some upper literati and to Emperor Guangxu himself that technology was not enough. The state had to bring the people (starting, of course, with the elite) into its councils under some form of constitution. Some attributed Japan's rise to regional power to its success in forming a constitutional government.

Beijing's Outreach to the Overseas Chinese

Along with concepts of broader participation in government arose new ideas about ethnic Chinese outside China. Beijing had been courting Chinese overseas since the late 1870s through consulates in foreign cities (starting with Singapore in 1877). But it remained to be seen how the government's stance could be shifted more convincingly to persuade them to support the state in its hour of need. In 1893, the Qing court accepted a Chinese diplomat's proposal to repeal the old ban on emigration, a ban long overtaken by events. The proposal was quickly adopted by the imperial court, which decreed that, thereafter, "honest merchants and common people, no matter how long they have been

abroad, along with their wives and children, shall be issued passports by Chinese diplomats abroad to allow them to return to China to live and establish businesses; moreover they may travel abroad to do business at any time without fear of being harassed when they return."[2] Chinese emigrants and their descendants were thence to be recognized as members of a worldwide community with roots in China. The initiative had come from Xue Fucheng, one of China's first ambassadors abroad. The proposal excerpted here, sent by Ambassador Xue from London, lay behind the imperial edicts of August 21 and September 13, 1893, that definitively scrapped the venerable imperial ban on emigration (which, though rescinded in practice, was still technically in force). Xue's argument addressed the old problem that emigrants who returned to their homes to do business, to retire, or to visit their families had technically flouted the ban by having emigrated in the first place. That the ban seldom had been enforced was not the point: nearly a century and a half after Emperor Qianlong had forbidden mistreatment of returning sojourners, Xue pointed out that they still were being blackmailed by "evil county clerks and wicked gentry" who threatened to denounce them to the authorities.

Xue Fucheng's Proposal to Remove Stigma from Overseas Chinese (29 June 1893)[3]

"Since 1842, we have signed numerous agreements with foreign countries of both Eastern and Western oceans. The first article of the Treaty of Nanjing with the British reads: As for the Chinese who live in England and the Englishmen who live in China, they and their families should be afforded protection. The fifth article of the [Burlingame] treaty with the U.S. reads: When Chinese and Americans come to each other's countries, they are to be accorded free choice as to whether to obtain citizenship and may come and go as they like. The treaties with Peru and Cuba about Chinese workers contain provisions to protect and care for overseas Chinese and to establish consulates. Nowadays trains and ships can go everywhere, countries on the other side of the globe seem on our doorstep, and it is impossible to govern one's own country with the door closed. Moreover, our Dynasty has been flourishing for more than two hundred years, and there is a danger of overpopulation in China. Therefore, we have to get more people employed to make a living, to open more commercial enterprises to provide the people's daily necessities, to accord with our people's desires in order to enhance their feeling of unity with us. . . .

"As bans on maritime trade have been rescinded, the spirit of the age is one of openness, in which people from far and near are to be treated equally. The former rules have been abandoned in practice, even though they have not been abandoned formally. This is not a matter of granting special favor to Chinese who have gone abroad, but rather according with the trend of the times. . . .

"The nature of people is to be loyal to whoever can give them a peaceful life. Millions of Chinese go abroad to foreign countries. Many Cantonese are employed overseas. Although the custom in those countries is to despise them, they are nevertheless allowed to follow their own ways and are able to save some money in addition to making a living. Certain prefectures and counties along China's coast have become prosperous [because of remittances from these emigrants]. Many Fujianese emigrants were rich merchants. The vulgar practice [of officials] was to treat them harshly, so that they took all their wealth and went to live abroad. Less than one-tenth have come back. It is not that the Chinese do not miss their home country, nor does the Chinese government have a policy of driving them out. It was because when the new regulations were established, they were not broadcast widely so that all could know them.

[Note: "New regulations" probably refers to the convention negotiated in 1866 among China, Britain, and France but never ratified by the foreign powers (see chapter 3).]

"Thus the deep kindness and concern of our Dynasty could not reach afar; and evil county clerks and wicked gentry could take advantage of people and make trouble for them. 'To expel fish and birds from safe havens' is not a sound policy. . . .

"To prevent evil people from making trouble [for returnees], it should be made clear to the public that the old regulations have been changed. All the governors-general and governors, as well high officials sent abroad, should inform the people of the Imperial intention through all possible channels. Chinese consuls at overseas ports should issue passports [to those who wish to return], after checking their behavior and reputation. In this way, without too much trouble, we can gain popular support and greatly improve our situation. It will have the benefit of bridging the gap between China and the West, and lowering the barrier between the officials and common

people. If those who miss their home country would return in increasing numbers, and the tenant farmers would not lightly think of forsaking their homes . . . then our Dynasty would reap the benefits of 'storing riches among the people.' Here I petition to have the old prohibition [against emigration] repealed, in order to protect the merchants [who return to China] and to attract more of them [to come back]."

It was during this period that the term "Chinese sojourners" (*Huaqiao*) became both the official and the popular term for Chinese overseas. It connoted a continuous link with the homeland, to which emigrants (or at least their funds) were expected to return.[4] Nevertheless, it was a euphemism that was not based on empirical knowledge of how particular populations of Chinese overseas felt about their land of origin or their venue societies. Nevertheless, extending formal Chinese nationality to emigrants and their descendants was the next logical step. In 1909, legislation that was to have far-reaching consequences declared that all children of Chinese fathers (or mothers if paternity was unknown), wherever born, were thereby Chinese nationals.[5] In Southeast Asia, this "law of bloodline" (*jus sanguinis*) eventually complicated the relationships of Chinese minorities with their venue societies and governments.

Chinese Nationalism and Its Reception Overseas

In the waning years of the dynasty, reformist and revolutionary movements appeared on the scene almost simultaneously. These movements were first promoted in the Nanyang by their exiled leaders, who traveled worldwide to inspire compatriots to shelter them and finance their causes. The imperial government had, since the 1880s, been gleaning overseas Chinese financial aid by selling ranks and titles through consular offices. The reformers, led by the Cantonese scholar-literati Kang Youwei and Liang Qichao, drummed up support for their Emperor Protection Society (Baohuanghui), which advocated modern state building under a constitutional monarchy. Revolutionaries, led by Sun Yatsen, a Cantonese commoner with overseas family connections, competed with them for funds and support. In 1894, Sun had founded his "Revive China Society" (Xingzhonghui) in Hawaii. Its proclaimed purpose was to overthrow the Manchu monarchy and establish a republic. A later organization in which Sun played a major role, the Revolutionary Alliance (Tongmenghui, founded in 1905 in Tokyo), continued to rely on Chinese emigrant communities for political and financial support. Worldwide, two linked issues moved Chinese emigrants toward greater political involvement: fears and hopes for China's future, particularly for their home provinces, and concerns for the welfare of Chinese minorities in overseas venues. A strong, progressive China seemed to promise a brighter future for emigrant communities, and emigrant communities could help move China and their own *qiaoxiang* toward strength and progress.

Liang Qichao, who had begun as a disciple of the visionary constitutionalist Kang Youwei, soon outgrew Kang's influence to become one of China's leading interpreters of nationalism, modern statecraft, and Western social thought. His writings were read by educated people all over China. As a promoter of constitutional government and Kang's collaborator in the abortive "Reform Movement of 1898," he had fled the country with a price on his head. His worldwide travels on behalf of a constitutional monarchy were loyalist in principle but revolutionary by implication.

Liang was convinced that emigrants could help build national strength if only the Chinese state had the power to protect them. Emigration and the character of emigrants called to his mind adventurous, assertive, and even imperialistic Chinese emigrants of past ages who had lacked only Chinese state support. His 1906 essay "Biographies of Eight Great Chinese Colonialists" drew muscular portraits of Chinese emigrants as historic contenders for power in Southeast Asia—as heroic pioneers whose swashbuckling vigor had rivaled that of Europeans. A devotee of social Darwinism, Liang called for making China "fit" by arousing individual ambitions. Because imperialist expansion by powerful nation-states was a salient fact of the day, why should China not follow suit? Liang sought evidence from the past that would give Chinese a positive self-image as they faced the task of nation building. His examples included refugee military leaders, outlaws, and brotherhood chieftains who had carved out little militarized principalities, some as early as the fourteenth century, in Java, Sumatra, Borneo, and Malaya, territories that later became European colonies.

Liang Qichao's Portrayal of Great Chinese Colonialists (1906)[6]

"While browsing through the accounts of foreign countries in the *Ming History*, I found these four kings in Srivijaya, Borneo, [Malaya] and Java. I was speechless with surprise and delight. Then I regretted that such great national figures should have been buried so deeply in musty books . . . [That they had been] left out of Chinese history is symbolic of how China herself has been left out of the present world struggle for survival. . . .

* * * *

"When I had finished sketching the biographies, besides my reflections about the spirit of the times, three further thoughts occurred to me. The first is the relation between maritime affairs and national vitality. . . . Seven of these men were from Guangdong Province and two from Fujian. If in the future our country could expand her imperialism outward, people of these two provinces would remain useful. However, people of other coastal provinces or even in the inland provinces might also be qualified. The key is to cultivate their abilities. American sea-power, for example, did not develop only because of people from the two coasts.

"Second is the relation between colonial enterprise and governmental encouragement. All of the big powers, directly or indirectly, used their governments to encourage their colonial enterprises. In our country, mutual suspicion and jealousy were the rule, so everyone went in his separate direction. Accordingly, although some had great abilities and energy, they failed eventually for lack of support. This is exactly why, in recent decades, many overseas Chinese in America, Australia, and Africa have had miserable experiences.

"Third is the relation between political power and international competition. Anciently, our people could open up businesses in various countries or pass on their businesses to descendants, without the assistance of the Chinese government. But when they encountered countries with powerful civilizations, they had to submit to those countries' control. . . . Alas! In the hundred or more kingdoms of the Nanyang, the majority of the population are descended from the Yellow Emperor. Whether from the standpoint of geography or history, they are natural colonies for our people. But now the Chinese residing there can only compare themselves to oxen and horses. Alas! Who is to blame? Who is to blame? Moreover, since we cannot even protect our own land, which has been handed down from the Yellow Emperor, how can we expect to [protect our countrymen] in Southeast Asia?"

It was hardly to be expected that the rise of nationalism among Chinese overseas should follow the same paths as in the China homeland. Although China was subject to foreign power, that power was exercised through indirect rule; but Chinese abroad were subject to the direct rule of foreigners. The structure of their family and economic lives was adapted to particular niches and accommodations under foreign regimes, whether colonial or indigenous. Whatever anti-Chinese resentments simmered beneath the surface, Chinese minorities overseas had worked out patterns of adaptation to the environments in which they lived, patterns not to be discarded lightly. In the circumstances, it is not surprising that they displayed complex attitudes toward the Chinese state and its future—and toward their own connections to that state.

In his survey of Chinese overseas nationalism from 1912 to 1937, Wang Gungwu found no single pattern of commitment toward nationalist agendas. Nationalism among the Nanyang Chinese was not self-generated but rather a "taught nationalism" borne by activists from the homeland. These activists were mostly products of classical education (which gave them a deep appreciation of the old culture and a keen sense of humiliation from outrages at the hands of foreigners) and of travel abroad (where they had seen the wealth and power attained by modern states). To Chinese overseas, these nationalist missionaries offered visions of a strong state that could both protect them from mistreatment and afford them the pride of being associated with a modernizing, enlightened China.

Yet over the next thirty years, responses varied along a continuum. At one end were those who focused passionately on Chinese issues and remained involved with them. At the other end were acculturated community leaders (often products of colonial schooling) who sought to participate in the public life of their venue society, be it colonial or indigenous. In between, the great majority, including the shopkeepers and traders who formed the backbone of the interlocking affinity groups in local communities, focused on the interests of those communities and were wary of political engagement. The nationalism of this middle majority was "calculated and controlled,"[7] moving cautiously in one direction or the other in response to opportunity and circumstance. Such were the survival instincts of a population with complex identities and carefully honed capacities for adaptation.

Nation, Nation-State, and Nationalism

In Western discourse, the old meaning of "nation" had denoted no necessary relation to a territorial state. Before the eighteenth century, "nation" usually meant a people with shared culture, language, and history but not necessarily ruled by their own sovereign government. Although they lacked a sovereign homeland, Jews of the Diaspora were commonly referred to as a "nation" in the cultural-linguistic-historical sense. Before the twentieth century, "nation" was only sporadically identified with the "nation-state," that is, an "independent political state formed from a people who share a common national identity (historically, culturally, or ethnically); (more generally) any independent political state."[8] Modern nationalism centers on both state and people but not necessarily in equal proportion. The examples in this chapter suggest that "nation" as culture-language-history, basically "a people," remained the chief component among Chinese overseas—as logically we might expect of a people whose national state was weak, ineffective, and often short on legitimacy.

Chinese overseas (even acculturated creoles who had lost their Chinese language) took pride in a distinct culture that set them apart from indigenous peoples. Because they were treated by others (indigenes and colonial rulers) as a single population group, the particularistic divisions among them (dialect, region, and kinship) could be supplemented, when necessary, by a pan-Chinese vision. As we saw in chapter 4, these divisions often aggregated under an umbrella group (a "consolidated Chinese lodge" or a modern-style chamber of commerce) that could negotiate effectively with the non-Chinese power structure. Yet the record shows that all such umbrella organizations were federations of particularistic regional or dialect groups whose identities and leaders remained as distinct as ever. Furthermore, joining forces into pan-Chinese groups for practical local purposes might not imply a joint acknowledgment of China as a nation-state. Until the late nineteenth century, references by overseas communities to any centralized Chinese state were few and ambiguous. Emigrants might see themselves as connected symbolically to the ruling dynasty (as in Da Qing: "great Qing") but more culturally than politically. The sense of cultural unity was expressed by the self-referential *Huaren* (Chinese people: "*Hua*" referring to a culture rather than a state) or, among Cantonese, by the expression *Tangren* (people of the Tang dynasty), which had ended a millennium earlier.[9] So it is doubtful whether, before the final third of the nineteenth century, emigrants pictured a culture within a Chinese state in which the emigrant—despite his physical absence—was a stakeholder or citizen.

By the first decade of the twentieth century, the sense of a Chinese "nation" was being expressed in three forms: first, as a cultural tradition that dignified all its adherents; second, as a modernizing state that someday might be able to protect its citizens overseas; and, third, as a "race" in danger of being extinguished in a social-Darwinian battle for survival. It was this last sense of "nation"—the inherent unity of a "race" that shared both culture and descent—that most clearly characterized Chinese overseas nationalism in the early twentieth century. Some of this consciousness had long simmered among the Han subjects of alien rule in China: no matter that the Manchus had been partially acculturated (many had lost the Manchu language), their status as a privileged alien elite was resented all the more now that the regime's weakness had been exposed. Ethnic self-consciousness also arose in reaction to the humiliations visited on China by Westerners. And were not "race" and social Darwinism (known to classically literate Chinese through Yan Fu's translations of Huxley and Spencer) the latest "scientific" discoveries of those same powerful Westerners? Among Chinese minorities overseas, however, the sense of "nation" as an ethnocultural unit sprang directly from the fact that "Chinese" as a community—regardless of formal nationality and despite the particularisms that divided them—were surrounded by non-Chinese populations and controlled by non-Chinese ruling powers. Hence, the distinction between ethnic Chinese and "Others" was stark. Although both "nation" as state power and "nation" as ethnic collectivity were visible in early Chinese nationalism, the conception of shared "race" (*huangzhong*, *tongzhong, renzhong*, and *zhongzu*)[10] proved the stronger overseas, particularly during campaigns to defuse hostility among dialect groups. However chimerical, "racial" unity seemed a promising defense for insecure minority communities.

In practice, "nationalism" for the overseas Chinese was a congeries of attitudes and strategies, all pointing to China as a land of common origin, yet all rooted in local environments. In those environments, the nationalist agenda served various needs: to create a self-image or group image that could enhance Chinese status and security, to protect their economic position, and to coalesce around common threats regardless of regional and dialect divisions. Finally, nationalist movements were arenas for political competition and social mobility within the Chinese community.

Mass Migration and Diversified Communities

Although the upsurge of overseas Chinese nationalism before World War II is famously linked to mass campaigns against Japanese aggression in China, its origins can be traced to the demographic results of mass migration that fundamentally changed the structure of overseas Chinese communities. A Chinese population that remained in close touch with its home region, sent children to Chinese schools, and read Chinese-language newspapers offered political activists in China a new and promising arena for mobilization. The prospect varied with the proportion of Totoks to Peranakans in different venues. As of 1891, the 50,000 Babas of the Straits Settlements were outnumbered by 175,000 newcomers from China; in peninsular Malaya, the Chinese population was overwhelmingly Totok: 68 percent of Malayan Chinese as of 1931 were actually born in China; not surprisingly, their nationalist fervor was more intense than, for example, in Thailand, where only some 46 percent were China-born. Skinner suggests that living in a colonial setting exposed Chinese to radical doctrines, compared to a population in a noncolonial venue like Thailand, and, further, that the Cantonese majority among Malayan Chinese had been aligned historically with revolutionary movements in Guangdong.[11] In the Indies as late as the 1960s, Peranakans still outnumbered Totoks by three to two in Java; the ratio was reversed in the outer islands.[12] Gradually more balanced sex ratios after the turn of the twentieth century were another factor keeping Totoks culturally Chinese. The new demography was a lure to ambitious Chinese politicians and to cash-strapped Chinese governments.

For Peranakans, the new diversity spotlighted their own anomalous situation: where did their own "Chinese" identities fit into the current definitions of "Chineseness," whether among the new immigrants or in the homeland? Language aside, some Peranakans found new pride in Chinese culture and experimented with re-Sinicizing themselves; this they attempted through cultural sodalities (such as the "Chinese Association"—Tiong Hoa Hwe Koan—founded in 1900 in Batavia, and Confucian education movements there and in the Straits Settlements) to raise awareness of their historical heritage, to sponsor Chinese schools, and particularly to venerate Confucius and his teachings, accessible through translations of the classics. On the practical side, a strong, modernizing, and respected China might become a source of protection. By the early twentieth century, Peranakans were feeling the need for a clearer sense of personal worth and security. For Java Peranakans, the period since the mid-nineteenth century had been demoralizing. Laws passed in 1854 had classed Peranakans as "Foreign Orientals" and subjected them to the same degrading judicial treatment as the native Indonesians. In 1870, a further indignity was a residence and pass requirement that restricted where they might live and limited their travel—both requirements disabling for anyone involved in trade.[13]

The economic monopolies of the Peranakan elite had been stripped from them by the Dutch, as we have seen, and Chinese were now to be shut out of the moneylending business as well. Instead of being a notch above the indigenes in privileges and prestige, the Peranakans were now targeted by humiliating dictates, including the promotion of Japanese (in 1899) to the same status as Europeans, while the Chinese remained "Foreign Orientals." The ethnic distinctions that had given the Chinese something like second-class status (beneath the Dutch) now reduced their status humiliatingly close to that of the indigenes. In this situation, the new vision of China as a modernizing nation-state, a "homeland" of venerable cultural distinction, began to look appealing to Peranakans.

That vision appealed to them in two ways. First, there was the practical matter of protection, for which they believed they could no longer rely on the colonial system. A more powerful China, with diplomatic representation in the Indies and (after 1909) an inclusive definition of Chinese nationality, might actually stand up for its citizens overseas. Second, if humiliation could be salved by cultural pride, Chinese culture was just what was needed. Historically, it had evinced a towering image of philosophical and literary superiority, respected around the world. The Chinese revolution had not yet reached the stage of cultural iconoclasm that, a generation later, would seek to dethrone Confucianism and all its works. Meanwhile, Confucianism seemed to fill the void of self-respect that Peranakans were feeling now that their favored colonial status was threatened.

China, wrote the Peranakan activist Liem Koen Hien in 1919, was the "fatherland across the sea" that was calling its citizens—whether at home or abroad—to help the nation "enhance itself." It was "the duty of the Peranakan Chinese" to respond "because we place all our hope in China." Although "the improvement of our status overseas will come rather slowly," the Peranakans can be patient.[14] Improvement in status for its far-flung citizens would ultimately result from the enhancement of

China, and it must have seemed a not discreditable result for a people who had first been used by colonialists for their own purposes, then betrayed by them. For Indies Peranakans like Liem, as for Babas of the Straits Settlements, Chinese culture seemed to be a cultural lifeline to rescue them from the limbo of hybridity. It furnished an identity within the local order that did not depend on the patronage of the ruling powers. No longer would Peranakans feel scorned as mere clients of the haughty Europeans but rather respected as a minority with impeccable cultural credentials (and perhaps some support from Qing consular officials).

Yet in both British and Dutch colonies, European schooling became an alternative to re-Sinicization. From 1818, children of the Baba elite in Malacca could attend the Anglo-Chinese College. Many of these families migrated in the 1820s to Singapore, where English-medium education was soon supplemented by a Hokkien-medium school established next to the main Hokkien temple. There, children of the Baba merchants could be partially re-Sinicized by studying alongside the children of newly arrived merchant immigrants from the Xiamen region. Accordingly, the period 1819–1877 saw some amalgamation between the Baba and new immigrant elites. By the 1880s, however, the two language streams were drawn apart: the Totoks, by the establishment of a Qing consulate, which raised their China consciousness by selling successful men Qing titles and degrees; and the Baba by British co-optation of leading families through educational distinctions, such as the Queen's Scholarship program for talented English-schooled students.[15] By the 1890s, the new migrants in the Straits Settlements greatly outnumbered the Babas and began to assume leadership positions in the *bang* organizations. Babas (particularly those most thoroughly Anglicized) found themselves increasingly out of place in the overwhelmingly Chinese-speaking society of the new immigrants. The refuge for many of them was the Straits Chinese British Association, founded in 1900, which affirmed Baba identities as British subjects.

Similar transitions occurred in the Indies: Java witnessed the first stirrings of a pan-Chinese movement around 1900. But Peranakans who founded Chinese schools soon found themselves outpaced by the more China-oriented and politically engaged Totoks who dominated the new schools by 1915. The alternative offered by the colonial authorities to compete with the re-Sinicization movement, namely, Dutch education (a privilege accorded in 1907), and greater legal equality gradually drew most Peranakans away from re-Sinicization, thus widening the cultural distance between them and the new immigrants. Education in the colonialists' language had become a powerful force defining the identities of Baba in the Straits Settlements and later became so for the Peranakans of the Indies.

For Peranakans, either Chinese or a colonial language had an additional status function, one that carried a certain risk: it bolstered their sense of distinction and superiority over the indigenous Indonesians, and aroused bitter resentment. Confucianism, as interpreted by its Peranakan champions, signaled their reinforced sense of distinction by purging social practices (funerals and marriages) of "native" accretions. Nothing that had been borrowed from the locals, declared the Confucians, could be anything but rude, superstitious, and contrary to (supposedly) pure Chinese social usage. The popularization of unsullied Confucian ritual practices was a way of differentiating themselves from the majority people around them. Such "corrupt" (i.e., absorbed from Indonesian customs) death rituals as displaying a pillow on the roof of the deceased's dwelling were denounced as "unfilial" by the Confucian restorationists (though failure to do so was, in turn, branded "unfilial" by less Confucianized neighbors).[16]

All assumptions about the old relationships of Chinese minorities to indigenous peoples and ruling elites (whether in colonial regimes or in native kingdoms) were thrown into question. Newly evident practices and symbols of "Chineseness" (Chinese schools, newspapers, voluntary associations, and ritual practices) along with political activism related to China were obtrusive enough to cause resentment among indigenous peoples. The inevitable results were anti-Sinitic movements in the Philippines, the Indies, and Thailand. Particularly in Java, where a long history of Peranakans' superior status and wealth had been galling to them, the indigenes perceived the Peranakans' new cultural self-esteem as arrogance and reacted accordingly. In Thailand, Chinese social assertiveness, political activism, and economic success collided with the growth of a vigorous Thai nationalism that promoted stronger awareness of ethnic differences. We shall consider shortly the anti-Sinitism that resulted.

Much as colonial education helped Peranakans and Baba draw professionally and culturally nearer to the powerful Europeans, Chinese culture (whether or not one knew Chinese) offered a form of self-definition that could differentiate the devotee from the lowest ranks of colonial subjects. Paradoxically, Confucianism had a special appeal to some progressive Babas because it

seemed to embody rationality, secularism, and progress—all the attractive aspects of the powerful West. To Lim Boon Keng (1869–1957), a British-educated Baba physician, Confucianism offered a better future for Chinese migrant society as a whole.

Lim was a third-generation Straits Chinese descended from Hokkien forebears. A star student at Singapore's Raffles Institution (a secondary school), he was the first to win a Queen's Scholarship, which underwrote his medical education at Edinburgh University. Back in Singapore, he developed a career as physician, businessman, Tongmenghui member, Confucian educator and reformer, and a founder of the Straits Chinese British Association. Although brought up speaking Baba Malay and English, he cherished Chinese classical philosophy. Although he studied Chinese for years, he never mastered it. His complex Sino-British cultural inheritance and his cosmopolitanism led him to meld Confucianism, British liberal ideals, and modernization into a distinctive synthesis.

Lim wrote in 1917 that the Baba/Peranakans were "a new race . . . created by the fusion of Chinese and Malay blood." Although these culturally hybrid people are "to all intents and purposes Chinese," they have distinct social practices that make them "a class by themselves." The British had brought English education to the Straits colonies, which made "the line of cleavage . . . more evident" (because it was the creolized Chinese merchants who sent their sons to the English schools). The Peranakan "race" developed also in the Dutch East Indies, wrote Lim, but the slowness of the Indies colonialists to co-opt them into Dutch education had led to "remarkable qualitative variations" from those in Malaya, "to the advantage of the Chinese born and bred under the aegis of the British flag."[17]

Although Lim had worked hard at classical Chinese, to read and understand the Confucian classics in the original language was a struggle. Nevertheless, his intense commitment to the classical heritage led him to become the preeminent Confucian educator and promoter in the Straits Settlements and Malaya. The following passages reveal Lim's Confucianism as purist, agnostic, and secular: a striking contrast to the Malayanized "Chineseness" of the creole Babas; in fact, cognate with the rational, progress-oriented British education Lim had received in Singapore and Scotland. It also served to distance Lim and his colleagues from the "superstitious" folk practices of the Chinese-speaking immigrants who by the early twentieth century vastly outnumbered the English-speaking Babas in the Straits Settlements. There was, in Lim's Confucianism, a certain Mandarin disdain for both the "corrupted" Chinese culture of the Babas and the colorful, magic-encrusted folk culture of the Chinese masses.[18]

Lim Boon Keng on Confucianism, Colonialism, and Modernity (1917)[19]

"Modern education . . . is killing all forms of superstition. English ideas and customs are spreading. Large numbers of young men have gone to study abroad and have come back to practise law, medicine, and other professions. Chinese lads from the Straits have gained academic honours in European and American Universities. . . . Mr. Song Ong Siang, M.A., LL.M. [a Cambridge-educated and socially prominent Baba reformist] is widely known and respected throughout British Malaya as a sound and conscientious lawyer, an advocate of reform and of better education for women. He and the present writer have been workers in the thankless task of attempting to bring about a forward social and intellectual movement. Mainly through the lectures delivered by the writer of this article between 1894–1910 there has been a Confucian revival throughout Malaya, with its reflex action upon China herself. The direct result has been the resuscitation of Chinese schools, which now exist over the whole Malayan region. . . .

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"There is this to be said in favour of the Chinese: in all their dealings the vast majority observe the law of justice and fairness, and it is this moral trait that establishes their power and their influence in every remote corner of the whole of Malaya. . . . Within the British sphere, where all races are treated alike, there is no occasion to set one race against another. Under British rule the Chinese have flourished, and have made uninhabitable jungle into a country literally overflowing with milk and honey. . . . The Chinese will manage to struggle on under any rule, but they find that British rule accords best with their own democratic ideals, and is the nearest approach to the realization of the economic system of Confucius. . . . British rule plus Chinese industry and trade . . . have made the Straits Settlements amongst the most successful of the colonies of the British Empire. . . .

* * * *

"Perhaps the most striking customs of the Chinese relate to weddings and funerals. . . . With regard to funerals, the children of the departed are often placed in a very awkward position. . . . A Chinese fears most to be regarded as an ungrateful son. Hence he is unsparing in his expenditure on funerals and graves. The Buddhist priest is an important personage at funerals. He claims to have power to break through hell and purgatory, and to act as the real representative of the Buddha. . . . There seems to be a system of indulgences which one can buy according to a certain scale. Paper houses, carriages, animals, and so forth can be transformed by the power of fire into ethereal entities in the nether world. [These were customs of the Hokkien homeland.] Here is something ludicrously odd in the spectacle of the priest handing over the title deeds of property in Hades for a certain fee paid in this world! Yet it is done every day, and thousands of filial sons pay dearly for imaginary 'soft' places in the lower regions for their deceased relatives. The Confucianist smiles pityingly at these inanities, but is powerless to stem the tide of superstition. Modern education is, however, a terrific enemy of beliefs in devils and in witchcraft. . . . The revival of Confucianism is slowly clearing the atmosphere, and all the old and ignorant traditions are dying. New ideas are causing a social revolution."

Local Leadership and Social Structure

It was principally the Totok newcomers who were swayed by the tide of nationalist feeling in response to events in China. Properly speaking, however, China (the nation) was not their only focus. At least as compelling were the fortunes of their native places. "China" was seen elastically, with the natal village as the vital center of a circle of concern that expanded or contracted as events unfolded. This focus on the local and the particular extended equally to the Chinese community where the migrant currently was living: his social obligations were to his kinsmen and to his regional and dialect compatriots. Social action in overseas communities took place within a framework of compatriotism. Even in pan-Chinese nationalist mobilization, the base continued to be regional and dialect affinity groups, nested within a larger framework. And at the highest levels of coordination, such as the pan-Chinese (i.e., including all regional compatriot groups) China relief fund drives, we see *bang* leaders acting through their affinity-group constituencies at the local level.

What of the nation-state as a focus for coordinated action? To understand where "China" the nation-state ranked in overseas consciousness, we begin with the rhetoric of the early twentieth century, which melded dynastic loyalty with the concept of "race" *(zhong)* in starkly social-Darwinian terms. The emphasis was not so much on Chinese unity as on the perils of existing disunity. As Huang Naishang, a sojourner in Singapore, wrote in 1899, racial extinction was just over the horizon if Chinese did not learn to transcend particularistic divisions and act as a coherent group—a group not political but racial. Perhaps overseas Chinese nationalists, living in so many disparate venues, believed that only racial affinity could unite them. But how strong was Chinese racial feeling as a unifying force? Divisiveness was particularly evident among the Totoks, whose particularism was fresh from the regions, dialects, and even villages of the old country. The social structure of their lives abroad was built on the same templates as their lives in China: dialect, region, and kinship made up a mosaic of affinity-group disunity and, all too often, competition or violent conflict. The Nanyang Chinese nationalism championed in Huang's writings was both apocalyptic and practical. Disunity invited racial extinction (the horrific social-Darwinian apocalypse). Yet other visions were more down to earth. Besides concern for Chinese racial survival, Nanyang merchants felt reasonable and timely anxiety about Western business competition. Business plus nationalism: was this not the link that had made the imperialist West so powerful?

We met Huang Naishang in chapter 1 as promoter of Chinese settlement in Sarawak, northern Borneo, where he led three parties of Hokchiu farmers to clear farmland on the jungle frontier. Born near Fuzhou to a poor farming-artisan family, Huang was educated at home, later was converted to Methodism by an American missionary, and became a minister in Fuzhou. From the missionaries he had learned English, had studied American history, and was inspired by the American pioneer experience. Later he passed the imperial examinations at a high level and became a certified member of the provincial literati elite. As a committed nationalist and reformer, Huang was a follower of Kang Youwei's constitutional reform movement beginning in 1895. After the movement was crushed in 1898, Huang left the country for Singapore, where he took up journalism and wrote the following summons.

Huang Naishang's Call for Overseas-Chinese Unity (1899)[20]

"The three types of creature—plants, birds and beasts, and humans—have different levels of wisdom and power . . . the wisest and the strongest bully the less wise and less strong. Among one species or race, the stronger will bully the weaker.

"The wisest and strongest cannot be found among today's Yellow Race. At some point in time a wisest-and-strongest race must emerge. It will mistreat the weaker ones and even exterminate them. Among our Yellow Race, there is nobody who does not know this fact and fear it. Nevertheless we are not able to think through and understand how to avoid being exterminated. This is because we do not understand the principle of knowledge and power. If we understood the principle, we would know that our Yellow Race also has the knowledge and power to defend itself. We cannot be called the strongest [race], because we are not united. . . .

"If the Yellow Race realizes the critical danger of being exterminated, and understands the importance of wisdom and power as well as the differences [among races] in their knowledge, power, and unity, then they will become aware of the way of self-defense. There is no alternative. Although this will affect the situation of China as a whole, yet it must start with the Nanyang Chinese. . . .

"It is said in yesterday's paper that it is vital to establish chambers of commerce in order to unite the Nanyang Chinese. We Chinese know little about new theories that have developed over the last hundred years. Because our knowledge is shallow, not only do we have trouble uniting when we are abroad, but even in the home country there is estrangement between people from different provinces, prefectures, counties, villages, and lineages. Therefore, a trivial disagreement may cause a dispute or even a violent affray. Sometimes two entire villages or lineages resort to armed conflict. In a minor case they go to court and bankrupt their families; in a major case, a vendetta is the result. This vile custom is common in Fujian and Guangdong.

"From Saigon to the East Indies and Australia, five or six million Chinese live scattered among the Nanyang islands. Among them, most came from Fujian and Guangdong, and only a few from other provinces. These five or six million Chinese forsook their ancestors' homes and tombs, looking for food in a foreign country and living under others' shelters. They are under the rule of the British, French, American, Portuguese, or Spanish. They live together with the different peoples of Malaya [etc.]. Living all over the place, if the Chinese cannot achieve good relations among themselves . . . then the foreign peoples will surely take advantage of our mutual estrangement to despise and mistreat us. Not only powerful countries such as Britain, France, U.S., Portugal, and Spain, but also the Malays and other local people will make trouble for us. . . . They have not done this yet, only because we Fujianese and Cantonese came here a mere three decades ago, so perhaps they have not yet espied our shortcomings. Later, if we are still disunited and injure one other, they will reveal their strength and barbarity. Then a general catastrophe will be conceivable.

"Furthermore, the Western powers such as Britain, France, U.S., Portugal, and Spain are skilled at commerce. They will seize every opportunity to make profits—like mercury falling on the floor, there is no hole it will not enter. They will not give up until they control the entire commerce of Nanyang. . . .

* * * *

"If we want to establish chambers of commerce, we should first advise commercial schools, commercial lawyers, and business circles as to how they should be managed so as not to be mistreated by other countries. Then steamships, railways, mines [and other modern enterprises] can be developed by the Nanyang Chinese. . . . In addition, we need to establish schools to educate the youth, to correct old customs and promote reform, and to learn technology as the basis for profits. Thus we can catch up with other powerful countries in the East and West, protect the interests we have built up in Nanyang, and not be forced into retreat by foreign countries.

"We [Nanyang Chinese] can then recover the ruined rivers and mountains of the twenty-two provinces of China for our benevolent and glorious emperor, so that our four hundred million fellow countrymen [in China] will not become beasts of burden, slaves, or prisoners. Then we shall be able to roam at ease over 200,000 *li* of fertile land, and perhaps even honor our royal dynasty by recovering the lost frontier territories. This is something that the Nanyang Chinese merchants of noble aspiration can offer by way of gratitude to the dynasty, to repair the damage that our Chinese realm has suffered. Their fame will spread around the globe, will be on the lips of all who belong to the Yellow Race, and will last for ten thousand generations. How splendid!"

In the early twentieth century, Chinese nationalist tides swept across the Pacific. In North America, immigrants had suffered from the widespread public perception of a China that looked poor and backward, mired in age-old lassitude, a breeding ground of disease and vice: all lurid reflections of Westerners' supercilious treaty-port mentality yet not wholly different from the views of progressive Nanyang Chinese. As noted in chapter 5, Chinese in the United States had suffered also from the baneful conjunction of class conflict and racial hostility in the western states. Under the bitterly resented exclusion laws, it was an easy reach for emigrants to link their troubles metaphorically to the situation of their homeland. China was oppressed not only by Western imperialism but also by a monarchic regime that was itself an alien imposition: the Manchu dynasty. Associating China with the situation of migrants abroad, drawing emotional support from the struggles of homeland reformers and revolutionaries, was probably common enough: a strong, progressive China could be powerfully suggestive to Chinese abroad who felt oppressed and despised. Public support for reform in China swept through American Chinese communities.

In 1905, those communities may have helped to mobilize the first transnational pan-Chinese protest movement. To pressure the U.S. government into negotiating fairer treatment of Chinese laborers, Beijing's envoy in Washington reportedly persuaded San Francisco Chinese to ask Shanghai merchants to boycott American goods. The Shanghai Chamber of Commerce responded by launching a mass anti-American boycott, which was organized and enforced by the Chamber's component trade guilds. Before long, the boycott movement spread to port cities all along the coast.

A mainspring of the boycott movement in Shanghai was Zeng Shaoqing, a Hokkien businessman reared in Singapore.[21] Other Nanyang Chinese activists followed Zeng's lead. This editorial, published in Penang, was one of a number of racially-charged nationalist outcries similar to that of Huang Naishang six years earlier. (Though the boycott of 1905 influenced Chinese protest movements for years to come, it had no practical effect on U.S. exclusion laws.)

A Call to Boycott American Goods to Protest the Exclusion Acts (1905)[22]

"The Chinese Merchants in Nanyang Should Urgently Struggle against the U.S. Exclusion Treaty.

"The Act that regulates Chinese labor immigration in the United States [the 'Exclusion Act' of 1882] has now been in effect for over twenty years since it was first introduced by an American named Geary. In the beginning, this Act appeared to place restrictions only upon Chinese laborers, and merchants were not supposed to be excluded. Nowadays, however, only actual shareholders [of a business] can be counted as merchants and the rest [the staff who work in the enterprise] therefore do not have the rights of merchants. So although it looks as if there are no prohibitions against merchants, the prohibitions do exist in effect. Our people are subjected to all kinds of obstacles and outrages as if they were barbarians. This has never happened before anywhere in the world For ten months, the Chinese merchants in Shanghai have held meetings and discussions, and they plan to suspend all imports of American goods as a form of boycott. Then, the Chambers of Commerce in Hong Kong and Canton [Guangzhou] also responded and showed their sympathy. The myriad crowd clamorously passed on the news. Their love of country and their solidarity were clearly revealed in their words and demeanor. Why is it that only the Chinese merchants in Nanyang still remain silent and have not responded in any way?

* * * *

"We are a race with several thousand years of civilization, yet are humiliated by the Americans to this extent! Over the past twenty years, countless Chinese [in America] have lost their rights and their family members. This is what we have all seen and heard when we trade in other countries. Upon the expiration of the Act this year, if we cannot extricate ourselves [from this humiliating position] but allow them to continue enforcing the Exclusion Act, then their brutality will only get more severe. Can we Chinese willingly bear all these [injuries and humiliations]?

* * * *

"Our united action today is an effective way to correct the situation in China. . . . Now, all the people of the various provinces and port cities have acted promptly upon hearing this news. But the people at the various ports in Nanyang are the only ones from whom we have heard nothing. Could the Chinese merchants in Nanyang be the only ones who do not share love for the country and unity with other Chinese? These are also descendents of our Yellow Emperor. . . .

"Nanyang is where tens of thousands of merchants gather. The total number of Chinese merchants in the area exceeds a million, and the quantity of American goods that they market is

immense. Why don't we unite all the merchants and shareholders and spread the news to the various ports in Nanyang about how the Americans exclude Chinese workers? Together, we maintain a principle of not using American goods and not allowing them to come ashore. . . .

"We humbly hope that the Chinese merchants in Nanyang will promptly act and respond to this call. If we manage to boycott American goods, then we shall be regaining dignity for the four hundred million people of our race."

A shared sense of racial solidarity, spanning regional and dialect differences, powered this first mass movement, joining Chinese at home with migrants abroad in several venues at once. Although the boycott failed to sway the anti-Chinese forces in America, it awakened thousands of Chinese in the United States to the potential of nationalist protest.

In China and abroad, the boycott movement sprang from the transitional social structure of the modern city: new social groupings joined with old institutions to produce activism of a new sort. For all its modern flavor, the boycott could not do without the old dialect and regional associations. Whether in China or California, leadership by the regional lodges and their merchant elites was indispensable. In Shanghai, the regional sojourning groups, such as the Ningbo *bang*, which dominated the Chamber of Commerce, and the Guangdong and Fujian *bang*, which had the most intimate concerns with countrymen overseas, were nodes of leadership and mobilization. Such regional groups (along with occupational guilds, generally with regional affiliations) met separately to coordinate the boycott. Consequently, the boycott had transnational reach but local roots. But alongside the old-style regional organizations was the changing urban citizenry, including students and professional groups, that constituted a new and politically susceptible public. The nested structure of old-style compatriot lodges within modern institutions such as chambers of commerce remained characteristic of pan-Chinese and nationalist movements both within China and overseas.

In North American Chinatowns, too, the leadership and social structure of the boycott movement displayed a mixture of old and new. Old-style merchant groups (organized under the Six Companies) were the boycott's key supporters. Chinatown merchants, whose shops were generally branches of Hong Kong establishments, were not themselves subject to the exclusion laws. Nonetheless, they were alarmed by the exclusion of their principal customers—the mass of Chinese laborers—to whom they sold imported Chinese goods such as food products. As a result, merchant leadership of the Chinese Six Companies in San Francisco and their constituent regional *huiguan* formed the basis of organized outrage against exclusion in 1905. Nevertheless, these old-style elites operated alongside the dominant reformist party, the Emperor Protection Society, the Chinese-language press, and the federation of Triad brotherhoods known as the Zhigongtang.[23] It was a cross-class, eclectic, pan-Chinese movement, but it relied on the tight-knit regional affinity groups to mobilize crowds and money. Similar conditions could be found throughout Southeast Asia, as Chinese communities were roused by hopes that China would become strong and resolute enough to protect its overseas subjects.

Political Activism in Overseas Communities

On top of the numerous reasons for migrants to become involved in homeland issues was the homeland's outreach to them: the emergence, in twentieth-century China, of governments that considered Chinese overseas as part of their rightful human capital and, accordingly, built institutions for mobilizing and controlling them.[24] Over three decades, Japanese aggression focused the attention of Chinese overseas on perils to the Chinese nation-state. Repeated regionwide campaigns to raise funds for war victims produced an extraordinary historical moment: efforts by governments in China to assert control over Chinese overseas, tap their wealth, and mold their politics. The activities of the Guomindang government (including its Communist united-front collaborators and paralleled on a smaller scale after 1937 by the Japanese-installed puppet regime of Wang Jingwei) combined persuasion, intimidation, organization, and covert operations to extend control over Chinese overseas communities.

This extraordinary extension of state power was consistent with the attitudes of the old imperial government, which, even before the 1909 promulgation of bloodline nationality (*jus sanguinis*), considered its consuls abroad to be the legitimate supervisors of Chinese overseas lives. It was partly to counter what they considered a power grab by the Qing imperial government that the British had established the "Chinese Protectorate" in 1877, not simply to "protect" Chinese workers from the secret-society brotherhoods that controlled their lives. Ultimately, the Protectorate and its successor organization had blocked the ambitions of imperial consuls to oversee the Chinese

community. But Beijing (and later Nanjing) had other cards to play, particularly in the sphere of Chinese-language education. Chinese government influence over the Malayan Chinese schools was so powerful that, from 1920 on, the British attempted to counter it by vetting teachers and censoring textbooks.

The far-reaching approach to direct governance of Chinese citizens abroad was backed by a restatement of the *jus sanguinis* principle in 1928 following the bloody Ji'nan Incident in Shandong.[25] The Guomindang then rode the rising tide of anti-Japanese anger to mobilize "Shandong relief" contributions from Chinese everywhere. There was more than legalistic reasoning here: the Guomindang had two other claims to universal sovereignty over Chinese. One was the ethnic component of Sun Yatsen's legacy. The revolution of 1911 had been based partly on the identification of the Chinese nation with the Han race—and race could not be contained by national boundaries. Another was the anti-imperialist strain in the revised "Three People's Principles" issued by Sun in 1924. "Nationalism" was not to be limited to abolishing the "unequal treaties" but embodied (by implication) the worldwide anti-imperialist agenda of the Comintern, with which the Guomindang was nominally aligned through its united front with the Chinese Communists. Anti-imperialism connected China's national autonomy to more universal goals, a connection not lost on colonial regimes.

Mobilization and Control

From the early years of the republic, Chinese governments' interest in overseas Chinese was institutionalized in special organizations to control them and to mobilize their loyalties and resources. Authorities on all levels established offices to manage "Overseas Chinese Affairs" (*qiaowu*). When Sun Yatsen set up his revolutionary government in Guangzhou in 1923, he established forthwith an "Overseas Chinese Affairs Bureau" (*qiaowuju*) and chaired it himself. His stated purpose was to assure protection and care for returned sojourners, a resolute step to allay their anxieties.[26]

By 1928, the newly established Nationalist government in Nanjing had established an Overseas Party Affairs Department directly under the Guomindang Party Central Committee, in line with its vital political mission, which embraced both mobilization and control.[27] Tasks of intelligence gathering (e.g., registration of schools, community groups, and newspaper publishers) were assigned to Guomindang *qiaowu* operatives despite efforts by some returned sojourners to extricate overseas Chinese affairs from party authority.[28] The department's duties included sending officials to investigate the conditions of emigrants; to supervise their education, ideology, and culture; and to spur their investment in Chinese industry. Subsequently, regional branches of the department were established in emigrant-sending cities all around China. Efforts by the Nanjing government to mobilize and control overseas Chinese were energetic and persistent, in view of the long-standing connection of the Guomindang with emigrant communities. Finally, instigation of anti-Japanese movements among overseas Chinese was assigned to the department, a politically sensitive job that antagonized ruling authorities in foreign venues such as Malaya, the Indies, and Thailand.

In line with the "parallel hierarchies" principle of the party-state, an analogous unit, the Overseas Chinese Affairs Commission, was attached to the Executive Yuan, with the tasks of assigning "Overseas Chinese Affairs Officers" to Chinese diplomatic missions and working with consular officials to manage relations with compatriots overseas.[29] Particularly consequential was the commission's role in compiling special textbooks for overseas Chinese communities and founding schools all around Southeast Asia (more than 2,800 were established before the onset of the Sino-Japanese War in 1937).[30] But it was the party branches established throughout Chinese communities overseas that served as intelligence and control centers linking the national Guomindang to overseas Chinese communities, particularly in respect to mass movements. This was, as Stephen Fitzgerald has observed, an attempt to exercise a kind of colonialism.[31]

Plainly, the Nationalist Party and government meant to oversee many facets of overseas Chinese lives: their political loyalties, education, voluntary associations, and financial resources.[32] The Guomindang, with its historic connections to the Nanyang, took an active role in overseas Chinese affairs, assuming that overseas Chinese, being citizens of the nation, ought to be controlled by the nation's governing party. The Guomindang's Nanyang orientation contrasted with that of the Qing rulers, who despite their pragmatism about maritime trade still mistrusted Chinese overseas. The Guomindang conceived its mission to govern them comprehensively—and (as it appeared to the rulers and peoples of the Nanyang) saw Southeast Asia as an appropriate sphere for China to wield

influence through its overseas citizens. Accordingly, the Nanyang became an arena in which to rouse national loyalty and during the 1930s an economic battleground for China's resistance to Japan.[33] How successful was the Guomindang-run Nationalist government in achieving these aims?

In the decade before the Pacific War, such Guomindang presumptions were resisted not only by political rulers in the Nanyang but also by many overseas Chinese, including some eminent Babas (such as Tan Cheng Lock in Malaya) and most famously by the Singaporean leader of the Nanyang China Relief organization, Tan Kah-kee. Nor were Chinese chambers of commerce or local Nanyang newspapers entirely under the Guomindang thumb.[34] The prospect of any Chinese government's controlling overseas Chinese, whether by accredited diplomats, by educators, or by covert operatives, was alarming wherever Chinese settled or so-journed. The overseas Chinese themselves came to realize that none of the three Chinese regional governments in existence during the Sino-Japanese War of 1937–1945 (the Nationalists at Chongqing (Chungking), the Communists at Yan'an, or the puppet Wang Jingwei regime at Nanjing) could offer the slightest protection to communities overseas. It is not hard to see why many sojourners avoided commitment and hedged their bets.

None of the ruling powers in Southeast Asia—whether British, Dutch, French, American, or Thai—could suffer its Chinese minority to be controlled by an outside power. Considering the credentials of the Guomindang as a revolutionary party, there were reasons for alarm. Colonial regimes feared that the anti-imperialism of the 1919 May Fourth movement—echoed overseas by furious Chinese crowds denouncing the Versailles Treaty—would provoke uprisings against foreign rule throughout the Nanyang. There was also the fear of Soviet Bolshevism, a self-proclaimed foe of Western colonialism, which had a base within the Guomindang in the early 1920s in the form of the Chinese Communist Party. To British colonial officials, a Guomindang-led strike and boycott against Hong Kong in 1925–1926 seemed a likely inspiration to their "own" Chinese minority in Malaya. Another fear involved relations with Japan: antagonizing Japan by boycotting its trade and assaulting its citizens was not what any Southeast Asian government wanted. Accordingly, Guomindang branches in Malaya and the Straits Settlements were banned by government order in 1925 under the same "Societies Ordinance" that had outlawed the brotherhoods in 1889. The Dutch in the Indies imposed strict limits on Guomindang activity. In Malaya, the party survived underground, only to be banned again in 1930 with greater effect. Meanwhile, however, it had so penetrated Chinese schools in Malaya and the Straits Settlements as to form a solid base among students and teachers. An overall assessment of China's effort to control the Nanyang Chinese must begin with the schools, where patriotism and cultural pride were most effectively instilled into the young and ultimately into the communities at large.

In some respects, overseas Chinese elites had as much to fear from Guomindang interference as did the local governments under which they were living. Even an old Tongmenghui member like Tan Kah-kee became suspicious of Guomindang officials. He had witnessed official corruption in his home province of Fujian while setting up modern schools during the 1910s and 1920s, and his ultimate break with the Guomindang occurred over Fujian misgovernment. Apart from fear of radicalism, it is easy to understand Nanyang businessmen's distrust of Chinese bureaucrats (whether party or government) whose behavior barely distinguished them from the Qing officials from whom so many emigrant merchants had been glad to escape. As Huang Naishang had written, the Nanyang Chinese business class had profited by being out from under the control of the "greedy officials and harsh flunkies" of the homeland.[35]

Anti-Sinitism: Early Phase

The long-term implications of China's nationality law, along with the inauguration of the Chinese Republic in 1912, were a mixed blessing to ethnic Chinese living abroad, particularly in Southeast Asia. The suspicions of colonial governments and later of postcolonial "new nations" that Chinese minorities might prove ungovernable or disruptive put emigrants and their descendants at considerable risk. The results were quickly seen in several venues. In Java, what looked to indigenes like culturally prideful assertiveness by Peranakans in the early twentieth century provoked anti-Chinese violence among Muslim groups. Around the same time, Thailand's own nationalist fervor had emerged in step with that of its Chinese minority and was partly provoked by it.

Thailand (as Siam called itself from the early twentieth century) had received Chinese immigrants at a rapid pace, about 15,000 annually between 1893 and 1917, yet by 1917 the local-born Chinese

still outnumbered the China-born by about three to two.[36] These large, local-born acculturated communities felt the cultural and political effects of the new layer of immigrants, as typical Chinese social practices emerged among the newcomers. These included regional and dialect associations, secret-society brotherhoods, community welfare organizations, newspapers, and local branches of Chinese political parties. Homeland political battles of the 1900s had given rise to a lively and contentious Chinese-language press in Thailand, along with feuding advocacy groups backing reform, constitutional monarchy, or revolution.

The Thai reaction was strikingly hostile, as we shall see in chapter 7. In the era before modern nationality, the Siamese monarchy had been concerned only with the Chinese place in the political order, not with their ethnicity. Thus the presence or absence of cultural or ethnic "Chineseness" had not been considered important by the Siamese ruling class. Nevertheless, in the early twentieth century, "Thai" ethnicity was expressed in the freshly coined "Thailand," and ethnic distinctions rationalized new controls over the increasingly assertive and powerful Chinese minority. As the Sino-Thai scholar Kasian Tejapira expressed it, "the problem of the Chinese minority" in Thailand was created politically "by the joint efforts of the Nationalist regime in China on the one hand, and the racist, absolutist regime under King Rama VI in Siam on the other."[37] The Thai case is a perfect example of how "nationalisms" emerge as reciprocal productions of intersecting cultures. It also illustrates how anti-Sinitism arose as an opportunistic response to Chinese events, particularly the injection of Chinese national politics into overseas Chinese communities. Thailand's new anti-Chinese measures included restrictions on immigration, bans against the collection of "China relief" funds, arrests or deportation of Chinese Guomindang activists and community leaders, and requirements that all Thailand-born Chinese attend Thai-language schools. Most onerous was an economic "Thai-ification" program to push Chinese out of key industrial and labor sectors in favor of ethnic Thai.[38]

Japanese Aggression and Chinese "National Salvation"

All over Southeast Asia, Chinese leaders of campaigns for "national salvation" and "China relief" were Totoks: Chinese-speaking first- or second-generation immigrants. To the Totoks, "China" began with particular Chinese villages, counties, or provinces where their own corridors were open and lively. They had *qiaoxiang* to care about. What factors in Chinese society made it possible for them to move beyond their *qiaoxiang* concerns to embrace the cause of the Chinese nation-state? A history of the years of resistance to Japanese aggression suggests that, however intense the feeling for China, the particularistic texture of Chinese emigrant society remained the foundation of public activism.

Tan Kah-kee and "China Relief"

Using particularism as a base for larger frameworks of social action characterized the career of Tan Kah-kee, the most admired overseas Chinese nationalist leader of the twentieth century. Tan's father and uncle had emigrated from their Hokkien farming village to the bustling port of Singapore, where they became well-established rice traders. Traditionally educated at rural schools, Tan Kah-kee blended stern Confucian social ethics with a bold, practical approach to business. Having migrated to Singapore in 1890 to work in the family business, within a decade and a half he had become a wealthy entrepreneur in his own right.

Charitable donations transmute wealth into status, and in Chinese society such donations begin with one's kin group and native region. Beginning with his home village and later his home province, Tan became known as a philanthropist of education. Recalling in 1933 the local origins of this life mission, he related how a tour in 1912 of his native region had left him deeply shocked by the breakdown of the rural school system. In village after village, he had seen "groups of young men, some watching local opera performances, some gambling. When I asked villagers about this, they all replied that the traditional village primary schools had long been abandoned, and that there was no funding available to institute modern-style state schools. I realized that if the situation weren't corrected, these villages could hardly avoid falling into barbarism within a decade or so. That's what impelled me to promote education."[39]

With his own contributions and those of Singapore compatriots, he financed schools in his native village; a decade later, he founded a private university at Xiamen, the primary seaport of Minnan,

his home region. The Xiamen project benefited not only young people in his home province but also many compatriots from Southeast Asia who made up about half the entering class. All these projects were plainly motivated by a fervent sense of obligation to the society and dialect group of Minnan. Yet from the Confucian perspective, they were not irrelevant to national issues. The idea that education in Tan's home region would ultimately contribute to "an orderly China" followed the classic template of Confucian social action: to rule a kingdom, first get your own house in order. From village to province—and only afterward to the nation—was Tan's path to social reform and national strength.

When China was menaced by foreign power, as in the Ji'nan Incident, Tan could be moved to action at the national level. In Singapore, mass anger at Japan sparked a community-wide fund-raising campaign led by Tan and other leading capitalists. The Shandong Relief campaign paralleled a boycott of Japanese goods throughout the colony. Although under a ban in Malaya, the Guomindang nevertheless was deeply involved in mobilizing the Ji'nan relief-fund operation. The fact that Tan was politically unaligned ("*wudang*, *wupai*": no party affiliation, no faction) helped make him acceptable to the British as a Chinese community leader. In fact, Tan organized fund-raising through the particularistic structure of Singapore society, not through the Guomindang, which the British administration deeply distrusted: *bang* organizations (the original basis of Tan's own power), affinity-group lodges, as well as schools, women's groups, and trade associations all served as footholds among the intensely particularistic Singapore public. Most of the actual collection followed *bang* lines; despite the popular fervor and class depth of the movement, the divided power structure survived at all levels.

What provided the linkage between Tan's local and national concerns? C. F. Yong has shown how Tan's broad social activism rested on his status in the Hokkien *bang* in Singapore but that he also looked beyond the *bang* system toward a society where dialect groups were complemented by universal citizen responsibility. Funding a Hokkien school was followed by founding other schools that transcended dialect-group lines—including Raffles College, which eventually became the University of Malaya and later of Singapore. Status within the Singapore Hokkien *bang* linked him to Hokkien community leaders around Malaya as essential collaborators in his fund-raising campaigns. Dialect-group support invariably served him as a foundation for broader social leadership. Tan had been an early supporter of Sun Yatsen, having joined his Revolutionary Alliance (Tongmenghui) before the revolution of 1911 and supported Sun financially. Clearly, he must have subscribed to Sun's brand of ethnically based, inclusive republicanism. But Sun also believed in building democracy from the ground up. In Tan's case, particularist and national concerns existed side by side. One level of concern did not supplant the other. Without a dialect-group base, Tan could not have achieved the credibility for political leadership, and without the national focus, he could not have built a cross-dialect constituency. In Tan's characteristic political style, the national and the local were inseparable even on the pan-Chinese scale.[40]

Tan's most ambitious project, now that he was called on to bring the broad span of Chinese organizations together in a common cause, was to organize the larger scale Singapore China Relief Fund Committee after the outbreak of war in 1937. Although Chinese anti-Japanese nationalism in Malaya and Singapore was intense, Tan had been unable to engineer a cross-class pan-Chinese "association" in 1929, in part because of British opposition and in part because of the inherent rivalry among the *bang* oligarchs who dominated Chinese society in the colony. It had been Tan's position as president of the Ee Ho Hean (Yihexuan), a "millionaires' club," dominated by leaders of the Hokkien *bang*, that enabled him to muster enough support to launch pan-Chinese projects such as the Shandong Relief Fund. Singapore society was nationalistic but not easily united to act on it. It took the all-out Japanese invasion of China in the summer of 1937 to galvanize a Nanyang-wide "China Relief" movement, first in Singapore (organized by Tan Kah-kee working through the Singapore Chinese Chamber of Commerce and the Yihexuan), then, in October 1938, the Singapore-based "Nanyang Chinese Relief General Association" with local affiliates all over Southeast Asia. This regional collaboration, from November 1938 to the beginning of the Pacific War in December 1941, yielded nearly 178 million yuan to sustain China's war effort (equivalent, in 1938, to about 10.6 million U.S. dollars). The largest contributions came from Chinese in Malaya, the Dutch East Indies, and the Philippines. It is a tribute to Tah Kah-kee's widespread reputation that contributions from this diverse region could balance Chongqing's foreign-exchange deficit through 1942.

Yet Tan's primary concerns remained close to home. When he visited China in 1940 to survey wartime conditions (including tours to Chongqing and Yan'an, the Nationalist and Communist

redoubts), it happened that his home province of Fujian was being administered by a cruel and corrupt outsider, Chen Yi, a Zhejiangese general with close ties to Chiang Kai-shek. After Chongqing and Yan'an (which he evaluated to the advantage of the latter), Tan visited his home province. What moved him decisively were the spoliation of Fujian—and Chiang Kai-shek's cold rejection of his complaints about it. On his return to Singapore, Tan related his findings in detail to the Hokkien *bang* association. A parade of horrors began with "mistreatment of conscript soldiers": these helpless victims were treated "like convicted felons, who were bound with ropes in groups of ten or so to prevent their escaping." Tan recalled, "Passing through Jianyang I saw two corpses by the roadside, one stark naked. My travelling companions told me that they were conscripts who had either died of illness, or been too sick to travel and so were shot to death."[41]

There followed a long list of abuses that added up to Governor Chen's squeezing the province for whatever profit he could extract. When Tan had demanded, first of Chen and then of Chiang Kai-shek, that the looting and tyranny in Fujian be stopped, he was stonewalled by both. He concluded that Chiang and his wife "hated and rejected" him because of his scathing denunciations of Governor Chen.[42] At bottom, this issue was probably more consequential for Tan's eventual embrace of the Communists than were his disgust at the corruption and decadence in Chiang's wartime capital of Chongqing and his admiration for the apparently spartan life in Mao's Yan'an. As his Hokkien compatriots in Singapore expressed it when they welcomed him back from his mainland tour of 1940, Tan's "object of investigation has been the [Hokkien] people, [but] the ultimate target of that investigation has been the nation."[43] But Tan's localism, added to his resolute non-party stance, reassured the British that he was not being controlled by external forces.[44]

Nonetheless, China Relief had to surmount significant hurdles: resistance by ruling authorities as well as fearfulness and business-as-usual on the part of many overseas Chinese merchants. Overseas Chinese nationalism was fervent but not universal. That individual businessmen balked at boycotting Japanese manufactures was only to be expected since alternative suppliers of certain goods (e.g., bicycles) were not always available. Resistance is attested by the numerous cases of violence and intimidation against recalcitrant merchants. A Nanyang businessman, whether shopkeeper or tycoon, was under painful pressures. If he resisted the boycott, he could be subject to severe moral or physical sanctions, including accusations of treason, torching or trashing of his property, and even personal injury or death. Yet a boycott could bring ruinous financial losses, including business failure. Furthermore, the political authorities in the venue societies were, in the years just preceding the war, intent on damping down local activism for fear of offending Japan.

Were Totoks more willing than Peranakans to sacrifice for the cause? In some venues they were, but identity was not always decisive. A wealthy Hokkien Totok in Java (a textile importer whose European supplies had been cut off by the outbreak of World War II) was listed by a Japanese observer as having close business relations with Japanese firms, yet he was simultaneously chairman of the Batavia Overseas-Chinese Committee for China Relief, a vice president of the Federation of Hokkien Associations in Southeast Asia, and a member of the Nationalist government's Legislative Yuan.[45] Such hedging was endemic in the lives of overseas Chinese businessmen during the National Salvation crisis. Community standing and personal reputation required serving the greater good, which in the late 1930s had been defined as concern for China-the-nation and for victims of Japanese aggression. At the same time, what of one's own family and of the business that supported its security and status? This choice between conflicting moral imperatives was one that few could make easily. As for the prudent Totok businessman, fate caught up with him when the Japanese invaded Java. He moved his entire textile stock from Batavia to a safer location—where it was promptly overrun by an angry anti-Chinese crowd of Indonesians and looted to the last thread.[46]

Lin Man-houng has shown how the flexible attitudes of overseas Chinese businessmen toward national identity led to a widespread practice of adopting foreign nationality—on top of the Chinese nationality they held by virtue of the bloodline-citizenship law. Nationality for them tended to be a matter not of "either-or" but of "both-and." Formal nationality was but an external quality that existed for the benefit of doing business in foreign venues. Nationalities of colonial powers (particularly Dutch and British) could be useful for business purposes (such as obtaining favorable taxation rates or court jurisdictions), but the most useful turned out to be that of the rising Asian regional power, Japan. Immunity from exploitation and mistreatment by governments in Southeast Asia and in China itself was the primary benefit of multiple nationality. It was said that nationality certificates were hung above doorways of Hokkiens, "just like the *jinshi* imperial examination degrees or Hanlin Academy student tablets." The Indies sugar and tea magnate, the Hokkien Guo

Chunyang (a native of Tong'an, Tan Kah-kee's *qiaoxiang*), bore Dutch, British, and Japanese nationalities simultaneously with Chinese (Guo had obtained Japanese nationality by visiting Taiwan's Japanese colonial regime).[47] The multiple-nationality practice was consistent with the "business is business" ethos of overseas Chinese merchants. This was not easily to be classed as treason: formal nationality (as distinct from affinity group) was considered not an indelible mark of one's identity but rather a flexible attribute that probably carried little or no moral weight for most people. Flexibility was characteristic of a period in which national identity was not a dominant characteristic of personal definition in Chinese society—particularly for overseas Chinese in colonial venues who made their livings as sojourners in an environment of powerful foreign states and a weak China. That flexibility was achieved through the leverage of marginality: each side of one's doubly marginal identity was a fulcrum to lever advantages from the other.

Some societies were by their nature impossible venues in which to display anti-Japanese outrage. One such place was, of course, Japan itself. The modern history of Chinese migration to Japan began with the Perry mission of 1863 that forced the Tokugawa shōgunate to open seaports to foreign traders. Chinese accompanied Western merchants to work for them as compradors, servants, and artisans. Pursuant to the Treaty of Tianjin of 1871, China and Japan opened diplomatic and commercial relations. After the Japanese annexation of Taiwan in 1895, Taiwanese had easy access to work in Japan. Besides the craft niches known as "three knives" (catering, barbering, and tailoring), Chinese assumed crucial roles in foreign trade. For years, the Chinese community in the port of Kobe had been shipping and trading Japanese textiles all over East and Southeast Asia, a middleman niche vital to the Japanese industrial economy. Kagotani Naoto has studied the role of overseas Chinese merchants in building Japan's East Asian trading system quite independently of the Western networks for distributing industrial products. Beginning in the 1880s, Chinese sojourners, including Hokkien and Cantonese, ran major export-import firms at Kobe, trading to south China and Southeast Asia.[48] Beginning in 1937, a new group of Chinese merchants set up shop in Kobe, apparently to exploit the niche created by the growing market for Japanese textiles in Java, where Peranakans (and the occasional Totok) were willing to deal with Japanese firms despite the Guomindang's boycott campaign.[49] Given the difference in nationalist ardor between Peranakans and Totoks, it is not surprising that the boycott was relatively weak in Java, where Peranakans were a substantial majority. Because most of their Javanese customers were Hokkien, we can infer that the new Kobe group of sojourner-merchants were Hokkien too. It is likely that these same Kobe-based merchants contributed to the Guomindang anti-Japanese fund drive in Java.

The Mosaic of Chinese Nationalism

Stirring pictures of united Nanyang overseas Chinese nationalism are open to doubt, given abundant evidence of hesitancy, divisiveness, and Guomindang heavy-handedness. Even a leader of Tan Kah-kee's eminence could not achieve unity among the Nanyang Chinese in the cause of a Chinese nation-state that could offer them no protection—despite a sometimes crude presumption of authority by a Chinese government far from the scene of action. Tan Kah-kee himself was infuriated by Guomindang interference in the Nanyang China Relief effort and by its attempt, in 1940, to supplant him as its leader. As a coda to his views on Nanyang "unity," Tan offered the following gentle irony in response to supporters' postwar plea that he lead a united Nanyang Chinese organization. Particularism still reigned supreme in Singapore, as in Southeast Asia as a whole:

> How easy it is to say the word "unity." For the moment let us not consider large areas such as southeast Asia or the whole of Malaya. Let us just take the case of Singapore. I would not dare to affirm whether the Overseas Chinese here could be united or not, for what is called unity on its own is just a useless, empty word. There definitely has to be some sign of factual accomplishment before it has any real meaning. . . . For example, the schools of each *bang* should all be under unified control. . . . [Tan went on to suggest radical amalgamations of dialect-group assets and facilities as well as the elimination of all kinship associations.] However, in so far as the Hokkien *bang* is concerned, no matter who is trying to promote these ideas, he will certainly be shot down.[50]

Chinese nationalism during the first half of the twentieth century was not a single construct but a mosaic of related states of mind and channels of action. Some Peranakans sought a revised self-definition and sense of social status through Confucianism as a renewed foothold in Chinese culture and a distinction from indigenous populations. Totoks, without political protection in the colonial world, took refuge in Chinese (or foreign) nationality and earned social validation in *qiaoxiang* ties. To some overseas Chinese, a modernizing Chinese state seemed a possible source of protection and improved status in alien societies. Yet all these people had to seek survival in foreign venues, which meant living with local ruling regimes and getting along with indigenous peoples. Too bold an assertion of political Chineseness was a risk that not everyone felt able to take. And for all the

attractiveness of a resurgent Chinese state, its meddling in the social, educational, and financial lives of overseas communities could be objectionable on many scores.

To understand the nationalism of Chinese overseas, it is worth keeping in mind what made their position different from that of compatriots back in China. First, they had survived in their venue societies through adaptation to local realities: the cultures of indigenous populations, the interests of indigenous or colonial ruling elites, and the economic niches so hard-won and so painstakingly maintained. Such realities often required delicate balancing of Chinese identities with behavior permitted or required by others. Fervent expressions of Chineseness, whether cultural or political, were seldom productive. Survival, not to say prosperity, required minorities to develop social skills and cultural sensitivities that reconciled their own needs and sentiments with those of the Others among whom and by whose sufferance they lived. Accordingly, it was not to be expected that they could respond easily to stirring calls from faraway China.

Another factor affecting the shape and intensity of their nationalism was social structure. In China, the bearers and transmitters of nationalist ideas were the educated elite: in imperial days, the literati whose honor—as custodians of the cultural tradition—had been outraged by foreign assaults. It was a segment of these literati who led the way, first to the "self-strengthening movement" of the late nineteenth century and later to the constitutional and revolutionary movements beginning in the mid-1890s, continuing through the May Fourth movement and into the militarized political party movements of the 1920s and 1930s. The nationalistic propaganda of the Guomindang and the Communist Party was written and transmitted by intellectual analogues of the imperial literati. Those of them who journeyed overseas to mobilize the newly embraced *"Huaqiao"* for the cause of nationalism were from this class of intellectuals or their students (leaving aside the galvanizing figure of Sun Yatsen, a Western-educated intellectual with a common touch). They were, in other words, mostly classically literate representatives of an elite with an ancient vocation to instruct their countrymen both culturally and politically.

But the leaders of overseas Chinese communities were neither literati nor modern intellectuals: they were not culture-bearers but businessmen. Their approach to life's opportunities and duties was bound up with family, affinity group, and business associates. Although they shared some of the literati's cultural orientations, they had their own sense of honor and obligation, which was not normally focused on national politics—or on politics of any sort. Politics and business seldom mixed well, a maxim that merchants in China had long understood. For these canny, adaptable businessmen, risk assessment was a keenly honed skill. Most were men of honor but not normally men of political enthusiasm. It was a rare business leader who could be—or would want to be—an effective mobilizer of nationalism. Tan Kah-kee was one such rarity. Yet his sense of duty radiated gradually outward, from service to his family, then to his native village, then to his Hokkien compatriots in Singapore and Fujian, and finally to China, the nation-state. Many could sympathize; but as products of their distinctive migrant environments, not all could follow.

Notes

1. Lee (1998), 1: 52.
2. DQLCSLGX (1964a), 326.4 and 327.1b.
3. Chen (1985), 1:1, 292–94.
4. Wang (1981).
5. Yen (1986), 199–202.
6. Liang (1906).
7. Wang (1981), 157; see also Wang (1970).
8. *Oxford English Dictionary*, "Nation," "Nation-state."
9. Shiba (1995), 19, 163.
10. Ye (1995), 53–54; Wong (2001), 90.
11. Skinner (1996), 82; Skinner (1977b), 227.
12. Skinner (1967), 106.
13. Coppel (2002), 140–42.
14. Suryadinata (1993), 60.
15. Lim (1995), chap. 4.
16. Williams (1960), 60–61.
17. Lim (1917).

18. Lim's Confucianism emphasized "filiality" as "the basis of humane feelings." He believed Confucianism (*kongjiao*) was a genuine religion, embodying the spiritual qualities of love and harmony, which in turn were compatible with socialism. Science he found compatible with the "investigation of things" in the *Great Learning*, and (as an admirer of Kang Youwei) he believed in historical progress toward "Great Harmony" (*datong*). In sum, his Confucianism was optimistic, meliorative, rational, and progressive. Li (1991), chap. 3. The Peranakan founder of the Tiong Hoa Hwe Koan in Jakarta, Phoa Keng Hek, parallels Lim's disdain for folk funeral practices. "To begin with, this association hopes to reduce the heavy burden imposed on the Chinese by the existing funeral and wedding customs." Suryadinata (1997), 6.

19. Lim (1917), 875–82.

20. Ye (1995), 52–61, quoted from *Jit Shin Pau*, Singapore, November 7–14, 1899.

21. Wong (2002), 29, 47.

22. Wong (2001), 89–91, reprinted from *Bincheng xinbao* (Penang), June 20, 1905.

23. Wong (2001), 29–30; Ma (1990), 34–36.

24. In view of the expectations on both sides of the corridor, can this new layer of settlers and sojourners be considered "an overseas expansion of China"? This term (in Mandarin, "*Zhongguo haiwai fazhan*"), used either chauvinistically by those who celebrate it or alarmingly by those who fear it, does not describe the real situation of the Chinese overseas.

25. This was a bloody clash between troops of Chiang Kai-shek's "Northern Expedition" and a Japanese force, resulting in thousands of Chinese civilian and military deaths.

26. Guangzhoushi (2000), 2–3.

27. He (1931), 196.

28. Qiaowu (1957), 2.

29. Akashi (1970), 6.

30. *Guojia jianshe zongkan* (1971), 36.

31. Fitzgerald (1972), 76.

32. Akashi (1970), 1–14.

33. Yong and McKenna (1990), 103.

34. Akashi (1970), 8–9.

35. Ye (1995), 59.

36. Skinner (1957), 61, 79.

37. Kasian (1992), 97; Skinner (1957), 159–71.

38. Skinner (1957), chap. 5.

39. For the original article in *Nanyang shangbao*, see Yong (1980), 40; Yong (1987), chap. 3; Liu (1989), 358.

40. Yong (1987), 116, 146–47.

41. Yong (1980), 148, originally published in *Nanyang shangbao* as "Fujian neimu," January 20, 1941.

42. Tan (1994), 197–205.

43. Liu (1989), 360.

44. Yong (1987), chap. 6.

45. Akashi (1970), 34; Kagotani (2000), 486–87; Kagotani (2005), 67–68; Suryadinata (1992), 105–6.

46. Twang (1998), 71–72.

47. Lin (2001a), 994.

48. Kagotani (2000), 68–71.

49. Kagotani (2005), 68–99.

50. Tan (1994), 285–87.

CHAPTER SEVEN

Chinese Communities in Postcolonial Southeast Asia

Chinese emigrants' adaptability to changing historical conditions was tested in unprecedented ways by the Pacific War (1941–1945) and by the ensuing collapse of colonialism. Colonial governments had dominated the environment in which Chinese worked, suffered, and often prospered. Colonialists and monarchs alike had relied on them to manage their fiscal systems, to build and provision their cities, and to run the commerce that produced their wealth. Niches available to Chinese were many and varied, from manual worker to street hawker to small shopkeeper to commodities trader, and occasionally to major tycoon. Taken together, these niches formed an environment that was more hospitable to commercial enterprise than any to be found in China. That indeed was why many had emigrated in the first place. What was to happen when that environment was rent by war, by decolonization, and by the bitterness of indigenous majorities among whom Chinese minorities held superior economic status? And how was the position of Southeast Asian Chinese to be affected by the emergence of a unified, revolutionary regime in their old homeland?

Japan's Invasion and the Fall of Western Colonialism

Japan's reaction to Western imperialism had been to transform itself into a centralized industrial nation-state and then to become imperialistic itself. The first step was to annex Taiwan in 1895, having defeated China in the first Sino-Japanese War. Japanese administration of Taiwan soon began to change the shape of commerce in the Pacific region: not long after Taiwan became part of Japan's empire, the occupiers laid plans to transform the island into the central transshipment point for Pacific trade routes. By the 1930s, Taiwan shared status with Hong Kong in the region's entrepôt trade (although Hong Kong remained the more crucial connection with the overseas Chinese in Southeast Asia).[1]

Taking advantage of the West's preoccupation with World War I (1914–1918), Japan then set about expanding its commercial reach in East and Southeast Asia. Although Japan's interest in Southeast Asia had begun early in the twentieth century as a romantic fantasy with little political or economic substance, World War I was an opportunity to give that fantasy concrete structure. Once Japan had declared itself on the Allied side, its first contribution to the war effort was to take over the Micronesian islands ruled by Germany. Japanese industries then looked toward Southeast Asia for expanded markets and for strategic raw materials such as rubber and iron. Japanese shipping competed for routes formerly dominated by European powers. Competition for markets and shipping routes intensified during the 1920s but without any ideological or strategic intention of displacing the West politically. Japan's "southward advance" (*nanshin*) as yet had no connection either to slogans of "anti-imperialism" or of pan-Asianism. "Southward advance" began not as a strategic movement but as a commercial one. Nevertheless, the 1930s saw a more concerted Japanese economic offensive, energized by cooperation between industry and government, both linked to military intelligence. The South Seas Association (*Nanyô kyôkai*) was an instrument of expansion backed by Tokyo and by Japan's colonial government in Taiwan.

Japanese manufactured goods, with their lower labor costs and efficient distribution networks, became a major threat to Western dominance of Southeast Asian markets. Only in the late 1930s,

when sanctions imposed by Britain and Holland began to impede Japanese trade, did anti-Western slogans and pan-Asianism become part of Japan's *nanshin* rhetoric. Contempt for the indigenous peoples of the region, along with a dire shortage of military raw materials, lay behind Japan's blitzkrieg of 1942, at a time when Germany's invasion of Europe left Western governments helpless to defend their Southeast Asian colonies.[2]

Nor could the West defend their Asian middlemen, the overseas Chinese, whose trading networks were threatened by Japan's "southward advance." Besides using small distribution centers to infiltrate local economies, Japan also used some existing Chinese networks to sell their own goods. This pattern extended beyond 1931, when anti-Japanese activism arose among the Chinese communities. Some overseas Chinese found ways to profit from Japan's export drive by acting as shippers and distributors. As already observed, Chinese traders based in Kobe continued to carry Japanese products into Southeast Asia and distribute them in colonial territories, even as Chinese boycotts sought to block Japanese imports.[3]

Having overrun Malaya, Singapore, and the Dutch East Indies in shockingly short order, the Japanese established a firm stranglehold over former colonial populations, singling out Chinese for the cruelest treatment. They targeted the Chinese minority economically and politically: those businessmen deemed necessary to the region's economy were to continue operating their shops and factories but were forced to pay huge "contributions" to fund the occupation. Chinese known or suspected to have been anti-Japanese activists were rounded up and slaughtered in early 1942: up to 30,000 in Singapore alone, and thousands more in largely Chinese Malayan cities, such as Taiping and Penang.[4] Leading anti-Japanese militants escaped overseas; the Singapore magnate Tan Kah-kee fled for his life to the Javanese backcountry. Others took to the Malayan jungle to wage guerrilla warfare: the so-called Malayan People's (largely Hakka Chinese) Anti-Japanese Army, led and indoctrinated by Chinese Communists, armed and advised by British officers, survived to become the nucleus of a postwar insurrection.

In the Dutch East Indies, the Japanese occupiers intimidated Chinese and confiscated their property. Huge sums were extracted from them. Amid the suffering, there were nevertheless opportunities for some Chinese to profit from the occupation. To keep the economy running in their own interest, the Japanese sponsored trade organizations (*kumiai*, or "cooperatives") of indigenous and Chinese merchants; of which Chinese emerged as economic managers alongside high-ranking Indonesian civilians. (After Indonesian independence, this arrangement survived as the "Ali-Baba" system, in which a Chinese and an Indonesian formed a partnership, the Chinese managing the enterprise and the Indonesian providing political cover.) The occupation also provided opportunities for new groups of Chinese entrepreneurs: the risky and unpredictable nature of both maritime and overland trade attracted intrepid adventurers from the lower rungs of the Chinese immigration ladder—recent arrivals from minor dialect groups (particularly the Hokchia from Fuqing in northern Fujian) who were grasping for handholds in the Indies economy. These enterprising immigrants lived among the Indonesians, intermarried with them, and learned their language. Compared to Peranakans, they had an additional asset: knowing Chinese, they could communicate with the Japanese occupiers through the Chinese written language. As will be seen shortly, some of these men made their way onto the top rungs of the Chinese economic ladder after independence.[5] As a decisive moment in the disintegration of colonialism, the Pacific War entailed long-term consequences for Chinese minorities in the former colonial territories, the "new nations" of Southeast Asia. Although the prewar "national salvation" movement had made pan-Chinese patriots of many of them, most overseas Chinese would henceforward be affected more directly by conditions in their adopted societies.

Roots of Anti-Sinitism

Discrimination (and worse) against Chinese minorities has accompanied nationalism and nation building in Southeast Asia since the early twentieth century. Anti-Sinitism displays crude stereotypes and elaborate justifications for anti-Chinese policies. It did not, however, emerge fresh from newly independent societies; it was rooted in colonialism's long-term effects on indigenous peoples, the "Others" among whom Chinese overseas lived. In the course of the long, bloody Western retreat from colonial Asia, the conditions and prospects of Chinese minorities in the region were profoundly altered. How "new nations" emerged out of colonial territories affected Chinese

political and economic fortunes. How Chinese communities adapted to the fall of colonialism depended on the differing capacities and interests of successive generations of immigrants.

The anti-Sinitism of newly independent Indonesia had a deep history. In the early twentieth century had arisen a popular movement whose ethnic-redemptive tone linked anti-Chinese hostility to religion, to social class, and to anticolonial resentments. The Indies "movement" (*pergerakan*) was not that of a "party," nor was it strictly nationalist; it expressed an array of Islamic, nativist, anticolonial, anticapitalist themes. Mass activism, vaguely defined freedom, autonomous organization: all arose as galvanizing forces among an emerging indigenous intelligentsia. The ethos of the movement was unmistakably anti-Sinitic, whether in actuality or in potential; it targeted Chinese as capitalists, as infidels, as aliens, and as collaborators of the hated yet admired Dutch.[6] At rallies held in 1913 by a new Islamic brotherhood, Sarekat Islam, Chinese were sometimes injured or killed by the crowds. Among illiterate peasants circulated a vision of imminent cataclysm in which all Chinese would be massacred, their lands returned to natives, and the Dutch expelled.[7]

Ironically, the movement began as Chinese themselves were being assailed by the Dutch "Ethical Policy," an array of deprivations and restrictions on their economic, residential, and travel privileges, all ostensibly to protect the interests of the vulnerable, long-suffering "natives." Chinese, for their part, were feeling not only aggrieved but also more confident of redress through the imagined power of the resurgent Chinese state. Surely the new China of the early twentieth century would not permit its citizens abroad to be victimized. In the wake of the revolution of 1911, Chinese in the Indies had in fact begun to act more assertively: cutting their queues, wearing Western clothing, and (in the indigenes' view) acting "arrogantly" toward non-Chinese. The rise of Sarekat Islam and of anti-Chinese violence seems to have been reinforced by such behavior, whether real or imagined. New pride inspired by China's state building and revolution had given emigrants overseas the courage to stand up for themselves. New pride among Chinese fed resentment among others. Anti-Sinitism was one predictable result, given the accumulated envy among the indigenes and the comparatively risk-free option of attacking Chinese rather than the colonial rulers. Among other causes for Indonesian anti-Sinitism was the expansion of Chinese business enterprise into sectors (such as cigarette manufacturing) that had been dominated by Islamic entrepreneurs. Such diversification was a sensible adaptation for Chinese capitalists whose tax-farming monopolies the Dutch authorities had recently abolished.[8]

In newly independent Indonesia, it was not long before anti-Sinitism was in full cry once it became known that Chinese were taking over economic niches formerly occupied by the Dutch. Assaat, an Indonesian businessman, pursued a line of attack (that subsequently bore his name: Assaatism) that called for discriminating in economic rights and privileges in favor of *pribumi* (ethnic) Indonesians and against Chinese. The ostensible targets of his campaign were Indonesian citizens of Chinese descent lest they dominate the new nation's economy. The underlying message was clearly racist. Something about the Chinese determined, according to Assaat, that even citizenship could not erase their infuriating social and economic exclusivity. They were by nature grasping opportunists who could never be accepted as "real" Indonesians, even after they had taken up Indonesian citizenship. Chinese economic power was a "legacy of Dutch colonialism" and must be defeated on behalf of dyed-in-the-wool Indonesians. Although economic envy against rich Chinese certainly existed, and although Chinese were disproportionately engaged in business, not all Chinese businessmen were rich. Nor was similar hostility directed against rich *pribumi*. One result of Assaatism was legislation forbidding Chinese to operate retail stores in rural areas. Enforcement of this discriminatory law (1959) in west Java, supported by the army, wreaked widespread damage on the economy; it forced over 100,000 Chinese to flee the country in ships sent by the People's Republic, to resettle in China (where they were not well treated).[9] This "Speech to the All-Indonesian National Importers' Congress" displays the ostensible reason for Indonesian anti-Sinitism and suggests its underlying feelings.

Assaat, "The Chinese Grip on Our Economy" (1956)[10]

"The Chinese as an exclusive group resist the entry of others, whether in the cultural, social, or especially, the economic sphere. In the economic sphere they are so exclusive that in practice they are monopolistic. Every Indonesian businessman experiences the Chinese monopoly in practice. . . . An Indonesian shopkeeper who wants to sell rice in his shop is forced to buy from a Chinese rice dealer. There he is treated differently from a Chinese shopkeeper. The rice dealer gives better facilities to the Chinese shopkeeper as regards credit, price and quality. . . .

"What about the group called new citizens, or citizens of foreign descent—in this case, of Chinese descent? To answer this, we must investigate just who these new citizens are under the present regulations in our country. Chinese who were Netherlands subjects and did not refuse Indonesian citizenship automatically according to the law become Indonesian citizens.

"Who was included among these Netherlands-subject Chinese? Anyone born in Indonesia whose parents were Chinese foreign orientals living in Indonesia was a Netherlands-subject Chinese. So a child born in Indonesia of a Chinese *Totok* father and a Chinese *Totok* mother living here, became an Indonesian citizen unless he objected. *Totok* father, *Totok* mother, capital from his father. Such a man is a foreigner. Socially and economically he is still part of the Chinese *Totok* community; yet he could become an Indonesian citizen.

"Do these people feel themselves Indonesians? Do they feel one with the Indonesian people? Would they be prepared to defend the interests of Indonesia if there was a dispute with another country, even if it was the Chinese People's Republic or Taiwan? . . . .

"To extend special protection to this sort of citizen means enabling the Chinese to maintain and entrench further their position in politically independent Indonesia; all the various regulations aimed at advancing the interests of the Indonesian people will be evaded and circumvented by the Chinese via these new citizens."

Among the postcolonial nations of Southeast Asia, Indonesia's anti-Sinitism has been the most deeply ingrained; its political, religious, and ethnic structure, along with its colonial background, have sustained a particularly tenacious belief in a "Chinese problem." What is it that has kept the Indonesian Chinese minority whipsawed, for more than a century, between patronage and pogrom? The answer lies in the conundrum posed by the Chinese role in the economy, dating from colonial days. By dominating vital sectors of the market—from large-scale enterprises down to village-level shops—they tend (not invariably but as a group) to be wealthier than their neighbors and therefore both objectionable and indispensable. Every Indonesian ruling group since colonial days has wrestled with the question of whether to promote their economic strength and profit from it or to drive them out. Finding that they cannot do the former (because of popular resentments) or the latter (because the economy cannot do without the Chinese), Indonesia has lurched between one extreme and the other; or settled for an unstable blend of toleration for the Chinese minority and discrimination against them.

But there is more to it than economics. Following the abortive antiarmy coup of 1965, at the lowest point of Indonesian relations with the People's Republic of China, the name used officially by the Indonesian authorities for "China" was changed from Tiongkok (Mandarin: *Zhongguo*, "central kingdom," the name used by both Beijing and Taiwan) to "Tjina" (later spelled "China"), an offensive term used in prewar Japan to refer to China. Beijing protested vigorously, to no effect.

What was the intent of this change? According to one official rationale it was *"to remove the feeling of inferiority on the part of our people and . . . the feeling of superiority on the part of the group concerned within the state [i.e., the ethnic Chinese]."*[11] Here is a clue to Indonesia's "Chinese problem": long-nurtured feelings of status humiliation and resentment among indigenous Indonesians, feelings that have survived the fall of colonialism. The deep history of the "Chinese Problem" lies in the degradation of indigenous Indonesians under Dutch rule. As we observed in chapter 2, Chinese were positioned by the colonial regime as second-class citizens: below the colonialists yet above the lowly indigenes, whom the Dutch referred to as *inboorling*, a term that simply means "natives" but that took on a meaning close to "savages."[12] Such a castelike system with enforced boundaries served the colonialists by ensuring that "their Chinese" (forbidden to change their status either upward or downward) would continue to carry out their middleman duties, while the *inboorling* would provide the agricultural labor for the coffee, sugar, and other exportable crops that made the colony profitable.

From this history flowed the tortured self-image of the Indonesian majority. The "*pribumi*" as they were called in modern times (equivalent to *bumiputra*, "sons of the soil," in Malaysia) have glared rancorously at their former status under colonialism—and at what they see as a cruel extension of that status in "their own" postcolonial nation. "*Pribumi*" denotes privilege and evinces pride; but connotes humiliation and nurses hatred. What of the imputed feelings of "superiority" among the Chinese minority? The privileged position of the Peranakan Chinese under the Dutch had been reinforced in the late colonial era by pride in their identification with the resurgent Chinese state. This confluence of historic privilege and new nationalism contributed to a collective self-esteem that sustained the minority in an anxious time of transition. How natural for *pribumi* to

perceive this as a form of ethnic snobbery! To this resentment add the religious divide between Muslim and infidel, amid continuing economic insecurity under successive Indonesian governments, and Indonesians of Chinese descent become the obvious scapegoats.

In British colonial Malaya, native grievances against Chinese sprang from a deep-rooted sense of disadvantage. Whether this sense arose from cultural factors (such as inherent disdain for wage labor and business, central to British perceptions of Malays) or whether it was an artifact of the colonial system itself, at least it can be said that the colonial system reinforced whatever aversion Malay peasants may have felt toward these occupations. Mine and plantation operators preferred imported indentured laborers over native workers because they were cheaper, more available, and more tractable. Malay peasants themselves preferred Chinese to Malays as middlemen because the Chinese had readier access to capital and so were willing and able to bargain. The upshot was to associate Malay ethnicity with lack of aptitude for the modern sector of the economy.[13]

This painful sense of inadequacy among Malays, linked to colonialism and essentialized as a negative contrast to "inherent" Chinese skills, emerged as postcolonial grievances toward the Chinese minority. It was rationalized in social-Darwinian terms by Dr. Mahathir Bin Mohamad (1925–), the political ideologist of the Malay backlash against Chinese economic dominance. This backlash generated the "New Economic Policy" (1970–1990), which mandated special preferences for Malay business: in effect, affirmative action for the majority.

Mahathir, a Malay of part Indian descent, was born in British colonial Malaya to a schoolteacher's family, studied medicine in Singapore, and became a practicing physician. He joined the leading Malay nationalist party, the United Malay National Organization (UMNO), when it was founded in 1946. After bloody riots in May 1969 between Malays and Chinese, Mahathir criticized the aristocratic, British-educated UMNO leadership for being out of touch with the Malay masses and too accommodating to ethnic Chinese. For this, Mahathir was expelled from UMNO. Nevertheless, the riots set the stage for new policies favoring Malays, emphasizing Islamic culture and seeking to redress the economic imbalance between Malays and Chinese. In this new political atmosphere, the old UMNO leadership took a more militant line. After Mahathir rejoined UMNO, his nationalist and communal (i.e., ethnic militant) views made him a major force in the party. His book *The Malay Dilemma* was banned as dangerously inflammatory when it first appeared in 1970 and was not unbanned until 1981, when he became prime minister, a position he held until 2003.

Mahathir Bin Mohamad: A Malay View of the Chinese Minority[14]

"The effects of heredity and environment on man are interrelated and complementary to each other." Thanks to abundant land and lush tropical climate, Malay civilization developed without having to adapt to great hardships or challenges. In such an environment, even the weak survived and reproduced. By contrast, the Chinese in their natal homeland had to struggle for survival. By natural selection, "the weak in mind and body lost out to the strong and the resourceful. . . ."

"The Malays, whose own hereditary and environmental influence had been so debilitating, could do nothing but retreat before the onslaught of the Chinese immigrants. Whatever the Malays could do, the Chinese could do better and cheaper." It was not long before the hard-working and ambitious Chinese had supplanted Malays in small-scale commerce and skilled artisanry. With their skills and riches they sought the patronage of the politically powerful. They successfully cultivated the local aristocracy and the colonial authorities by providing them goods and services. Hence their advance was unstoppable.

Races differ not only in physical characteristics but in cultural attributes as well. "The Jews for example are not merely hook-nosed, but understand money instinctively. The Europeans are not only fair-skinned, but have an insatiable curiosity. The Malays are not merely brown, but are also easy-going and tolerant. And the Chinese are not just almond-eyed people, but are inherently good businessmen." Their economic success all around Southeast Asia is proof of that. That is why "Malays are rural and economically backward, and why the non-Malays are urban and economically advanced. It is not the choice of the Malays that they should be rural and poor. It is the result of the clash of racial traits. They are easy-going and tolerant. The Chinese are hard-working and astute in business. When the two came in contact the result was inevitable. Before the onslaught of the predatory Chinese the Malays retreated" to less desirable areas.

* * * *

That ethnic Malays are downtrodden in their own country is not due to discriminatory laws, but to "the character and behaviour of the major racial groups in Malaysia. The Malays are spiritually inclined, tolerant and easy-going. The non-Malays and especially the Chinese are materialistic, aggressive and have an appetite for work. For equality to come about it is necessary that these strikingly contrasting races adjust to each other."

While avowing that "laws cannot do this," Mahathir implied that laws were, in fact, essential, because "we do not have four thousand years to play around with."[15] In the event, quotas guaranteed Malays set proportions of jobs, education, and ownership of capital assets—guarantees well beyond what the provisions of the 1957 independence settlement had promised but had failed to deliver.

In the two preceding texts, the differences between Indonesian and Malaysian anti-Sinitism are more of tone than of substance. Both call for legislation to advantage the economically weaker majority over the stronger minority. Both label the Chinese as flinty-eyed businessmen. Both can be classified as "racist" in the sense that they stigmatize an entire ethnic group. Yet one can sense in the Mahathir text a grudging admiration for the Chinese, whom evolutionary struggle had "selected" to be tough and resourceful. In addition, Mahathir stresses elevating Malays rather than specifically repressing Chinese—a result conceivable in a rapidly growing economy. As galling as quotas and targets have been for Chinese Malaysians, there is little in Mahathir's rhetoric to suggest that the Chinese are inherently unprincipled and disloyal. It is as though Mahathir and his colleagues understood that the Chinese minority was big enough and able enough either to build Malaysia into a prosperous nation or, by sending their capital and their talent out of the country, to doom it to poverty. Indonesian "Assaatism," by contrast, was ruthless and potentially self-destructive: as we have seen, the draconian Presidential Regulation No. 10, issued in 1959, forbade "aliens" to engage in retail commerce in the countryside. As a result, some 100,000 shopkeepers of Chinese descent fled the country.

The experience of ethnic Chinese in postcolonial Malaysia and Indonesia has been similar in certain respects and quite different in others. Both "new nations" are home to economically strong and energetic Chinese minorities whose business skills and capital are vital to national stability and economic growth. Both nations emerged from colonialism as plural societies, the Chinese (and, in the Malaysian case, the Indians as well) having long been encouraged by the colonial powers to immigrate. As a largely (and increasingly) urban business class in both societies, the Chinese identity has been distinctive—and envied by the majority indigenous population. Both Malaysia and Indonesia are predominantly Islamic countries; although fundamentalism is present in both, Islam as generally practiced is far more eclectic and easygoing than in the Middle East. The most prominent difference is demographic: the Chinese minority in Indonesia amounts to less than 3 percent of the population, whereas the Chinese in Malaysia constitute about 25 percent. Where the Indonesians consider that they have a "Chinese problem," the situation in Malaysia is on quite a different scale. Chinese in Indonesia have to make the best bargain they can with the dominant group (either by assimilating and fading from view or by seeking protective patrons among the *pribumi* governing elite). Chinese in Malaysia are too numerous and economically indispensable to be patronized or forced to assimilate, much less driven out of the country.

An instructive comparison is the Philippine case. As observed in chapter 4, the new wave of Chinese immigration following the Opium War had shifted the distribution of economic niches as Spanish plans to recruit Chinese for plantation labor went awry. In fact, the new arrivals quickly took over the commercial roles that had been the province of the Chinese Mestizos. The domination of commerce by new Chinese immigrants (in effect, Totoks, the Chinese Mestizos being the Philippine equivalent of Peranakans) had become intense by the early twentieth century to the point where, by the early 1930s, the Chinese held some 75 percent of retailing and the rice trade. Chinese buyers would advance credit to rice farmers on the basis of future crops, sometimes gaining control of land through foreclosure.

It is hardly surprising that resentment smoldered among the Filipino population—including the Chinese Mestizos. Already in the 1920s, economic nationalism generated anti-Chinese legislation: bookkeeping laws, for example, requiring that all accounts be kept in English, Spanish, or Tagalog. Although these laws took effect only after a decade's struggle, they ultimately chivvied many Chinese out of retailing. Nevertheless, by the 1950s the adaptable Chinese (less than 2 percent of the Philippine population) still ran at least half the retail trade. Finally, a "Retail Trade Nationalization Law" of 1954 drove "aliens" out of retailing completely—and was blamed for an

economic depression the following year. Chinese merchants adapted by shipping capital abroad or by shifting it into wholesaling and manufacturing.

The Philippine anti-Sinitic backlash was certainly as "postcolonial" as the Malaysian and Indonesian, inasmuch as Chinese immigrants had won their economic dominance under colonial rule (first Spanish, then American). The Chinese Mestizo ("*tsinoy*") Filipinos had absorbed a share of the Spanish disdain and distrust of the "*intsik*" (i.e., Totoks) and at least some of the ambivalence of the Americans, who nominally excluded them but supposed that, if any work were to be done, it would be done faster and better by Chinese. The newly independent Philippine government (1946) was left to cope with the results. Unfortunately for the Philippine Chinese, the remedies more closely resembled the Indonesian than the Malaysian (in line with the low proportion of Chinese in the Philippine population). In other words, the remedies were less pro-Filipino than they were anti-Chinese. Yet the big difference from Indonesia was the ultimate turn toward genuine assimilation: during the 1970s under Ferdinand Marcos, full citizenship, through either naturalization or birthright, became easily available to Chinese. And despite frustrating residues of anti-Sinitic discrimination and suspicion, each succeeding generation since the 1950s has drawn closer to a common Filipino culture. The Chinese stake in the economy as a whole remained 25 to 35 percent.[16]

In the Siamese kingdom, Chinese suffered from official anti-Sinitism beginning in the early twentieth century, but in a different context: although Siam had been forced to accept "unequal treaties" by the West, beginning with Britain in 1855, it never was ruled by a Western colonial regime. Neither its governing elite nor its rank-and-file citizenry had been humiliated by a colonial status hierarchy. Anti-Sinitism arose while the Siamese government was being modernized and Thai ethnicity promoted as the bedrock of a contemporary nation-state (hence "Thai-land": land of the *ethnic Thai*). As young members of the Thai elite, including the future King Rama VI, began to study abroad during the late nineteenth century, they absorbed the nationalist and racist ideologies of Europe, among which were anti-Semitism and anti-Sinitism. "Yellow Peril" hysteria, in its European variety, was directed against all Asians. In Thailand, it was focused on Chinese. It was quickly picked up by some in the Thai elite, particularly military men, who saw Chinese, with their ties to revolutionary movements in China, as a potential threat to the Siamese monarchy. Anti-Chinese sentiment in Thailand had been inflamed in 1909 by a Chinese strike to protest new government tax policies. King Rama VI had returned from his English education brimming with fashionable European anti-Semitic clichés that seemed cognate with stereotypes of the Chinese minority in his own society. The young king found the Chinese a convenient foil for his own nationalistic animus.

An Anti-Sinitic Tract of 1914: "The Jews of the Orient"[17] By Wachirawut (King Rama VI)

"When [Europeans] speak of 'The Yellow Peril' (by which they mean the danger of an attack by the yellow races upon the white) I must ask the privilege of objecting to the term, inasmuch as they use it generically to include all the races of Asia. As a matter of fact, the danger of which they speak has reference only to the Chinese. In Thailand we have quite as much to fear from the Chinese as the white races have. . . . I protest any inclusion of the Thai in the term 'The Yellow Peril,' for the Thai are not even as much like the Chinese as Europeans are like the Jews.

* * * *

"MONEY! There you have it! the heart of the Chinese! It is what they feel impelled to seek without so much as stopping for even a moment. It is the highest desire of their hearts, with which nothing else is to be compared. Position and reputation, honor and honesty, love and mercy and compassion, which are the waters of life to the rest of us, are to them merely libations to be poured out to the GOD MONEY who is Lord. The more one thinks about it the more horrible, the more pitiable does such a state of mind become!

"But with such appetites as these . . . it is not strange that they should have invented a system of morals all their own, which no one who is not born a Chinese can possibly hope to comprehend. Where money is involved there is no method of acquiring it which they consider dishonest or wrong. They revere and practice the ethic which says that 'The end justifies the means.'

"The little that can be said here is enough to indicate how extremely difficult it must always be to traffic with people of this sort. There are unnumbered Chinese, enough to inundate any country

in the world. This fact, coupled with their incredible ability to endure hardships, the RACIAL LOYALTY which prevents their absorption into other nations, and their astuteness in financial matters, are reasons enough for arousing fear of 'THE PERIL' in any country."

Curiously enough, the king's anti-Sinitism did not reflect any deep-running stream of Siamese hostility to Chinese. The Kingdom of Siam (officially called "Thailand" from 1938 on to reflect the nation's supposedly ethnic basis) differed from its postcolonial neighbors in that it did not inherit what we have noted in the Indonesian case as a "*pribumi* problem": humiliation under a foreign regime. The Chinese in the Siamese state had never held a superior position over indigenous Thai; rather, the Thai aristocracy was always the dominant class, and Chinese elites were co-opted into it as a reward for services to the monarchy. Nor did the Thai desire to compete with Chinese commercially. Commerce was simply accepted as a Chinese calling. Hence the "ethnic" factor had not arisen within either state or society. Criteria for acceptance were not ethnicity or culture but submission to the Siamese political system and loyalty to the monarchy. These criteria, along with high rates of intermarriage, meant that Chinese as well as Sino-Thai were well integrated into the governing elite, notwithstanding Wachirawut's and his successors' anti-Sinitic rhetoric.

One source of trouble during the first half of the twentieth century was the clash of nationalisms between the modernizing Siamese monarchy and the concurrent revolutionary movement in China, which, as we have seen, reached out to overseas Chinese minorities throughout the world. First there was the anti-Qing revolution of 1911, which threw a scare into the Siamese monarchy; then there was the rise of Chinese communism, which raised ruling-class suspicions of Chinese immigrants all over Southeast Asia. Another source was the rapid influx of immigrants to Thailand between the end of World War I and the onset of the Great Depression of the 1930s. About half a million immigrants swelled the resident Chinese population (a remainder between arrivals and departures). Skinner estimated in 1957 that "at least half of the China-born Chinese living in Thailand today first immigrated during the 1918–1931 period."[18] To the Thai military leadership that assumed power in 1932, this flood of new immigrants seemed a significant threat.

Chinese Responses to Anti-Sinitism

The West's retreat from Asia moved former colonial populations to define themselves not only as sovereign political entities but also as cultures. Colonial regimes had drawn boundaries to suit themselves, without regard for the future viability of their territories as independent nation-states. Consequently postcolonial nations found themselves dealing with multiethnic populations and conflicting claims of cultural value. Should a nation have a single "national culture" and, if so, which one? To complicate matters, cultural identities might not accord with the distribution of economic and political power. Chinese minorities commonly experienced an incongruity between their economic strength and their political weakness.

Was it desirable or even possible to unify national life by imposing the culture of a politically dominant majority on all citizens? Was it a threat to national security if even a long-settled minority, such as the Chinese, were ethnically linked to a powerful foreign nation? Although Chinese minorities did raise security fears among rulers of postcolonial states, the "Chinese problem" was not primarily a "China problem." Instead, it was rooted in inherited conceptions among formerly subject people who saw their world through the lens of colonial history. Chinese had been useful to colonialists because they turned the economic wheels that made colonies work. In postcolonial independent nations, the tension between economic functions and national culture became critical.

Indonesia: Economic Expansion, Cultural Suppression

Despite the anti-Sinitic tides running in postcolonial Indonesia, Chinese have strengthened their economic position. Compared to the period before World War II, the proportion of manual laborers declined in favor of more small and medium-sized businesses as Chinese overall became more urbanized. This transition to city hawker, artisan, or shopkeeper follows the time-honored Chinese route for escaping agriculture. After Dutch firms were expelled, Chinese took over some large-scale commercial sectors. Their economic ascent accelerated under Suharto's "New Order" beginning in the late 1960s with new banking and manufacturing ventures. After 1970, they participated broadly in Indonesia's industrial expansion, often jointly with foreign corporations.[19]

At the top level of wealth, Chinese adaptiveness is even more striking. Two decades into independence, Indonesian Chinese included a new stratum of hugely rich and well-connected business entrepreneurs. Most striking is the way ethnic Chinese businessmen (mostly Totoks) responded to Indonesian economic nationalism by consorting with indigenous businessmen and power holders (particularly military men). The dangerous period of the 1960s, when anti-Sinitic tides were running strong after the abortive anti-army coup of 1965, in which the Communist Party of Indonesia and vaguely defined Chinese sympathizers were suspected, forced Chinese capitalists to seek security through two adaptive patterns. Both involved patron–client relationships or partnerships between rich Chinese and powerful Indonesians. One was to co-opt *pribumi* into the management of Chinese-owned firms (the "Ali-Baba" system noted earlier, which was an outgrowth of the Japanese occupation period). The other (also rooted in the occupation period) was the system known as "*cukong*" (Mandarin: *zhugong*, meaning "master" or "boss") in which a Chinese entrepreneur became the client of a powerful government official (usually a military man—such as General Suharto, who supplanted Sukharno after 1965 and headed Indonesia's government from 1968 until 1998). The Chinese entrepreneur acquired procurement contracts from government agencies, ran the enterprise himself, and shared some of the profit with his patron. In a democratic political system, this would be denounced as a "kickback" scheme, but in a context of highly personalized autocracy, it went mostly unchallenged. (Suharto's critics suggested wryly that Suharto himself was probably half Chinese. He was at length indicted for corruption though never tried.)

One of Suharto's principal Chinese clients was none other than Liem Sioe Liong, a Hokchia immigrant who, during the Indonesian war of independence, had sold supplies to the Indonesian army and had come under the wing of Suharto, then a midranking military officer.[20] Hokchia such as Liem Sioe Liong had arrived penniless in the Indies and worked their way into small business. Occupying the lowest stratum of recently arrived Chinese and having only tenuous contacts with other Chinese communities (because of the low social standing and impenetrable dialect of the Hokchia), they found niches as moneylenders among the indigenes, learning Indonesian and making what business connections they could. Moneylending does not necessarily breed hostility in a society just becoming monetized, because long-term debt may lead to dependency and thereby to close personal relationships.[21] During the Japanese occupation, some Hokchia collaborated with Japanese *kempeitai* (military police) besides running underground commerce, sometimes from the backs of bicycles, for the Indonesian republican revolutionaries. Such was the background of the profitable relationships forged between arriviste Chinese businessmen and powerful Indonesian politico-military figures.

The roots of such patron–client relationships are historical in several respects. First, they resemble the "officer" system of the colonial regime, in which, as we have seen, wealthy Chinese became brokers between their communities and the colonial power holders. Second, they recall the precolonial system of foreign harbor masters in Southeast Asian kingdoms, entrusted by their royal patrons to gather customs duties and selected for these lucrative positions precisely because they were outsiders and less likely than native elites to challenge the ruler. Overseas, as in China, Chinese businessmen understood how to exercise economic power without encroaching on their patrons' political turf.

The rise of ethnic Chinese capitalists in Suharto's "New Order" Indonesia illustrates the adaptive qualities of Chinese social structure in the mid-twentieth century. One crucial ingredient was the status hierarchy of migrant subpopulations. Forming profitable alliances with indigenes depended on the latest wave of immigrants from socially inferior dialect groups, who lacked connections with entrenched ethnic Chinese elites and had to make their way through risky paths into the indigenous culture and into relationships with powerful indigenous patrons.

For all its anti-Chinese hostility and violence, the Indonesian revolution nevertheless offered economic opportunities to adventurous newcomer Chinese such as the Hokchia. Military campaigns by the returning Dutch, including a maritime blockade of areas held by the republican revolutionaries, caused shortages of both civilian and military supplies. Daring Chinese from poor minority dialect groups, particularly the Hokchia, operated overland and maritime smuggling networks from bases in Singapore and Penang. These resourceful immigrants obtained monopoly relationships with Indonesian revolutionary military leaders and became the central figures of the *cukong* system after 1965. It is hard to know how much enthusiasm these men felt for Indonesian national independence and how much was shrewd adaptation to dangerous but potentially profitable opportunities. Risky undertakings such as smuggling for the republicans while flouting the Dutch blockade may have seemed a prudent hedge against anti-Chinese persecution.[22]

Although some Chinese born in Indonesia (thus formally citizens in the political sense) were prepared to assimilate culturally, others had sought a culturally pluralist solution to maintaining their Chinese identity: to be politically integrated without being culturally assimilated. The organization called *Baperki* was formed in 1954 as an avowedly communal group to represent Indonesian citizens of Chinese descent and to oppose discrimination and marginalization. *Baperki* agitated against racial discrimination and seemed, for a time, to be on a path not unlike that taken by the Malaysian Chinese Association. However, along with the general leftward shift of Indonesian politics under Sukharno in the late 1950s, *Baperki* moved closer to the ideological line of the Indonesian Communist Party. When Beijing was alleged to have been complicit in the abortive coup (1965) in which a number of generals were assassinated, the fate of *Baperki* was sealed; it was banned outright in a backlash against all leftist public associations, particularly those of the Chinese. That the Malaysian Chinese, by contrast, were able to protect Chinese culture from being seriously threatened was due to the substantial differences in the Malaysian transition to independence, to be discussed later in this chapter. Given the long history of *pribumi* humiliation, such cultural tolerance as had been accorded hundreds of Indonesia's other minorities remained out of reach for the ethnic Chinese.[23]

From 1965 on, then, the culture of Indonesian Chinese—both Peranakan and Totok—has been at the mercy of Indonesian nationalism. Whatever the true story of the attempted coup, the army's suspicion of Chinese sympathy for Beijing led to harsh anti-Chinese legislation. General Suharto's "New Order" included outright bans against Chinese newspapers, Chinese-medium education, and Chinese organizations. Even before this event, as we have seen, there had been strong assimilationist influences on and within the Chinese community. Peranakans, most of whom did not speak Chinese, were already partly assimilated. A law of 1966 required that every Chinese take an Indonesian-sounding name, and many Peranakans sought to avoid further trouble by blending into the general population. Others, while complying with the name-changing law, maintained a sense of cultural identity as an ethnic minority. Totoks, still culturally Chinese in the first generation, sent their children to Chinese-medium schools until these were banned in 1965. Thereafter, Totok children had to attend Indonesian-medium schools and rapidly became acculturated.

That the Indonesian authorities pressed the acculturation of both Peranakan and Totok Chinese through language suppression is consistent with trends elsewhere in Southeast Asia. Yet the Indonesian case was unique in its ruthlessness. Ironically, the various acculturation measures (on their face designed to eliminate the Chinese as a distinct ethnic group) had a built-in catch: the spirit of Assaatism kept citizens of Chinese descent out of certain economic sectors reserved for *pribumi*, citizenship notwithstanding. Especially ironic, the government pointedly obstructed the assimilation of citizens of Chinese descent by imprinting a special code on their identity cards—a "Mark of Cain" to identify them indelibly as "Chinese," whatever their cultural orientation.

The rancorous anti-Sinitism in Indonesian society was sufficiently toxic (compared to Malaysia and Thailand) to terrorize many Chinese into compliance. Even though the fall of Suharto in 1998 brought a partial relaxation of bans on Chinese language and seasonal ceremonies, an abiding anti-Sinitic prejudice among the public still casts a shadow over displays of Chinese cultural identity. And anti-Sinitic violence (including a particularly brutal episode of mass rape and murder in 1998) still poisons the Indonesian air.

Malaysia: The Quest for Cultural Pluralism

In postcolonial Malaysia, ethnic Chinese have struggled successfully to sustain their community and their personal Chinese identities. The constitutional basis of national independence had rested on the governing colonial fiction: that the legitimate rulers of British Malaya were the Malay aristocracy, the sultans in whose name British colonial officers ran Malaya. Only cultural affairs (principally religion) were left to the Malay elite. To leave that elite solely in charge of the postcolonial state was, however, not so simple. Chinese and Indians (Chinese then about a third of the population, Indians about a tenth) had indefeasible claims. The Japanese occupation had inflamed relations between Chinese and Malays: the anti-Japanese guerrilla resistance, armed and advised by British officers and led by the banned Malayan Communist Party, had been largely Chinese; the Japanese patronized the Malays and sought their allegiance against both the guerrillas and British colonialism. When the war ended, the claims of the Chinese for citizenship and cultural rights could not be ignored. The situation was complicated, from 1948 through the mid-1950s, by the "Emergency"—a rebirth of the Chinese Communist–led guerrilla challenge in the jungles, this time not anti-Japanese but anti-imperialist. One unforeseen result was that, in containing and

ultimately defeating the guerrilla army, the reliance of the British on the political support of the mainstream Malayan Chinese Association gave the Chinese ethnic community an additional claim to consideration in the independence settlement.[24]

Eventually, the English-educated elites of Malay and Chinese populations agreed on a Malay-weighted formula in which all ethnic communities would enjoy equal political citizenship but the "national" cultural symbols (language and religion) would be Malay (though non-Malays could retain their own minority languages and cultures). Moreover, the "Independence Constitution" (1957) included clauses to safeguard the Malay economic position and preserve employment preferences granted under British rule. Absent communal militancy, such a contradictory formula might have been expected to work. In the event, militancy could not be avoided.

Easing the way to independence had been the "Alliance" coalition, composed of the leaders of Malay, Chinese, and Indian populations. That this was an organization headed by largely British-educated elites and excluding the ultracommunalists (groups staunchly uncompromising on ethnic issues) lent a certain moderation to the first decade of independence. Yet the Alliance, with its preference for peace and stability, was unable to satisfy the rank and file of its own ethnic constituents, particularly the Malays. After the coalition had lost badly in the election of May 1969, there followed deadly riots by young Malays. It became clear to the Malay leadership that their poorer coethnics had benefited little from the modest preferences and nominal primacy called for in the constitution.

Peace accordingly was restored on a basis of more assertive Malay supremacy, with Islam the official religion, Malay the national language, and Islamic culture the norm of the Malaysian nation. Although the founding charter of the new policies left room for the "legitimate interests" of non-Malays and assured equality before the law, the playing field now was tilted more steeply against minorities, particularly the Chinese. Furthermore, it was forbidden to discuss these "sensitive issues" in public. That public life could be "depoliticized" (through co-optation, stifling of debate, and closed-door negotiation among communal leaders) reflected the credo of the British colonial state, preserved among socially compatible English-educated Malay and Chinese elites: government was above politics, and "seditious" activities, including awkward public questioning, should be suppressed.[25]

Almost immediately after independence in 1957, the Chinese faced their first cultural battle around the issue of Chinese-medium education. The ability of the Chinese minority to resist ethnic Malay cultural dominance has relied primarily on privately financed Chinese-medium schools. Since 1961, the government has funded Chinese primary schools provided that they teach the standard "national-type" curriculum. Government-supported secondary schools, however, were required to teach in either English or Malay and by the 1970s only in Malay. This requirement drove many Chinese secondary schools to reject government funding and survive as independent, community-supported institutions. By 2002, there were approximately sixty independent Chinese secondary schools in Malaysia.[26]

The Language Question

Language and education have been emotional issues. Chinese saw their individual and community identities as dependent on language continuity (in Mandarin, the dialect that welded the Chinese community together), which could be assured only through Chinese-medium education. The emotive power of shared language as a definer of modern Chinese identity had been imported to colonial Malaya by teachers from China whose educational philosophy was that of the May Fourth movement of 1919, which had laid the cultural basis for modern national consciousness. Even before independence, activists such as the Baba magnate Tan Cheng Lock and the ardent leader of the Chinese Teachers Association, Lim Lian Geok (1901–1985), had protested the initial plans to phase out Chinese-medium education.

Lim, a Hokkien, was born in Fujian to a poor teacher's family. His early education included not only the Chinese classics but also writings of the nationalist reformers Kang Youwei and Liang Qichao. He graduated from the local teacher-training college founded by the Hokkien Singapore philanthropist Tan Kah-kee, then joined the college's teaching staff. After his school closed in 1926, Lim came to Malaya and found a teaching position at the leading Chinese secondary school (the "Confucian Middle School") in Kuala Lumpur. Lim remained in Malaya during the Japanese occupation and in 1951 obtained Malayan citizenship. His uncompromising support of the right of

Chinese to educate their children in their mother tongue so enraged the Malaysian government that his citizenship was revoked in 1964.

Lim's argumentation links the promotion of ethnic Chinese culture to the strength of the Malaysian nation. To believers in a homogeneous national culture, this proposition seemed absurd or even disloyal. Yet Lim saw the preservation of Chinese culture as an advantage to Malaysian national development. There is more than a glimmer here of Chinese nationalism in the form of cultural pride—exactly the sort of pride that had raised hackles and intensified anti-Sinitism in Indonesia. Nevertheless, Lim offered a conceptual bridge between Chinese communalism (which was a fact) and loyalty to a politically unified but multicultural Malaysian nation.

Lim Lian Geok, "Declaration of the First Chinese Education Day" (1955)[27]

"Today is the Federation of Malaya's first Chinese Education Day.

"The establishment of this festival was occasioned by the fact that Chinese education had run into critical danger. On November 21, 1952, the Legislative Council of the colonial government of the Federation of Malaya passed a new Education Ordinance. According to this ordinance, more than 1,200 Chinese schools, which were teaching more than 260,000 youngsters, were to be 'terminated.'

"The Chinese side objected strenuously, but their objections were ignored. Then in October, 1954, the Legislative Council changed tack and passed Education White Paper No. 67, which called for nibbling away at the problem, so that within the shortest possible time Chinese-medium schools would be converted into English-medium schools. This was what led the United Chinese School Teachers Association to declare, at its annual meeting, the designation of November 21 as Chinese Education Day. . . .

"On the positive side, we uphold Chinese-medium education as a way to promote Chinese culture. As everyone should know, Chinese-medium education in Malaya began fifty years ago when the colonial government abandoned the responsibility of educating the people. Then foresighted leaders resolutely took up this responsibility with their own resources, because they could not bear to relegate their descendants to ignorance and illiteracy.

"By now, our Chinese-medium education not only has deep foundations, but also has a complete system, so that it has become a shining example to our country. Looking toward the future, we can see that the independence of Malaya is near. We are a strong component of the Malayan nation, and our culture is naturally one of the mainstream elements in Malayan culture. Hence the responsibility of our Chinese-medium education is even more important. We must not only support it as the times require, but also develop it further. . . .

"Anyone who has studied Malayan history will know that Chinese-medium education has made great contributions to Malaya. Half a century ago, Malaya was still in a period of un-enlightenment. The condition of society then is unimaginable today. But over the past fifty years, the level of civilization has risen rapidly, thanks to the energetic promotion of education by Chinese, and has caught up with the level of civilized countries. . . .

"Second, Chinese-medium education is extremely adaptable. It is well known that Malaya is a meeting-ground of world races. Languages and ideas have come from every corner of the globe. There must be tools [for communicating]. Though our Chinese schools use the mother-tongue and mother-literature as their principal medium, they definitely use foreign tongues and foreign literatures as supplements. All graduating students must be conversant with both Chinese and a Western language to meet the needs of practical use. This sort of education can really serve as a model for others.

"On the eve of Malayan independence, we hope everyone living in the country truly understands the fact that the Malayan situation is special and cannot be discussed in the same terms as other places. The ethnic Chinese in Malaya are, in terms of numbers, roughly on a par with the majority population. In terms of culture and economics, they greatly exceed that majority population. It would be one thing if Malaya were not preparing for independence. But as independence is shortly to be a fact, ethnic Chinese must make the largest contribution. This cannot be doubted. With those facts in mind, it is only proper that ethnic Chinese should demand that their education form one part of the national educational system, and that it receive equal treatment.

"We must frankly recognize that in modern nations, the principle of territory is weightier than the principle of racial descent. Our Chinese settlers came southward, made their homes here [lit. 'ate the grain and walked upon the land'], and naturally want to live in their country over the long term and become citizens. But let there be no mistake: we gain our right to existence through loyalty, sincerity, and attention to duty. We definitely do not sell our honor for someone else's patronage, or accept that we be sacrificed. Therefore we dare to proclaim loudly: our culture is the soul of our people, and our educational system is the fortress of our culture. We must hold onto and transmit our ancestors' teachings. Only thus can our lives attain happiness. The unbreakable principle of building a nation in this ethnically complex territory is to live peaceably with one another and prosper together. We must take great care to respect the education of others, and by the same principle we dare to demand that others respect ours."

Over five decades, the struggle to sustain Chinese schools in the face of determined government discrimination has welded Chinese communities together. Education has been a standard around which to rally business support: school finance and management have proved a basis for commercial elites to transform economic success into community leadership status. Chinese education thus became not only a cultural issue but a social-structural one as well. The social bond between Chinese business leaders and their communities hung on the issue of school finance, which certified business organizations' legitimacy as defenders of Chinese culture.

The Issue of Cultural Preservation

The National Culture Debate of the 1980s (about what was to be recognized as the national culture of Malaysia) was stirred by repeated government assertion of Malay cultural primacy in a number of sensitive areas, including rejection of a Chinese-medium university; refusal to recognize as a national institution the "Lion Dance," dear to Chinese at New Year celebrations; and posthumous dethronement of Yap A-loy, the Chinese "founder" of the national capital, Kuala Lumpur. These assertions of Malay cultural hegemony stirred fears in Chinese communities that their culture was not considered a legitimate part of Malaysia and was in danger of being shouldered out of national existence.[28] A contentious debate emerged in the press during 1983 and 1984. The Chinese position —agreed in a nationwide gathering of Chinese organizations—asserted that "diversity of religion and culture" was a defining characteristic of the Malaysian nation and that the "Malay-centric" policies of the government were "heavily tainted with communalism and tend towards forced assimilation." The "national culture" must, instead, embody "the fine elements in the cultures of all ethnic groups to resist the racial extremists within the country."[29]

Chinese cultural resistance emerged through a number of concrete local issues, of which the most explosive was the fight to preserve the world's oldest Chinese cemetery. Bukit China ("Chinese Hill," also known as Sanbaoshan) is an imposing forty-two-hectare rise overlooking the city of Malacca. As burial ground of the Chinese immigrant community since the 1600s, it contains the tombs of the most prominent Chinese merchant-leaders, among hundreds of others. Its location made it a prime target for commercial exploitation. In the spring of 1983, the Malacca state government presented plans to level the hill, use the earth for reclaiming coastal land, and develop a vast commercial/residential center (including a historical theme park). The plans roused outrage in the ethnic Chinese community. Many saw them as a symbol of Malay disdain for their culture and doubts about their loyalty to Malaysia.

The Bukit China preservation movement displayed a varied set of actors: the Malay chief minister of the state of Malacca in league with a flamboyant Chinese politician-entrepreneur had proposed the commercial development project. The preservationists included the heads of the two main Chinese political parties. The trustees of the Blue Clouds Pavilion, as fiduciaries of the cemetery, played a leading role. Racial feelings smoldered when the Malay administration of Malacca charged that the Chinese preservationists were antigovernment and implicitly guilty of treason. In the end, a nationwide mobilization of Chinese organizations persuaded the national government to squelch the project. True to his accommodationist reputation, the grand old man of Malay politics, the British-educated former prime minister Tunku Abdul Rahman, backed the preservationists. But ultimately the preservation movement owed its success to effective grassroots organization, based on the symbolic centrality of Bukit China to the identity of the Malaysian Chinese community: many of the prominent *kapitans* since the seventeenth century were buried there. The city of Malacca itself, home to at least four major Chinese-language groups, was home to the oldest continuous Chinese settlement in the Malay Peninsula. The Bukit China preservation movement showed the symbolic power of a numinous place that contained the ancestral remains of

the community and also linked that community (through its tombstone inscriptions) to its native counties in south China. Desecration of burial grounds has been an age-old flash point for righteous Chinese fury; developers could not have chosen a less propitious battlefield.[30]

The following editorial illustrates the potency of mutually reinforcing symbols: the ancestral cult, geomancy, and pride in compatriot affiliation—but equally evident, the determination of the Chinese community to demonstrate their Malaysian loyalty even while protecting the cultural heritage that sustained their identity.

Saving the Chinese Cemetery in Malacca (1984)[31]

"Historic Sites and Urban Development"

"For centuries, Malacca has experienced dramatic changes, which have left numerous historic sites that meld together the cultures of various races. . . . In addition to the historic remnants of the fifteenth-century Parameswara Dynasty, the old Dutch fort and the church on St. Paul's hill, there is the hundred-acre Bukit China, located in Malacca City, a historical site that bears witness to the bitter struggles of our Chinese forebears. The ancient tombs on Bukit China are iron-clad proof that Chinese were loyal to Malaya, in that they lived and died here [instead of returning to China to die or having their remains repatriated]. These tombs are not only records of the culture and history of ethnic Chinese, but have long constituted a page of Malayan history that cannot be revised. At the same time, it is 'a tourist site that shows the development of the Malayan Chinese cultural style.' . . . No wonder the proposal [to raze the cemetery and develop the site commercially] immediately galvanized the entire Chinese community.

"Although it is said that the government was promoting this development plan for the advantage of the people, there have been unavoidable suspicions as to why 'Bukit China was unfortunately chosen as the target.' In fact, Bukit China has unique *fengshui* [geomantic qualities]. In 1840 and again in 1920, the British government twice attempted to use it for other purposes. Both attempts failed, because of strong opposition from the Trustees of the Blue Clouds Pavilion [who are the fiduciaries of Bukit China] and from the entire Chinese community, who protested 'for reasons of religion and culture.' The present proposal to 'level Bukit China and use the earth as fill to reclaim the seacoast' is merely repeating the old tune of the British . . . in the 1920s. Why did all these governmental authorities set their hearts on getting Bukit China? Perhaps they did not think that they were using what our ancestors left us as an inheritance, but would merely be getting rid of 'a place where dead people are buried,' which was a nuisance for sightseeing! . . . We hope that this question can be settled once and for all, so that our ancestors under Bukit China can have peace!

"It is undeniable that on Bukit China are buried the Chinese pioneers who opened this country [lit. 'broke through brambles and cut through thorns'], and the remains of the *kapitans* who made contributions to this country. Even were we to disregard their contributions and the historical-cultural background, how could we forget our own origins?"

Malaysian Chinese economic life was inevitably affected by the Malay-centric preferences of its New Economic Policy, in force from 1970 to 1990. In line with the affirmative action goals was a requirement that by 1990 Malays should own at least 30 percent of the country's capital equity. This sounded menacing to Chinese business, which in fact possessed some 22.8 percent of share capital (at par) to the Malays' 2.4 percent when the New Economic Policy began. Nevertheless, by 1990, the Chinese share was 45.5 percent, while the Malays' stood at 19.2. Fortunately, this continued imbalance was seen against a background of economic growth so that, the disparity notwithstanding, the Malay "uplift" effect was considerable.

Chinese adaptations to the reverse affirmative action in Malaysia included some of the same devices as those of their Indonesian counterparts: cultivation of partners and patrons among politically powerful indigenes (the *cukong*, or Ali-Baba resort), diversification overseas, and formation of conglomerates to multiply and diversify assets. It is also likely that the thousands of unincorporated small businesses throughout Malaysian society remain in Chinese hands. A Chinese asset in Malaysia has also been the presence of a national-level Chinese political party as a junior member of the national governing coalition: the Malaysian Chinese Association, which has been active in promoting the expansion of Chinese business holdings. Nevertheless, the picture is one of vigorous Chinese efforts to blunt the effects of the New Economic Policy, even while cultivating the Sino-Malay compromises and alliances that permit them to prosper within it. Because Malaysia has remained a democracy throughout the postcolonial period, a *cukong* phenomenon (in the form of

under-the-counter relationships between military strongmen and Chinese tycoons) has not arisen in quite the same way as in Indonesia. Nevertheless, the fact that the Chinese minority is the politically weaker yet economically stronger entity opens the door to cronyism at the highest levels of political and economic power.

The postcolonial legacy in Indonesia and, to a lesser extent, in Malaysia lent the anti-Sinitism among those peoples a special bitterness that stands out clearly when compared with the Chinese experience in Thailand. As we have seen, the Kingdom of Siam had never been ruled by foreign colonialists. Nor had ethnic Chinese been placed by Siam's rulers in positions of authority over the indigenes, as in the Dutch East Indies. The important identity variable in the days before modern nationality was integration with the formal political order. Thus, the presence or absence of cultural "Chineseness" was not considered important by the Siamese ruling class.[32] "Thai" nationality dependent on exclusive cultural and ethnic identity (like the *pribumi* idea in Indonesia) had been buttressed by labeling ethnic Chinese indelibly as outside the Siamese citizenry for lack of an essentialized "Thai" culture. The link between ethnicity and citizenship was formalized by the dictator Phibun in 1938, when he formally renamed Siam "Thailand." Yet Thai power holders, including King Rama VI and his successors, all relied on rich Chinese as business partners.[33] Since the fall of the absolute monarchy in 1932, economic restrictions on Chinese—through limiting certain professions and businesses to Thai citizens—have still been met in the usual way: through complicated partnerships between Chinese or Sino-Thai businessmen and Thai politico-military elites.[34]

Fear of Chinese nationalism (particularly its Communist version) was a powerful source for the anti-Sinitism of Marshal Phibun and his military successors. Nevertheless, once China's revolution had given way to profit-driven pragmatism in the 1980s, the position of Sino-Thai was transformed. By the early 1990s, it became quite acceptable not just to maintain the Chinese part of their identity but also to celebrate it as an advantage to their families and to Thailand, as the lure of China trade made speaking Mandarin a marketable skill. At Chulalongkorn University, a center for Chinese studies has attracted funds from Thai Chinese businessmen riding the wave of enthusiasm not only for China trade but for the Chinese community's historical heritage as well.

In comparison with Indonesia and Malaysia, the history of the Chinese minority in Thailand is unique: second- and third-generation Sino-Thai (i.e., people of Chinese descent educated in Thai schools, more fluent in Thai than in Chinese) have little difficulty being accepted by the majority community. For some Sino-Thai, acculturation may amount to preserving "largely Chinese minds within Thai bodies." This is the ethnographer Richard Basham's description of Sino-Thai who have internalized the Thai body-language, or "motoric morality" (knowing how to move one's body decorously). Beyond this, Thai readily accept Sino-Thai who learn Thainess through being sensitive observers of neighbors and schoolmates (even though their family lives and personal ethos may remain substantially Chinese). In these cases, Thai "eagerness to accept the Chinese who conform outwardly to Thai standards of behaviour" proves irresistible. Add to this the cultural self-confidence of the Thai and the long-term lack of competition between Chinese and Thai for social and economic niches, and we can understand why many Chinese in Thailand are able to have it both ways: to acculturate yet to remain their frugal, hardworking, self-disciplined, success-oriented Chinese selves.[35] In the background stands a history in which Chinese were not seen as collaborators of foreign rulers, and therefore the Thai, never having been humiliated by either Chinese or foreigners, lack the self-doubt or even self-hatred that runs so near the surface of *pribumi* and *bumiputra* anti-Sinitism in Indonesia and Malaysia.

Finally, Singapore offers a special case of postcolonial Chinese identity. Lee Kuan Yew, an English-educated Singaporean of Hakka extraction, read law at Cambridge after World War II and returned to Singapore to hasten the end of colonial rule. It was generally assumed, when Singapore became self-governing in 1959, that it eventually would become part of the newly independent state of Malaysia. That was not to be, because Lee and his People's Action Party (PAP) had views of Malaysia's future quite different from those of Malaysia's Malay leadership. For Lee and the PAP, it must be a "Malaysian Malaya" (code for "not a predominantly Malay Malaysia") in which all ethnic groups would participate on an equal footing. Recalling the PAP's unsuccessful effort to contest the 1964 parliamentary elections in Malaysia, Lee wrote, "[The Malay political elite] did not want the Chinese to be represented by a vigorous leadership that propounded a non-communal or a multiracial approach to politics and [that] would not confine its appeal only to the Chinese."[36] Lee found himself in direct conflict with the only kind of Chinese whom the Malay leadership *did* trust: the Straits Chinese (Baba) leader of the Malaysian Chinese Association, Tan Siew Sin, who found

Lee's socialism (and personal charisma) as threatening as his anticommunal, multiracial approach to politics.

So in 1965, to Lee's anguish, Singapore was ousted from Malaysia and became an independent republic. The conservative leaderships of both major ethnic communities, Chinese and Malay, had felt threatened by the non–English-speaking Chinese of Singapore, who were seen as dangerously susceptible to Communist influence. But was an independent Singapore destined to be a culturally "Chinese" state? For several reasons, it was not. First, the PAP leadership was itself largely British educated and felt little or no emotional connection to Chinese language or culture. Lee Kuan Yew himself had to take Chinese lessons before he could deliver election speeches in Mandarin. Lee and his lieutenants distrusted the Chinese-educated (or uneducated) tycoons who ran the compatriot lodges and were rivals to PAP power among the dialect-speaking population. Second, the PAP leadership saw Chinese-medium education as a conduit for Communist subversion (as indeed it had been in the Chinese middle schools). Third, as the common language of the postcolonial Singapore bureaucracy as well as of international business, English, not Chinese, was seen by Chinese parents as the channel through which their children could get jobs in government and business. Finally, Lee had a keen sense of the danger of "Chinese chauvinism": the righteous pride in Chinese culture and business acumen that gave explosive anti-Sinitic ammunition to neighboring demagogues such as Indonesia's Sukharno. Singapore was a Chinese island in a Malay sea. Its national motto, "Majulla Singapura" (Flourish Singapore), is still rendered in Malay.

As a result, what emerged in multiracial Singapore was (as far as the Chinese majority was concerned) Chinese culture "lite." By the late 1960s, Chinese-medium primary and secondary education was in decline, as parents opted for English as the path to jobs and wealth. At length, in 1987, Singaporean schools adopted English as their common language, with a secondary language being the "mother tongue" of each student group: Mandarin for ethnic Chinese, Malay for Malays, and Tamil for Indians.

A symbolic marker for Singapore's ambivalence about Chinese culture—and its political implications—was the fate of its only Chinese-medium university, Nanyang, founded in 1953 by the Hokkien rubber magnate Tan Lark Sye and his Hokkien *bang*. Tan Lark Sye, as Hokkien leader, was in some sense a successor of Tan Kah-kee (no relation) but lacked Kah-kee's finesse and subtlety. Nanyang was a popular project, seconded by the rank-and-file Chinese-speaking working class, who contributed in droves. From its inception, it was a symbol of Chinese cultural pride and indeed of Chinese nationalism. Nevertheless, once Singapore was independent, with English as the language of government and of international business, Nanyang could offer students little hope of jobs suitable for college graduates. In 1975, the university adopted English as its primary language of instruction; five years later, the government merged Nanyang with the National University of Singapore—in other words, abolished it. This result can be seen from three perspectives. First, the decline of Chinese language in the Singapore schools; second, the PAP's vigilance against communist subversion from the People's Republic, which had been a real danger since the early days of Singapore's self-government in the mid-1950s; and, third, Prime Minister Lee's ruthless determination to neutralize Nanyang's sponsors, the dialect-speaking business tycoons such as Tan Lark Sye. These were not only Lee's political rivals but also (in PAP language) "Chinese chauvinists" who threatened Singapore's delicate multiracial stability. Worse yet, they endangered the tiny republic's relations with its giant Islamic neighbors, Malaysia and Indonesia.

Nonetheless, Lee had long admired aspects of Chinese culture—mainly its lofty moral ideals, its public service ethic, and its respect for authority. These undoubted advantages to an authoritarian state were embodied in a short-lived campaign—in the early 1980s—to instill "Asian values" into Singaporean society. "Asian values" really stood for Confucianism: emphasis on family, on social responsibility, and on self-discipline. Their sponsors, however, never referred to them as "Chinese" values, for reasons just suggested. Singapore today has diminishing interest in Confucianism and scant political freedom, but with a citizenry three-quarters Chinese, it has managed (by and large) to make multiracialism the stable basis of a livable postcolonial state.

Notes

1. Lin (2001b).
2. Peattie (1996).
3. Kagotani (2005), 68–69.

4. Kratoska (1997), 94; Turnbull (1989), 190.
5. Twang (1998), chap. 3.
6. Shiraishi (1990), chaps. 1–4 and 7.
7. Shiraishi (1990), 68.
8. Coppel (1983), 22.
9. Coppel (1983), 37–39.
10. Feith and Castles (1970), 343–46.
11. Suryadinata (2004), 206 (emphasis added).
12. I am indebted to Wilt Idema for this term and its significance.
13. Abraham (1997), chap. 4.
14. Mahathir (1970) (excerpts), 20, 24–25, 84–85.
15. Mahathir (1970), 31
16. Wickberg (1999), 191, and personal correspondence; Appleton (1960); Purcell (1965); Wilson (2004), chap. 5.
17. Landon (1941), 35, 40–41.
18. Skinner (1957), 173–74.
19. Mackie (1988), 240–42.
20. Suryadinata (1988), 270.
21. Twang (1998), 59.
22. Twang (1998), chaps. 5 and 6.
23. Coppel (1976).
24. Heng (1988), 98–101.
25. Means (1976), 401–2, 407; DeBernardi (2004), 114–16.
26. Tan (2002).
27. Lim Lian Geok (1986), 72–75.
28. Carstens (2005), chap. 8.
29. Kua (1985), 241–43.
30. Cartier (2001), 156–66.
31. *Xing-bin ribao* (1984).
32. Kasian (1992), 109.
33. Kasian (1997), 80–81.
34. Skinner (1958), 186–99, 301–19, et passim.
35. Basham (2001), 132–33.
36. Lee (1998), 542.

CHAPTER EIGHT

The New Migration

The present era of Chinese migration, dating from the 1960s, has been shaped by four historic events: 1) the abandonment of race-based exclusion by the settler societies of North America and Australasia; 2) China's repudiation of Maoism and opening to world commerce; 3) the reconfiguration of Europe, including the breakup of the Soviet Union and its satellite empire; and 4) the reorientation of Chinese state policies toward emigration. These events are best understood not as revolutionary but as evolutionary. The settler societies' rejection of racist exclusion grew from gradually changing attitudes toward ethnicity and human rights. China's rejection of Maoism (and, in the process, Marxism) along with its replacement by capitalist authoritarianism are consistent with patterns of China's longer political history. The reconfiguration of Europe is partly a result of the search for European unity following two disastrous world wars along with the decay of Marxist ideology and the failure of state socialism to meet human needs. The reorientation of China's policy toward emigration was foreshadowed by the empire's evolving pragmatism in respect to maritime trade.

In China itself, the New Migration rests on well-laid social and cultural foundations of labor export. Yet it also displays some distinctive features that reflect the present stage of world history. As used in China, "New Migration" (*xin yimin*) refers to people who left China during the reform era since 1978, products of "new China": better educated, more skilled, more urbanized. "New emigrants" are being contrasted with the "old emigrants" of the pre–World War II period, particularly those who settled in Southeast Asia, some of whom prospered but who were marked by "feudal" culture: old-style business practices, old-fashioned organizations like native-place lodges, and dialect and kinship associations. Seldom if ever is *"xin yimin"* used of China's migratory scene as a whole, which includes some hundred million rural migrants seeking factory, construction, or service work in China's expanding cities. These sojourners from the ranks of the semiemployed farm population are referred to as "floating population" (*liudong renkou*), an opprobrious term from China's past that reflects suspicion and disdain of internal migrants as dirty, shiftless, possibly criminal, and unconstrained by the bounds of territorial administration. Outside state control and far from their families, these sojourners are not welcomed by city people, except for the manufacturers and contractors who employ them at rock-bottom wages, the neighborhoods whose trash they collect, and the families whose housework they perform. Nevertheless, in keeping with the theme that has run through this study, internal and external migrants will be considered as participants in the same historic process: the rational quest for economic survival in a crowded, competitive environment through labor export or (increasingly common in the current era) family migration.

Both the internal and the external migrations are conditioned by worldwide movements of capital and technology and are shaped by the historic events mentioned above. Hence, these human movements should be understood as interactive parts of the "New Migration." Furthermore, although the phrase "New Migration" seems to have originated on the China mainland after 1980, it is considered here to span the entire period from the mid-1960s to the present: that is, the period since the abandonment of race-based "exclusion" by the societies of North America and Australasia.[1] It was these 1960s breakthroughs that enabled significant numbers of educated, skilled emigrants from Taiwan and Hong Kong—the advance guards of the New Migration—to settle in the West.

The Abandonment of Race-Based Exclusion by the Settler Societies

During the Great Depression, Chinese movement to Southeast Asia had actually reversed itself through return migration, and after World War II, barriers were raised against Chinese immigration by newly independent states such as Indonesia, Malaysia, and the Philippines as well as by Thailand and Japan. Southeast Asia still receives hundreds of thousands of Chinese immigrants annually, nearly all illegal, with the Philippines and Thailand as favored venues. Southeast Asian countries also serve as stepping-stones for illegal migrants traveling to the West.[2] The dramatic switch of migration routes, from the traditional Southeast Asian venues to the settler societies and Europe, resulted from new immigration conditions that emerged after World War II.

The repeal of exclusion laws by the United States (1943 and 1965), Canada (1947 and 1962), Australia (1958 and 1966), and New Zealand (1987) ended some eight decades of racial barriers; but repeal notwithstanding, old attitudes faded by painfully slow stages. In the United States, the 1943 "Repealer" had an insignificant effect on numbers admitted (China was granted 105 slots under the "national origins" quotas still in force), yet the Repealer was a crack in the dike. It abolished (in principle) two obnoxious limitations on Chinese immigration: besides ending racial exclusion, the Repealer finally permitted Chinese to become naturalized citizens. It also paved the way for a significant law of 1946 that allowed Chinese wives of American citizens to enter the country outside the quota; most Chinese women had been denied legal entry since the Page Law of 1875 (as we saw in chapter 5), making conjugal families next to impossible.

Nevertheless, public prejudice against Chinese and other Asian immigration continued to disfigure U.S. legislation. The McCarran-Walter Act of 1952 retained the invidious 1924 national-origins criteria that privileged immigrants from northern Europe. Although Asians of all nations from India to Japan and the Pacific islands (the so-called Asia-Pacific Triangle) were, in principle, granted naturalization rights equal to those granted the Chinese in 1943, an annual limit of 2,000 immigration visas was imposed on that vast area, clamping a racial ceiling all the more firmly over Asian immigration.[3]

The 1965 Hart-Celler Act for immigration reform finally jettisoned the national-origins system, providing slots for 20,000 per country (China, Hong Kong, and Taiwan eventually were allotted 20,000 annual slots each). But *outside the quotas* were provisions for family reunification of "immediate relatives" (spouses, unmarried children, and parents of American citizens). Under the quotas themselves was a rank list of preferences, beginning with unmarried children of citizens and then those of permanent residents. Then came professionals, scientists and artists, married children, and siblings of adult citizens. Heavily weighted toward family relationships, the off-quota and the preference provisions cleared the way for massive chain migration. The results surprised Congress. In the quarter century after 1965, the United States received some 711,000 Chinese immigrants. By 1989, a decade after the fall of Maoism, chain migration was in full flood. Out of all Chinese coming to the United States, family-reunification migrants from the People's Republic of China (PRC) outnumbered occupational-preference migrants by about 93 percent to 5 percent; from Hong Kong, 90 percent to 1 percent; and from Taiwan, about even (30 percent to 32 percent). By allowing a broad span of family reunification links, Congress had unwittingly played to the strength of the Chinese family system, which had survived long periods of separation and—using immediate-family exemptions and family preference quotas—continued to provide the surest route to successful migration.[4] The total Asian population of the United States increased from some 1.2 million in 1965 to around 11 million in 2000.[5]

Among the results of the 1965 legislation was a wider gateway for Chinese immigrants but, to judge by the number of illegal migrants, still not wide enough to meet demand. The 1965 reform legislation actually produced a substantial rise of legal immigrants but, simultaneously, a large number of illegals. Why this happened may not be simply that limits were set too low (or set at all) but may involve the culture of the sending society. We shall look into this question shortly.

Canada's exclusion of Chinese had been formalized in 1923 (after stiff head-taxes had failed to discourage immigration). The equivalent of the U.S. "Chinese Repealer" passed Parliament in 1947, although (just as in the United States) invidious restrictions remained in effect against all Asians. Finally, immigration rules were equalized for all nationalities in 1967; thus, both Canada and the United States were positioned to be prime venues for the New Migration. Canada's intake was filtered through a "point" system that favored those with education and skills, with a major

expansion of points for business investors in 1985. Not surprisingly, the highly educated Hong Kong and Taiwan populations were the initial beneficiaries, with Hong Kong remaining the principal source of Chinese immigrants even into the 1990s, when the PRC contribution began to increase. By 1991, Chinese were concentrated in two major metropolitan areas: Vancouver (1.5 million) and Toronto (3.9 million).[6] In both cities, Hong Kong immigrants set the pace, numerically and culturally. Urban, sophisticated, and often wealthy, Hong Kongese formed a vibrant subcommunity in the multicultural mosaic of Canadian society.

From 1958 to the 1980s, Australia and New Zealand also phased out exclusion policies that had endured since early in the twentieth century. In a series of carefully modulated steps from 1958 to 1973, successive Australian governments dismantled "White Australia" in both theory and practice. The obnoxious "dictation test" was abolished in 1958, though no explicit disclaimer was offered on the sensitive issue of race, and government was left to administer the existing policy as it saw fit.[7] Government addressed race for the first time in 1966, gingerly but positively, by declaring that small numbers of "well qualified non-Europeans" would be eligible for immigration. Later this was cited as a watershed in the abandonment of White Australia. In 1973, new legislation shortened the path to citizenship and cleared it of racial obstacles. Australian consuls abroad were to ignore race when processing immigration applications, and all international treaties relating to race and immigration were to be ratified. That such a momentous policy change was completed in less than two decades is impressive. The annual quota for all immigrants (2001–2002) was 97,000, composed largely of those eligible under "skills" or "family" quotas, and only 14 percent of the slots were allocated to the "humanitarian" quota. By then, nearly one-fourth of Australia's population was foreign born. In that year, 150 countries sent Australia some 89,000 immigrants, of whom 17.6 percent were from New Zealand, 9.8 percent from Great Britain, 7.5 percent from China, 5.7 percent from India, and 4.7 percent (many certainly of Chinese ancestry) from Indonesia.[8]

After such a long and ideologically entrenched habitude of exclusion, the political sensitivity of these changes can be imagined. That sensitivity is reflected in a painfully careful public statement by the Australian government's Department of Immigration and Citizenship: the issue of the "dictation test" was broached with extreme delicacy, stressing that White Australia *had been* a practically unanimous priority among Australians when it was enacted at the turn of the twentieth century. After noting that the Immigration Restriction Act of 1901 had barred entrance of the insane and the diseased, prostitutes, criminals, and contract laborers, it reads,

> Other restrictions included a dictation test, used to exclude certain applicants by requiring them to pass a written test in a language, with which they were not necessarily familiar, nominated by an immigration officer.
>
> With these severe measures the implementation of the "White Australia" policy was warmly applauded in most sections of the community.
>
> In 1919 the Prime Minister, William Morris Hughes, hailed it as "the greatest thing we have achieved."[9]

Well into the era of race-blind immigration and a genuine embrace of multiculturalism, the history of White Australia still carries political baggage and emotive force.

China's Repudiation of Maoism and Opening to World Commerce

Chinese revolutionary history has always played a role in the history of emigration. The effects of 1911 (the overthrow of monarchy), 1927 (the Guomindang seizure of power), and 1949 (the Communist conquest) had widespread effects on migrant communities—the first two attempting to extend Chinese national power among the overseas Chinese (as discussed in chapter 6), the third resulting in nearly thirty years of separation between Chinese overseas and the China homeland. To understand this separation—and the enthusiasm that greeted its end—we must understand the damage it had done to the migration corridors that linked emigrants to their dependents in the old *qiaoxiang*.

Besides virtually stopping emigration of any sort over a period of nearly three decades, PRC policies had baneful effects on overseas Chinese and their dependent families (*qiaojuan*: emigrants' dependents). Dispossessing and persecuting capitalists and landlords meant that any overseas remittances invested in business or land became targets for confiscation and their proprietors for mistreatment. Yet the PRC government knew that remittances had been a vital source of foreign exchange under its predecessor regimes. Was it worth forgoing that foreign exchange for the sake of social revolution? Were south China's emigrant dependents to continue receiving remittances, or were they to be treated as an "exploiting class" because of their foreign-derived livelihoods?

Persecuting hometown dependents could be expected to alienate overseas remitters. Yet a thoroughgoing socialist economy disdained areas of special privilege. Unfortunately, many of these dependents were wives, children, and elderly parents left behind by emigrants or aged emigrants themselves who had come home to retire. Lacking labor power to farm their land, they were letting it out to tenants, hiring farm laborers, or lending money at interest—all dangerous class markers that could mean dispossession or death during the "land reform" campaigns of the early 1950s. Nonetheless, certain limited exemptions and privileges for remittance receivers or returned emigrants were declared to be in the public interest.

Yet it was hard for local cadres to enforce these privileges amid the chaos, envy, and violence of land reform. Some of the lurid stories of victimization may have been propaganda from anti-PRC sources. Yet if even a tenth of them were true, the despair of *qiaojuan* families must have been widespread.

"Land Reform" and Overseas Chinese Dependents (1951)[10]

[The "land reform" movement (in which land redistribution, persecution or execution of thousands of landlords, inevitably targeted some families of overseas Chinese in the emigrant-sending regions of Guangdong and Fujian) was terrifying to many overseas Chinese. Emigrants' families who had invested remittances in land and houses or who (lacking male labor power) had rented out their land to be farmed by others were classed as "landlords." Sensational stories in the anti-Communist press, such as the following selection, were calculated to make overseas Chinese fear that the corridors to their home villages would be cut off.]

"Reported by Reuters, Singapore: Families of overseas Chinese forced to commit mass suicide. Four families of overseas Chinese, old and young, twenty-seven persons in all, took poison in response to death threats from the Communist Office of Investigation. . . .

"And another case, even more cruel: In the port city in the eighth district of Chaoyang (Xiagang) the Communist Party categorized Chen Dalu, age 65, whose son had emigrated to Nanyang to seek a living, as an 'overseas Chinese landlord.' Only his niece and grandson were left at home with him. The family owned three *mu* of land [less than half an acre]. Because the niece had been helping the old gentleman manage his affairs she was charged with being an 'accomplice.' The Communist cadres sent a gang of thugs to force the niece to strip naked, and ordered Chen Dalu to have sex with her. They forcibly stripped him naked, too, and made the two embrace. Afterward the two killed themselves out of shame. All Chaoyang people are well acquainted with this story.

"Other incidents involved communist massacres of overseas Chinese families and returned emigrants. On April 21 of this year [1951], at Dajiangxu, the Communists killed returned emigrants in Hengyong village, Liu Muqing and the 'landlord' Li Zhutao and his son Li Duomin. In all, since this spring the Communists have killed many people inTaishan, three-fourths of whom have been either *qiaojuan* or returned emigrants. Our *siyi* countrymen who live overseas are probably aware of their own kinsmen who have been unjustly put to death and will forgive our inability to relate the circumstances of each such person [there follows a list of forty-four persons allegedly killed by the Communist authorities since January in Taishan], two thirds of whom were *qiaojuan* or returned emigrants. . . .

"As to the correspondence between *qiaojuan* and their overseas kinsmen: every word of the letters we have received from our hometowns has been read by the Communist personnel. Those *qiaojuan* in the cities that are under control of the Communists of course cannot send a letter before it has been examined. If you purposely leave out your own name and address, the Communists will assign a special agent at the post office to track you down. How much the more will they check the foreign name and address to which you send a letter! The Overseas Chinese Association and the Communists' own 'Overseas-Chinese Section' and 'Overseas Chinese Bureau' carefully register all such items of information."

By 1952, it was clear that many *qiaojuan* were suffering. Remittances were actually declining, partly because of currency-exchange controls by foreign governments but also plausibly because of emigrants' dismay at treatment of dependents back home.[11] Accordingly, in 1953 a more liberal policy emerged; some unduly harsh class labels were revoked, and remittance households were allowed to hire labor and lend money. Nevertheless, the tide of local events soon brought the government back to a harsher line. Privileges of overseas Chinese dependents were breeding envy and social friction. Meanwhile, Chinese overseas were proving an embarrassing problem for the

regime, which was being reproached for failing to protest discrimination against overseas Chinese in Southeast Asia. In response, Beijing adopted two complementary strategies, one foreign and the other domestic.

In foreign affairs, the aim was to allay the suspicions of Southeast Asian states, particularly Indonesia, that their Chinese minorities (who still held Chinese citizenship through the "bloodline principle") were a potential "fifth column" serving the interests of PRC communism. Beijing's growing awareness of the foreign-policy costs of dual citizenship led Premier Zhou Enlai to renounce it at the Asian-African Conference of 1955 in Bandung, Indonesia. Beijing would no longer claim that all persons with a Chinese patriline were automatically citizens of China. A Sino-Indonesian Treaty on Dual Nationality, signed at Bandung in April 1955, called for Chinese living in Indonesia to choose one nationality or the other. The citizenship "choice" was not implemented until 1960. Meanwhile, Southeast Asian governments remained suspicious of the loyalty presumed to exist between overseas Chinese and China, regardless of formal citizenship status.

Indonesia in particular had never accepted people of Chinese descent as full citizens, notwithstanding their legal status. The designation WNI, for "Indonesian Citizen," in the 1946 Constitution meant *legally* Indonesian but *ethnically* alien (usually Chinese). Accordingly, for an ethnic Chinese to renounce Chinese nationality and choose Indonesian offered scant protection.[12] Yet for Beijing, foreign policy was in command. By 1958, the leadership continued to disentangle itself from responsibility for overseas Chinese, who were urged to "choose foreign nationality. They must live and work in peace in the countries of residence. . . . This will be of assistance in promoting friendly relations between China and the countries of residence."[13]

Nonetheless, the "Chinese problem" in Indonesia proved intractable. The chaos caused in 1959–1960 by the ban on retail trade by "aliens" confronted the PRC with an awkward challenge: Beijing's choice was repatriation to forestall a humanitarian catastrophe. At the same time, repatriation was designed to palliate a source of irritation for Southeast Asian regimes and to "smash thoroughly the slanders spread by imperialism and foreign reactionaries that the Overseas Chinese are China's 'fifth column' for subversion, and that an increase in the Chinese population will become a 'threat' to China's neighbors in Asia." A fleet of Chinese ships brought some 100,000 refugees to China for "resettlement" in special "Overseas-Chinese Farms."[14]

Domestically, Beijing sought to assuage rural divisiveness and envy by assimilating *qiaojuan* into the collective economy as soon as possible: accordingly, beginning in 1957, the remorseless Anti-Rightist Campaign and the Great Leap Forward (communes and egalitarianism) included tough strictures against special privileges for *qiaojuan*. The hardening stance toward *qiaojuan* meant that emigrants and, by implication, all Chinese at home with "overseas connections" (*haiwai guanxi*) were potential class enemies and not to be trusted. Hence, it became dangerous to maintain contact with relatives overseas. There is much in the following text that is reminiscent of die-hard imperial attitudes toward emigrants, as illustrated by an imperial edict of 1727: "Most traders who travel overseas are not law-abiding subjects. . . . What is the use of asking them back? They left their native places for foreign countries years ago; suddenly they return to our country. I'm afraid that they may have some scheme for secret collaboration [with foreigners]."[15] The priority of "class struggle" trumped concern for relations with Chinese communities abroad. This went for returned emigrants, too: the party distrusted even those who had returned as refugees, such as the Indonesian Chinese carried home on PRC ships in 1960. The following story of a Wenzhou immigrant in the Netherlands illustrates the stereotyping applied to overseas Chinese and their families during the 1950s and 1960s.

Perils of "Overseas Connections" for PRC Citizens (1950s)[16]

"My father went abroad when I was only a few months old. Then he lost contact with my mother. I was brought up by my mother in very difficult circumstances. . . . During the early 1950s, I joined the People's Army. I had done excellent work in the army. I was told that I had been selected as a prospective officer and I was full with a sense of pride. . . . Suddenly, all of my life changed. My father appeared! He came back from the Netherlands to find his only son whom he had left behind. . . . Very soon I was asked to leave the army since I had become a person with so-called *haiwai guanxi* [overseas connections]. I tried to explain that my father was a patriotic overseas Chinese, that he loves communist China; however, it was useless. I was demobilized from the army. I could not enjoy the Party's trust any more."

Stories like this illustrate how little ruling-class attitudes had changed since imperial days. Emigrants and their dependents were worth exploiting for their money. Although honored and flattered for their financial success, they were also despised for it: by Confucian mandarins for their crass pursuit of profit, by Communist cadres for their ingrained bourgeois nature, and by both for their political unreliability. The overthrow of the Maoists in 1978 turned the tide.

China and the postcolonial regimes of Southeast Asia shared the same "Chinese problem," but for different reasons. When overseas Chinese were mistreated by host governments, Beijing could be embarrassed by its inability to protect them. Yet Beijing's relations with insecure Southeast Asian nations such as Indonesia could be wrecked if it tried to do so. For China's postcolonial neighbors, the "Chinese problem" was a perennial dilemma between their need for the capital and business skill of Chinese minorities and the chronic anti-Sinitic resentment among indigenous majorities.

After Collectivism: The New Internal Migration

China's rigid state controls on economic and social life dissolved rapidly in the first decade of the "reform era" that began in 1979. The expansion of private commerce and the dismantling of rural collectivization had far-reaching effects on migration, both domestic and foreign. Collective agriculture had enserfed farmers within their bounded villages and shut down not only migration but most by-employments and private marketing as well, so that the centuries-old survival strategies of rural families—labor export, cash crops, and household manufacture—were stopped in their tracks. But as the strictures of the collectives loosened, millions of people were once again on the move. Seasonal migration to cities in search of work again became a normal resort of poor farmers who lacked enough land to farm profitably at home. On the margins of cities clustered communities of sojourners who entered the daily urban labor markets or went into petty trade and services. Migrant communities even began to set up private manufacturing firms that hired new migrants from their home communities. By 1995, the sojourning "floating population" numbered between 80 and 100 million.[17] As of 2004, there were estimated to be 1.6 million migrants in Beijing, 3.3 million in Shanghai, and 12 million in the industrial cities of Guangdong.[18] These migrants were responding to labor needs of the manufacturing powerhouses surrounding the Pearl River delta and in thriving port cities along the coast to Shanghai. The intensity of coastal industrialization, supported by abundant foreign investment (much of it coming from overseas Chinese), adds the "new" element to this phase of China's internal migration.

Under collectivism, rural-to-urban migration had been deterred by the ban on unsanctioned movement by members of rural collectives but also by the household registration system, under which city dwellers' access to food rations, housing, health care, and education depended on a residence certificate (*hukou*), which few rural migrants could obtain. Beginning in the early 1950s, household registration was applied to both urban and rural residents. By 1955, it was clear that the state was determined to erect a wall of regulations to protect city from countryside—an analogue of the physical walls that surrounded administrative cities in imperial times. Regulations in 1958 made it impossible for anyone without a household registration to get food in the city.[19] By these draconian measures, Beijing sought to stem urban growth and protect the favored industrial sector from masses of needy migrant country folk. Nevertheless, the *hukou* system became unenforceable by the mid- 1980s once the collectives had been dissolved, private enterprise legitimated, and labor export resumed. Soon the buyer's market in labor made it easy to exploit what was becoming a new urban underclass: a stratum of people without citizenship rights, without social safety nets or any chance of getting them. They were required to go home after two years.

Control over this underclass relies on state-sanctioned rules at both ends of the migration corridor: to move (legally) from one's village requires a pass for which the migrant must pay. To get a job in a city factory requires a "deposit," taken out of wages, which puts the migrant immediately in debt to the employer. The employer holds the worker's pass and identity card, thus establishing a form of bondage, a system tacitly enforced by the police. This state-complicit system has been compared to apartheid in white-ruled South Africa, in which a racial division kept rural-to-urban migrants from settling permanently and kept wages low. Instead of "race," China used "rurality" as a stigma to distinguish the migrant worker from settled urban residents.[20]

A recent sociological study offers a more optimistic view of the new internal migration on the grounds that it was not simply exploiting the rural poor but also contributing to wholesome changes in the villages where the sojourning migrants returned. Each migrant who came home with new skills, new outlooks, and some money was one more villager who might start an enterprise and

thereby contribute to alleviating rural poverty. The state generally approved temporary urban sojourning as one way of raising the "quality" (*suzhi*) of rural dwellers (code for modern outlooks, manners, and skills—an inversion of the Maoist glorification of rural people). At any rate, urban sojourning cost the government less than rural education. Finally, Beijing saw temporary labor export to cities as one way to enhance the modernization and work skills of the interior provinces while at the same time providing a rotating pool of cheap labor for industrialization. For village society, "the impact of migration is broadly positive" because it helps rural people "achieve their goals." There was more money for education, housing, marriage, and business creation.[21] In these respects, the yawning economic gap between coastal and interior provinces was gradually to be bridged.

Internal and External Migration: Common Ground?

How is the internal component of China's New Migration (the movement to off-farm employment) related to the external (the stream of emigration that began in earnest during the 1980s)? Although internal migration within the maritime provinces could prove a first step toward migration abroad, this was a step that migrants in the interior provinces were unlikely to take. The culture of emigration that pervades the Southeast Coast regions has depended historically on a long buildup of knowledge, overseas connections, family habitudes, and social expectations. Maritime commerce has provided the orientation toward labor export abroad. Educated urbanites, wherever in China they may be, have manifold opportunities to emigrate: business, tourism, and education being the usual channels. But the vast majority of internal migrants have no such connections. Kinship or compatriot connections overseas, a bridgehead, and access to capital are beyond their reach. That is why the poorest and most socially isolated seldom emigrate.[22]

We can, however, relate internal and external migration by examining sending communities that have histories of providing migrants to venues both domestic and foreign. Such ambidextrous coastal communities are not that unusual. Two outstanding dialect-group examples are the Hokkien of the Minnan region (in Fujian) and the region around Wenzhou (in Zhejiang). Hokkien merchant-sojourners were to be found throughout Southeast Asia but also in Chinese cities far and near. A survey of the nineteenth-century distribution of regional lodges around the empire shows Fujianese *huiguan* (likely Hokkien, Fujian's most commercialized dialect group) in sixty-five cities located in fifteen provinces.[23] Sojourning Hokkien were particularly active in trading ports up and down the China coast during the eighteenth century: over 10,000 in the great rice-trade entrepôt of Suzhou on the Grand Canal, several hundred in Tianjin, and a significant presence in the developing port of Shanghai.[24] Probably these Chinese shipping ports served as stepping-stones to migration overseas, as Hokkien managed their trade networks to the Nanyang and Japan.

More prominent in contemporary migration is another such ambidextrous *qiaoxiang*: Wenzhou, a coastal region that has specialized in sojourning, both domestic and foreign, since the early 1900s. Although Wenzhou emigration is largely a product of twentieth-century conditions, migration to nearby provinces came first. Beginning in the 1870s, after the Taiping Rebellion, many land-short Wenzhounese migrated to depopulated border regions of Jiangsu, Anhui, and Zhejiang (also Wu-dialect areas) in search of abandoned fields. External migration became a practical alternative when Wenzhou was made a treaty port in 1876 and began to service international steamship lines.[25] Like other intensive migrant-sending regions along the southeast coast, Wenzhou has an imbalanced land-to-population ratio: a 1978 estimate recorded roughly one-third the national average of cultivable land per capita. Sixty-three percent of village labor was "surplus" in relation to the land's capacity to absorb it.[26] The terrain is ruggedly mountainous, and land transportation to other parts of the region remained primitive through most of the twentieth century.

Europe (host today to a burgeoning Wenzhounese population) first attracted immigrants from nearby Qingtian county in a hardscrabble border area up the Ou River from Wenzhou city. Qingtian, though mountainous and dirt poor, boasted one salable resource—an attractive pale-green soapstone that local artisans carved into decorative shapes. These carvings reportedly were first sold as curios to foreigners in China in the 1880s by a Qingtian man. Having discovered their market value, he and other sculptors (the story goes) boarded a steamer to France in 1893, which was the beginning of Wenzhou-area emigration to Europe.[27] The ensuing outflow, sparked by fabulous stories about quick riches (including one in which a Qingtian emigrant presented a carving to the Dutch queen), provided the bridgehead for a surge of Wenzhou-to-Europe migration after World War II.[28] Many returnees served as travel facilitators (*baoke*) for others making the trip. Out of a population of

about 6.9 million (1994), Wenzhou municipality recorded 165,000 as living in Europe, 95 percent in France, Holland, Italy, and Spain.[29]

Chinese find the internal migration of Wenzhounese even more astonishing than the European. It originated after 1949 as Wenzhou people struggled to make up for their relatively neglected regional economy. Like the neighboring coastline of Fujian to the south, coastal Wenzhou was on the "front line" of the Taiwan strait and had purposely been passed over as a site for industry. Nevertheless, Wenzhounese had a long tradition of private commerce and handicraft production that had gone underground during the Maoist period but promptly reemerged in the reform era of the early 1980s. Wenzhou became an icon of bootstrap capitalism, marked by its aggressive risk-taking and its manufacturing firms arising from household-level start-ups. The "Wenzhou Model" was touted nationwide as what rural China could become through its own efforts.

Another facet of Wenzhou commercialism was its vigorous labor export. This also had begun on a small scale, under collectivization, through adroit subterfuges and official complicity.[30] A 1990 survey revealed that 80 percent of Wenzhou males over the age of thirty-two had experienced migration during the collective period.[31] Once the private sector had been legitimated, Wenzhou's network spread nationwide, with sojourning Wenzhou merchants in at least thirty venues spread over fourteen provinces. But the most famous venue for Wenzhou enterprise is the enclave in the southern Beijing suburbs called "Zhejiang Village" (Zhejiangcun). The "village" dates from 1984 when a few Wenzhou families tried their luck at garment making for private marketing in Beijing, with scanty capital accumulated by underground commerce. By the 1990s, the village had attracted more Wenzhou families as well as wage labor from neighboring provinces. Now a thriving and established manufacturing and trading center, Zhejiang Village is an adopted home for some 96,000 people, of whom 50,000 are Zhejiang immigrants and the remainder their employees who have migrated from provinces elsewhere.

Garment production is based on hundreds of individual families, each of which lives and works (along with its hired hands) in the same cramped quarters. The actual cutting and sewing are done by the women of the family and their hired assistants, as an extension of traditional household roles, while the men do the "outside" work of purchasing supplies and marketing products. The clothing produced, affordably down-market, fills a big niche in consumer demand. Zhejiang Village represents a pattern distinct from the migration of former days, which began with mostly male workers going out to work for wages and sending money home. Zhejiang Village social structure works through intersecting circles of personal connections (*guanxi* circles). These in turn rely on shared affinities: compatriotism (fellow Wenzhou villagers) and kinship (family, both immediate and extended). Other *guanxi* circles include business friends, often acquired through family introductions; carefully cultivated government personnel; and, more broadly, shared dialect.[32]

By the logic of Chinese territorial administration, the immigrant community cannot easily be regulated by Beijing government officials; the Wenzhounese are not Beijing citizens but operate outside the established system of administrative responsibility. Like all illegal immigrants, Wenzhounese migrants to Beijing had put themselves in an ambiguous relationship to the state. They had partially extricated themselves from the territorial-administrative grasp of the local state in Wenzhou ("partially" because their natal communities and family connections remained at the home end of the corridor); their relationship to state agencies in the capital hovers between avoidance and manipulation. To a considerable degree, they are self-governing. As a self-contained community, they furnish their own services (leadership, restaurants, transport, and clinics). They have periodically been chased away and their workshop-homes bulldozed; after fleeing and waiting for a time, they return and rebuild. Avoidance, and cultivation through bribes ("presents") but never confrontation, have been their ways of dealing with the state.[33]

A migrant community of Wenzhounese in Tuscany, Italy, shows striking likenesses to Zhejiang Village in Beijing, although there seem to be no kinship links between the two sites. The Tuscan community displays a similar household-based manufacturing and marketing system.[34] Italy has been an accommodating venue for the Wenzhounese, who had immigrated indirectly by way of other European countries: they moved to Italy to take advantage of a series of "regularization" laws (really amnesties) that permitted undocumented immigrants to stay in the country as long as they were employed and self-sufficient. The Tuscan niche was similar to that in Beijing: producing down-market leather goods and clothing in place of Italians who had vacated that occupation. Like the Beijing community, the Tuscan Chinese had immigrated as families, thus bringing their initial labor supply with them. Later, as their business expanded, they hired new immigrants from other

Chinese provinces, just as their compatriots did in Beijing. Low capital but intensive labor input, secondhand machinery, and mutual group support formed the Wenzhou business model in Tuscany as in Beijing. Like Zhejiang Village, the Tuscan Wenzhounese were good at running their shops "off the books": informal agreements and reliance on family and client labor substituted for formal agreements on wages and hours, in order to keep outside authorities at arm's length.

Zhejiang Village and its counterpart in Italy suggest that internal and external migration are sometimes linked by shared culture, social structure, and business strategy in the adaptive behavior of a particular population such as Wenzhou, whether in their native towns, in Beijing, or in Europe. One can think of the Tuscany and Beijing immigrant family workshops as "modular businesses"—they come with their own financing, initial labor supply, an ethic of mutual obligation and self-governance, and a strategy of dealing with state officials as little and as quietly as possible. That no doubt oversimplifies the case, but in its ideal-typical form, the Wenzhou model, as a communitarian type of petty capitalism, is an effective adaptation to migrant life. With it go steadfastness and pioneering cockiness, based on a long-term bottom line. It certainly gives a positive twist to the term "floating population."

The Ethic of the "Floating Population"[35]

"A middle-aged Wenzhou trader" in Beijing discussed the spirit of Wenzhou migrants (ca.1995)

"In a new era to enliven a market economy, floating is inevitable. Willing to take risks, to eat bitterness, and to move from place to place for better economic opportunities is the core of the Wenzhou spirit. There is a popular saying: 'Zhejiang people are like the sun. Wherever they go, they bring sunlight to brighten the place' [mocking an old ditty praising Chairman Mao]. This means that we can bring prosperity wherever we go! By contrast, Beijing people are spoiled and lazy, and they lack creativity. Rather than going out to improve their situation, Beijingers would rather sit at home drinking plain water and eating steamed buns. Why? Because they do not want to take any risks or to eat bitterness. If our country really wants to develop a free-market economy, the entire nation should learn from our Wenzhou people rather than denouncing our innovative practices."

Migration, Commerce, and the Local State

The question "why Wenzhou?" has been much discussed in China and abroad.[36] In view of the Wenzhou ecology and with other migrant-sending ecologies in mind, the question might well be "why *not* Wenzhou?" The long-term reliance of Wenzhou people on off-farm employment, the newly available international seaport, and the maritime culture of the Southeast Coast macroregion (of which Wenzhou occupies the northeastern extremity) all point to a culture of migration in general and of emigration in particular. One factor in the Hokkien case, as mentioned earlier, was tacit complicity of local officials in the maritime economy or even their quiet participation, and how easily they were persuaded that a pragmatic approach to trade and migration was in their own best interest. Commerce—maritime commerce in particular—was built into the regional culture, a culture in which the local state inevitably played a role. This included making the case, to central authorities, for the importance of their regional economic system. The local official establishment was acting as a broker between local society and the central state.

Besides tacit complicity, officials of the local state might turn to cautious resistance, which we can also observe in Wenzhou. The Wenzhou story was shaped by an unusual historic circumstance that inclined the local state to resist radical policies coming from the center: Wenzhou had been "liberated" in 1949 by an indigenous guerrilla band commanded largely by local people. Shielded by Wenzhou's geographical isolation, this force already had established a live-and-let-live relationship with private farmers and businesses. Remaining in power after 1949 and understanding the crucial importance of household farming and cottage industries in the local ecology, Wenzhou's cadres pragmatically shielded its inhabitants from the full rigor of collectivism. In 1978, Wenzhou was poised to expand its private economy more speedily than other places because that economy had never wholly been suppressed. Today some Wenzhou businessmen have actually been co-opted into the Communist Party, and cadres have been receiving shares in lucrative private businesses.[37] The integration of the local state into southeast commercial culture proceeded smoothly in Wenzhou. In respect to migration, both internal and external, this long-nurtured culture might also explain local cadre support for the Zhejiang Village venture as well as local cadre complicity in emigration. To these factors must be added a tradition of opportunistic migration, first to border

regions opened to settlement by the late Qing government and soon afterward to venues overseas once Wenzhou had been opened as an international port.

Emigration: Choices and Channels

It may seem anomalous that the big surge of Wenzhou migration began in the 1980s, when Wenzhou municipality and its surrounding counties were prospering under the reform program. Several explanations have been offered. One is "relative deprivation," a perception that greater wealth is possible for everybody, plus envy of neighbors who have done even better than oneself. It is a form of emulation—keeping up with the Zhangs—hence is rational behavior in a status system built on wealth and conspicuous display. Returned emigrants build elegant houses, hold lavish funerals for their parents, and bury them in princely tombs, all paid for by years of toil in a restaurant or leather workshop in Europe. Why not go there and do likewise?[38]

Relative deprivation cannot be the whole story, as a sociologist discovered while interviewing villagers near Wenzhou. A necessary adjunct is a sense of family responsibility: toward the status of one's family in the community, but also toward the status of a particular person or even a whole generation *within* the family: "Our predecessors have established excellent opportunities for us to get rich in Europe. If we cannot grasp these opportunities and maintain these links, we are unworthy sons."[39] It is the peculiar burden of every family in a migration-specializing community (an established *qiaoxiang*) to use chain-migration opportunities that have been set up—essentially "excellent opportunities" contributed to the family by parents, uncles, or siblings over the years, historical capital not to be squandered. In old-fashioned households, the warning that "sons are not as good as their fathers," adds to the filial burden that weighs on every new male generation. That weight can be measured in expectations of the family's social status and the soundness of the family business. If the family business is emigration, it is a moral failure to neglect it.

We can learn more about motivation through the case of Changle, a county across the border in Fujian in the Hokchiu area near the city of Fuzhou. Earlier we saw that Hokchiu were not mass migrants until the twentieth century but that impressive new ventures began in 1901 with Huang Naishang and his pioneering Methodist community in the jungles of Sarawak. An even more striking case has occurred in the county of Changle, which bids fair to rival the Cantonese Taishan as the county that has most prolifically sent emigrants to the United States. Unlike the Hokkien to their southwest, the Hokchiu have not historically been dependent on maritime livelihoods. Nevertheless, the fifteenth-century naval explorer Zheng He is said to have recruited sailors there. In the 1920s and 1930s, immigrants from Fuqing ("Hokchia"), just south of Changle, were known as enterprising settlers and smugglers in the Dutch East Indies, as we saw in chapter 7. Changle sailors, having jumped ship in New York and Canada, formed a bridgehead through which have passed as many as 200,000 Changle people to the United States since the 1970s, roughly a third of the county's population. The count is inexact because so many arrived illegally and remain undocumented. Around the Fuzhou region goes the saying, "China fears America; America fears Changle!"[40] The following interviews are drawn from fieldwork conducted in 2003 by Professor Zhuang Guotu of Xiamen University.

Chain Migration from Changle (2003)[41]

[Male subject, age 66]: "I was a sailor based in Hong Kong. In 1968 I jumped ship and stayed in New York. In 1974 I received American citizenship. At that time, there were only about 100 people from Changle in America. Most of them came to America by jumping ship. There were also some who had jumped ship in Canada, then had come to America. In all, New York had several tens of Changle people. At that time it was very easy to stay in America, because the Immigration Bureau didn't investigate. It was only necessary to get an employer willing to hire you and apply for your legal status. (Usually it was because you were a specially talented cook.) Then you could stay legally. You just had to be on good terms with your boss, so that he was willing to employ you for a long time, then he would apply for you. . . . From the beginning of the 1980s, though, it was a matter of kinfolk arranging for kinfolk. That way, I helped more than 80 relatives apply for legal entry to America."

[Male, age 36]: "My mother and three older brothers are in America. I myself went to Hong Kong ostensibly to 'visit kinsmen.' After I had stayed in my relative's house for about a month, a smuggler got me as far as Thailand. But after four months in Thailand, he had not yet managed all the arrangements [for onward passage to America] and my trip couldn't be completed. So

along with the four or five others who were traveling with me I came back to China. I still want to find a way to emigrate. I'm quite comfortable living at home, can make a little money, and my relatives can remit me some too. But if I don't emigrate, my children will suffer."

[Female, age 57]: "My children—one daughter and two sons—all have emigrated to America over the past several years, and all are married. My pension amounts to 460 yuan (US $58) a month. It's a bit more now, it used to be only two hundred something. My husband is sixty. He works at the Yingqian town grain depot. Now he's semi-retired, and next year he'll be fully retired. Because he's only part-time now, his salary is very little, only 260 yuan (US $32) a month. In this village nearly every household has folks who have emigrated. In China there's no work to do. They can't get by. For the children's future our whole family wants to go to America. That way we can take care of the grandchildren properly, so that our children can work without worrying."

[Female, age 36, women's affairs cadre in the town of Jinfengzhen]: "Here the condition of education is very bad. In the villages there is little inclination to study. Quite a lot of the households get remittances from abroad, so their standard of living is very good. Many kids believe that studying is useless because their parents, who have emigrated, will help them deal with future needs, and when they grow up they'll emigrate. So studying here in China is useless."

[Male, age 65, from Zeli village, now a New York restaurant owner]."After arrival in America, kinsmen and friends all help one another. Many newcomers hope to be able [one day] to work in their own restaurants. In 1990 I loaned money to twenty-odd people, two or three thousand American dollars each. Most were fellow townsmen, a minority were kinsmen. During the Cultural Revolution I chaired our village Revolutionary Committee. So I knew lots of folks and now I'm always being approached by people who need help. I've loaned perhaps seventy or eighty thousand dollars. Some of those loans still haven't been paid back. My family used to be very poor. Now that I have a little money I want to help fellow townsmen. In all, I've helped many dozens of people. I want to help all close kinsmen, and friends too. First I loan them money to pay off their debts, then I help them find jobs."

Changle lacks a long-nurtured culture of migration. What has suddenly motivated this exodus? Several possibilities emerge from these interviews. One is a feeling of being stuck, without prospects in an impacted society, with little betterment to be expected for the next generation, much less for one's own. "In China there's no work to do. [People in the villages] can't get by." Here is a poor agricultural community with too little work for its surplus population. A sense of hopelessness perfuses the scene. Without a cocky, self-confident family-based commercial tradition like Wenzhou's, Changle people see only one way out and are voting with their feet.

Family reunification is another motive, and there is an economic basis for it: the fifty-seven-year-old grandmother speaks of joining her married children in America because "that way we can take care of the grandchildren properly, so that our children can work without worrying." Child care is traditionally the grandparents' job in China, so all three young couples can work full time without worrying about the children. What she does not mention is the grandparents' need for their children's support, also an anxiety for old people on scanty pensions.

One further clue shows up: the role of the bridgehead in anchoring the migration chain. Around the world, ship jumping has gained families a foothold on foreign shores. Chinese sailors always did the grimiest jobs on international steamships, such as stoking the coal-fired furnaces deep below the waterline. Many took ship as sailors on foreign freighters with the aim of emigrating through desertion. With their feet on dry land, their first task was to get employed, their second to regularize their immigration status, and their third to serve as a bridgehead for *qinpeng haoyou*—relatives and friends back home. This process was common in the early stages of a chain-migration cycle. It worked smoothly for the former sailor quoted above. Naturally, not all are as lucky as this man: James Watson, writing about the Man (Mandarin: Wen) lineage in Hong Kong, tells how few did well enough even to help themselves. Nevertheless, some of his Hong Kong "ship-jumper immigrants" who had contrived to start their own small restaurants did serve as a bridgehead for wealthier lineage kin who financed the vast expansion of London's Chinese restaurant trade in the 1960s.[42] We shall return later to the issue of bridgeheads.

Within the ambidextrous migrant *qiaoxiang*, what factors govern a family's choice of either internal or external migration? This may be a futile question in that it is considered prudent family strategy to reduce risk by diversifying. One can imagine an old Hokkien paterfamilias deciding to send one son to Batavia, another to Taiwan, and a third to Sichuan, depending on how he sizes up

their talents and the needs of the family business. Data on such family choices are lacking for contemporary Wenzhou, possibly because neither the extended family nor the large lineage is as common now as it was in the heyday of Hokkien migration. In addition, it is questionable how much parental input there has been in Wenzhou migration decisions. The likelihood is that chance plays the major role in a family's choice. A family that happens to have European connections will exploit them. Although for Wenzhou families it is much costlier to go abroad than to set up shop in Beijing, the expected returns are much greater for those who make it to the West.[43]

Characteristics of the New Migration

A glimpse of the differences between New Migration and old was revealed by fieldwork undertaken over a number of years by a team of social scientists from Fujianese universities.[44] Of the three main case studies, the two that best illuminate the differences are 1) Xin'an, one of the villages studied by the pioneer sociologist Ch'en Ta (Chen Da) in the 1930s, and 2) the new migrant-sending community of Mingxi.[45] In Ch'en's time, Xin'an was a periurban village of some 300 households, most surnamed Khoo (Mandarin: Qiu). It was a "single-lineage village" ruled by its lineage elite. Public administration and policing were entirely supervised by the officers of the Khoo ancestral hall. Those days are now long gone, as Xin'an now has absorbed about 20,000 additional residents from elsewhere and has now been enrolled as a township within Xiamen municipality.

The special character of Xin'an, aside from its lineage homogeneity, lies in its long tradition of sending emigrants to do business in Southeast Asia. At present, Xin'an immigrants and their descendants are living in the Philippines, Malaysia, Indonesia, Singapore, Thailand, Europe, and North America. Before the Pacific War, the corporate lineage committee and its ritual duties were supported by remittances, as were most of the lineage households. Once the Japanese invasion cut off remittances, lineage members turned to agriculture to survive, a situation that lasted into the 1980s. The most prominent among Xin'an migrant settlements was on the island of Penang (in present-day Malaysia). There Khoo lineage members set up a branch organization and in 1851 built an imposing, luxuriantly baroque Khoo lineage hall called the *Longshan tang*.[46] The whole enterprise was controlled by an elite committee of wealthy senior kinsmen (called a *kongsi*—a fiduciary body acting for the entire Penang lineage) that managed lineage rituals and jointly-owned assets. As one of five powerful surname *kongsi* in Penang, this group was in position to protect and further Khoo interests in the Penang Chinese community. There is some evidence that the Khoo *kongsi*, like others of its type, had close ties to the "secret-society" brotherhoods through some of its high-ranking members.[47]

Several points stand out in the Xin'an Khoo story. First, the *Longshan tang*, from its inception, was the equivalent of a compatriot lodge and performed the usual services: in addition to ancestral rituals proper to the Khoo lineage, it offered sacrifices to the deities of the home region. It also served as a welfare agency for its poorer kinsmen and provided funerary services. Education of Khoo children was also one of its community responsibilities. In its lineage role, it was responsible for the Penang end of genealogical management as a local subsidiary of the senior lineage back in Xin'an. In that sense, it was not considered a wholly separate organization. The lineage and households on the sending end evidently supervised and directed the emigration by choosing which sons were to be sent out and which were to be kept at home (either adoptees or less favored sons were sent abroad first, just in case of mishap).[48]

Finally, and most important, the Penang branch served as a solid bridgehead for continued Khoo migration to Penang. An elderly Xin'an amateur historian and recently retired officer of the provincial Overseas Chinese Association (Qiaolian) related that, during the early twentieth century, Xin'an people had emigrated to Southeast Asia "because their kinsmen in Penang had the means to look after them." New arrivals could live at the *kongsi* building, "and the *kongsi* not only fed them but also helped them find work. Room and board were free until one found a job." And frankly, he said, any job in Penang paid better than any job at home. During that period, "nearly every rich family had relatives doing business in Southeast Asia."[49] Not every *qiaoxiang* was as well supplied with wealthy relations abroad, but the general pattern could be found throughout the region. This was the salient feature of the old migration: the corridors not only were routes of "chain migration" but are better described as a transnational travel agency and insurance system, promoting migration by reducing risk. On the receiving end, this system also operated as a replenisher and sustainer of elite strata in the venue societies. The patron-client relationships formed by elite largesse toward new arrivals enhanced lineage (and brotherhood) power and solidarity.[50]

For a New Migration model, the fieldwork team chose Shaxi village in Mingxi, a poor, mountainous inland county far from the coast, in the old Tingzhou prefecture: a community that had sent no known emigrants abroad before 1989. The key link in Shaxi's nascent emigration chain was a young man named Hu Zhiming, whose father had migrated to Shaxi from Wencheng county, part of Wenzhou municipality, in the 1950s. Zhiming's family was so poor that he had dropped out of middle school to work at farming and odd jobs. It happened that Wencheng (his father's old home) was a prolific sender of emigrants to Europe. The Hu family had kept contact with Wencheng relatives, so news of Wencheng's emigration fervor reached the Hu family in the back country of Fujian. The news proved irresistible to Zhiming and his half brother Zhixin. With the help of friends and family, the two emigrated to Italy to work in a Wenzhounese-run leather-goods workshop, just in time to take advantage of the 1990 Italian amnesty for illegal immigrants. News of the amnesty flashed back to Shaxi, where sixteen more poor young men took advantage of the opportunity, were introduced to jobs by Hu Zhiming, and through "special petitions" worked their way into legal status. News continued to spread during the 1990s until not only the whole county of Mingxi was affected but also communities beyond the county borders.[51] Total Chinese migrants living in Italy increased from 18,700 in 1991 to 48,650 in 2000.[52]

In contrast to the old lineage-dominated system, Mingxi emigration relied on no formal organizations. Not only were corporate lineages a thing of the "feudal" past, but the region was too poor to have supported big kinship groupings. What we see in Mingxi is individual decisions based on individual friendship or kinship but relying on no institution or patron. On the venue end, the close family relationship at the core of each household-workshop is supplemented by more distant relationships with hired workers from different kin or even from different regions. Was it enough to justify a decision to emigrate? What was the bridgehead for the Mingxi migrants?

According to a Mingxi emigrant interviewed while on a visit home, he and his friends had not emigrated blindly; they already had friends or kinfolk on the other side, even though no definite jobs awaited them. But in Italy, the proprietor of any Chinese workshop knows he is responsible for feeding and housing his workers. A new arrival can always stay in a workshop where a friend is employed, and once he too is employed, he can do the same for his own friends and family without fear that the proprietor will object. "My boss can't throw my friends out. If he throws my friends out, I can get mad and leave. Then who will work for him? I can always find work somewhere else." Anyway, he adds, the newcomers generally help out around the workshop, and sometimes the boss even helps them find jobs.[53]

Clearly, some form of soft landing is in emigrants' minds. The intensive labor of clothing and leather manufacture seems to have produced a chronic shortage of workers. The output of a Wenzhou-model family workshop is expansible only by hiring nonfamily labor or even (in the case of Mingxi migrants) labor from another region entirely. The bosses depend on a highly mobile pool of workers so that a reputation for stinginess or lack of human feeling (*renqing*) will make it hard to find replacements. Whoever is running an immigrant business in an ethnic enclave knows that a flow of fresh labor from home is the one thing he cannot do without. Grim tales carried home by returnees would shut off the tap. Finally, there seems to be some softening of particularistic boundaries in the New Migration. Consider the following story of a young Mingxi schoolteacher who migrated to Russia, interviewed at home while visiting his wife and family:

Teacher Yang Goes into Business in Russia[54]

"In 1995,1 made the big decision [to emigrate]. Many people were opposed to it. Only my wife supported me. For I had to quit my job before I went abroad, and who knew what would happen afterwards? There was no fallback position for me if I left my job. I'm different from those peasants. They could always come back and continue farming if they really couldn't make it abroad. But my case would be different. If I came back, my teaching job and my position as vice-principal would be gone. Frankly, a teacher has a steady income in the countryside. The living is not bad. So why did I want to emigrate? Basically I felt that so many people had gone abroad and managed all right. And many of them were uncultured peasants. That gave me self-confidence. I thought, I am still young. I should go and give it a shot. This was my way of thinking when I decided to emigrate. After I got to Russia, I ran a wholesale clothing business in partnership with a man from Tianjin, and later ran a business with a Cantonese. Having accumulated some capital, I now run a business of my own. Nowadays looking back I think that I chose the right path, and that this path will become broader and broader."

Of course, these sources are all anecdotal, and similar stories could be found in any period of migration history—the lone emigrant succeeding without anyone's help: no patron, no kinsmen, and no compatriots. Yet is there something about the New Migration that makes it seem more flexible and more cosmopolitan than the old? Teacher Yang's business partners were extraprovincials, which seems to have presented no problems. There is no hint of regional exclusiveness. Perhaps it is due to the spread of Mandarin (especially among educated people) or to a heightened sense of being fellow citizens of China regardless of regional origin. At any rate, here was a particularly courageous emigrant who seems to have made it safely and, one hopes, profitably.

On the surface, the New Migration displays some traditional patterns: familiar mechanisms of recruitment, sponsorship, and patronage have been operating between (on the China end) particular counties, villages, and families and (on the venue end) earlier arrivals, merchant bridgeheads, and voluntary associations. For example, fieldwork in Wenzhou reveals an old picture of family strategy and mutual support. One informant, a woodworker who was already earning more than a farmer, was determined to continue his upward path—but with his mind on status in his home community: "If I go to western Europe, I know I can earn much more. I can become rich very quickly and bring a lot of money back to do anything I want here." He spoke of building "a new and big house for my family" and of rebuilding his family tomb, "which will be among the best in this area, if not the best." He also might donate "to building a school or an old people's home in my village." Indeed, the chain of migration was already linked: "My eldest uncle [living in the Netherlands] has agreed to arrange the relevant immigrant procedures for me."[55] Yet even here, there are new elements. The spectacular economic rise of the Wenzhou region has created an "emigration frenzy" (*yimin re*) among everyone who has a relative or neighbor abroad who can help.

In a broader framework, the New Migration represents an evolutionary step into a new world environment. Although the microsocial basis remains traditional (bridgeheads, chain migration, and kinsmen helping kinsmen), the larger scene displays new features. First, post-Mao China, which lacks effective barriers to illegal emigration, is encouraging and assisting legal emigrants in ways unprecedented for any Chinese government. Second, economic development along the seacoast, particularly in the south and southeast, has introduced frontier enclaves in the form of "special economic zones" and "economic development zones" that generate more liquid capital than earlier coastal ports, thus boosting emigrants' borrowing power, creating starker inequalities in income and life chances. For families around the open ports, that capital and those inequalities are goads to emigration.[56]

Illegal Migration as a Business Niche

Historically, bans on migration have always created business niches for enterprising persons on both ends of the corridor. Forbidden migration to Taiwan during the early eighteenth century enabled coastal patrolmen in the Taiwan strait to extort large bribes from Fujianese who had decided to cross anyway. Navy ships, for a price, carried illegal migrants. Authorities even tried to outbid the migrants by offering sentinels substantial bounties for arrests of surreptitious strait crossers.[57] And as we observed in chapter 2, local government underlings made a regular business of blackmailing returning sojourners who flouted the eighteenth-century maritime bans.

What is required for today's illegal migration to flourish? First, there is the bridgehead: an established community at the venue end with enough wealth and connections to finance and employ immigrants and to broker their relations with the venue society. Second, there is the willingness of emigrants to take on the long-term obligation—the long-term bottom line—by which present deprivation is endured for the sake of the family future. Third, there must be an ineffective or collaborative border-security system at the sending end so that emigrants can leave the country without too much trouble. All these conditions were present during the era of Chinese exclusion but are greatly enhanced today.

Those covert facilitators known today as "snakeheads" in China and as "human traffickers" in the West have been labeled by governments as vicious racketeers. But their clients do not necessarily see them that way. A town headman in Changle said that irregular migration was "very good indeed for us," with the local standard of living going up, unemployment going down, and teenage delinquency being transformed into enthusiasm for going abroad to find work. Village folk have conferred ironic titles on these facilitators, such as "Unofficial (*minjian*) Ministers of Labor" (i.e., labor recruiters—the term *minjian* carries populist overtones) or "Unofficial Bank Directors" (i.e.,

moneylenders). In view of the long-standing practice of voluntary indebtedness, to be repaid by future labor, the link to the nineteenth-century "credit-ticket" system is evident.[58]

The problems of border control cannot be reduced to a simple issue of official corruption. Rather, they involve the social embeddedness of local state agents in the jurisdictions they are governing. Border control personnel have "deep-rooted" connections in border communities.[59] Even intensive government crackdowns prove futile against an ingrained culture of migration. The trade in migrants, wrote a reporter, "is so deeply woven into the culture and economy of [Fujian] that it may never be shut down. Some of the most powerful snakeheads seem to have protection from local officials. The word in the villages is that they're lying low, waiting until the crackdown eases to spring back into action."[60] There is also a perennial regional quarrel between the maritime provinces and the central government, as we observed earlier: the "Maritime Interest" has its own unique priorities that affect relations between the local state and the central.

Once exclusion was imposed in the United States in 1882, facilitating illegal entry became a regularized business with its own techniques and practitioners. Besides smuggling across the Mexican and Canadian borders, another effective (and profitable) method was the "paper son" business (as we saw in chapter 5). For obvious reasons, the exact number of fraudulent entries under exclusion cannot be known. But of the more than 300,000 admissions of Chinese to the United States during the sixty-year period of exclusion, many thousands were certainly traveling on fake documents. One authority estimates that "at least four or five generations of Taishanese up to the early 1960s were able to enter the United States" through the paper-son network.[61]

In sum, what we are seeing in the New Migration is a mixture of old and new elements. Wenzhou, for instance, exhibits two modes of emigration: first, the old chain pattern, where an old *qiaoxiang* passes the baton from generation to generation, each serving as part of a bridgehead to help the next get overseas and settled in a job; and, second, the new "modular" pattern of the family workshop, bringing its own labor supply and minimal capital, a pattern common to Wenzhounese communities in Beijing and Tuscany. In both modes, emigration has nothing to do with lineage arrangements, probably because lineages were so weakened by the Chinese revolution and land reform that they no longer can support the kind of local autonomy observed in Xin'an before World War II. Discrete households make their own decisions to emigrate, either as a family or as individual males. Bridgeheads are nothing like the solidly-entrenched Penang lineage described earlier, but consist of small numbers of individuals who have already established livelihoods—restaurants, workshops—in the venue society.

A surprising development in the New Migration is that regional and dialect ties seem less important than in earlier eras. There is greater cooperation with people from other provinces and dialect areas. Family workshops in both Beijing and Europe rely on non-kin, non-compatriot migrants, though the family core of the business remains in charge. The Mingxi emigration began with a Zhejiangese immigrant to Fujian (Hu Zhiming), who served as a link between Wenzhounese compatriots in Italy and Mingxi people among whom he had lived. Teacher Yang, in Russia, entered business partnerships with men from two different regions. There remains, of course, a residue of old-style interdialect and interregional suspicion and hostility in many venues alongside the newer flexibility.[62]

Another innovation involves the financing of emigrants. The credit available from the small Shaxi local bank dried up, so would-be emigrants borrowed the necessary ¥70,000 (about US$10,000) from families who were receiving remittances from abroad. Instead of being invested in agriculture or local enterprise, the remittances went directly toward financing new emigrants. Relations between the families were described as "very good," and the interest charged was slightly less than the bank rate. Chain migration was being perpetuated by chain financing.[63] There was evidently a sense of obligation to help successive emigrants go abroad. Field investigators found that, after the first cohort of migrants had established an economic foothold in the venue country, loans to the next constituted 40 percent of the funds borrowed (the rest still came from family and friends in China). It was an impressive bootstrap operation.

The Reconfiguration of Europe

During the breakup of colonialism, Europe received a sizable backflow of migrants, as the old colonial metropoles—France, England, and Holland—became remigration venues for subjects of

their erstwhile colonies. For Chinese minorities in Southeast Asia, the fall of colonialism brought much suffering and anxiety: indigenous peoples with painful colonial pasts viewed Chinese as remnants of the colonial order and scapegoated them for their own continuing poverty. Vietnam's civil war and subsequent war with China, and the communization of Cambodia and Laos, led to a massive flight of ethnic Chinese refugees. Persecution of Chinese in Indonesia drove out hundreds of thousands. Chinese who had been educated in the colonialists' languages or were to some degree familiar with them saw the metropoles as natural venues for remigration: Great Britain for English-educated Malaysian Chinese and Hong Kongese, the Netherlands for Indonesian Peranakans, and France for refugees from Vietnam, Cambodia, and Laos. In the latter two cases, immigrants commonly obtained legal status as refugees.

Otherwise, compared with North America, Europe remained relatively reluctant to admit Asian immigrants, fearing unemployment and inordinate demands on government welfare. To stanch the influx from Hong Kong, Britain erected legislative barriers such as the Commonwealth Immigrants Act (1962), which limited the flow of labor immigrants from Commonwealth countries and severely constrained the Chinese restaurant business (the predictable Chinese adaptation was to summon wives and other dependents from the home villages to fill the restaurants' labor needs).[64] In the run-up to 1997, when Hong Kong was to be returned to China, Britain offered 50,000 passports, with "right of abode" in Britain, to selected Hong Kong heads of families, mostly managerial and professional personnel. The aims were to protect Hong Kong from an immediate flight of highly skilled workers (by providing an exit guarantee in case of political disaster after 1997) and to cap Britain's liability for mass immigration from the colony. This tactic succeeded in a sense: many middle- and upper-class Hong Kongese migrated to Canada and the United States in preference to Britain, but often just to deposit their families safely overseas and return to work in Hong Kong. Britain itself attracted poorer, less skilled illegal immigrants of whom few were a net gain to investment or entrepreneurship.[65]

Barriers notwithstanding, new immigrants flowed, legally or illegally, into all European nations after the 1960s. Periodic amnesties (quickly made known to compatriots back in China) regularized the status of many thousands (France, 1981; Italy, 1986 and 1990; and Spain, 1985 and 1991). The development of the European Union in stages from 1951 to 1993 paved the way for unrestricted travel across national frontiers by EU legal residents. Thus, legalized immigrants could remigrate to Europe's most advantageous venues as opportunity afforded. By the 1990s, the dissolution of the Soviet empire opened the way to business, work, and travel in Russia and the former Soviet republics, but more significantly afforded a land route from China to eastern and central Europe and westward. The immigration route to western Europe through Russia, Hungary, and Yugoslavia to Italy became a well-trodden itinerary. By 1990, the ethnic Chinese population of Europe was reckoned as at least 800,000 and counting.[66]

The Transformation of Overseas Chinese Societies

The New Migration has been "new" on the receiving side, too. It has landed Chinese in new venues, or in old venues where Chinese communities had long been immured in exclusion regimes. It has drawn immigrants from new hometowns and from new social classes. In the postexclusion settler societies and in Europe, the biggest change in the Chinese communities has been class and regional differentiation. Largely Cantonese populations have been overlain by a stratum of more diverse (by region and dialect), wealthier (including investors and entrepreneurs), and more highly educated newcomers from the most developed parts of the Chinese nation, especially the coastal regions in closest contact with the outside world: Hong Kong, Guangzhou, Taiwan, Shanghai, the economic and intellectual centers in the Yangzi valley, and of course Beijing. To the political refugees of the civil war period were added intellectuals and democracy activists exiled by the Tiananmen suppression. And besides middle- and upper-class migrants, the New Migration has included hundreds of thousands of poor rural people, many of them undocumented, from regions along the China coast.

Overseas study has become a significant migration channel, with more than 98,000 Chinese students enrolled in U.S. institutions in 2005–2006.[67] As in earlier generations, the question is how many are really sojourners and will return to China. Worldwide, cumulative statistics show a widening gap between the number of students who have gone abroad and those who have returned to China. Returnee numbers are rising but not as fast as the numbers emigrating. However, from the standpoint of China's economic growth and modernization, does it matter who stays and who returns? It is a good bet that, although some of these students will not return permanently, they will

maintain business, scholarly, and professional relationships with their native country. Opportunities for professional and financial success in the developing Chinese economy are hard to resist. Imaginative programs have been launched by the PRC government to make returning attractive to Chinese scientists and entrepreneurs overseas, even temporarily. The "brain-drain" concept—that the failure of highly trained people to return is a loss to China—may be outdated in the era of mobile phones, e-mail, and cheap air travel.

New migrants have brought significant changes to older Chinese communities overseas. In cities such as New York and San Francisco, the old group of traditional-style merchant headmen were joined—and sometimes replaced—by a more diverse group of leaders, reflecting the diversification of the Chinese community in the postexclusion period. From Taiwan, Hong Kong, and (after 1980) from the PRC came immigrants from the academic, professional, and business sectors, highly educated and often with salable skills or capital to invest. The average educational level among new immigrants from China, age twenty-five and older, is higher than that of the U.S. population as a whole.[68] This influx of skilled immigrants had forerunners in the modest numbers of students and political refugees who had entered in the decades following World War II. Nevertheless, this new wave has accelerated what Wang Gungwu calls the "upgrading" of Chinese migrants coming to the West. Especially striking is the ability of these better-educated immigrants to join the professional, scientific, and business worlds of the settler societies while retaining a deep attachment to Chinese culture.[69]

The Ethnic Enclave Economy

The thousands of poor, unskilled, or semiskilled "New Migrants" from *qiaoxiang* in nontraditional migrant-sending regions such as northern Fujian (the Hokchiu dialect area), many of them illegal entrants, form a new and vulnerable urban labor force in the West. In fact, a prominent feature of the New Migration has been Chinese overseas entrepreneurs employing Chinese workers. In New York, numerous garment factories ("sweatshops") are run by Chinese capitalists employing scantily paid compatriot labor. Such enterprises operate on the principle that ethnic capital and coethnic labor embody shared cultural values—notably the old guild-style norms of patron-client relationships in which the interests of employer and employees are represented as complementary, not conflictual. The employer provides jobs along with a degree of care for the workers (including shielding them from government authorities); the workers accept substandard wages, which are at least better than they would be making back home. In a wholly Chinese workplace they do not need the English language. How true to life is such a picture? Is this really a healthy arrangement, or an elaborate facade to conceal outright exploitation? The following story reveals the ambiguities of ethnicity as an industrial rationale.

Week in a New York Sweatshop Unearths a "Grim Conspiracy of the Poor"[70]

In 1995, Jane H. Lii, a *New York Times* reporter, got herself hired as a sewing-machine operator in a Brooklyn garment factory in which both owner and workers were Chinese immigrants. Her report illustrates immigrant attitudes that not only labor activists but many other Americans find disturbing. Yet underlying the "grim conspiracy" was an inescapable fact: every worker interviewed was thankful to have her job.

Lii found herself working an 84-hour week at piece-work rates that amounted to 65 cents an hour (at a time when minimum wage was $4.25). The lint-laden air left her with a hacking cough and a painful throat. Despite the hazards and discomforts of the sweatshop for its all-female, entirely Sinophone workforce, Lii concluded that this was not a matter of "evil" owners and "victimized" workers, but that "there is something more complex at work—a miserable complicity born of necessity in an insular, immigrant world."

* * * *

The factory owner, Ms. Zheng, is Fujianese, indeed from the same county (possibly Changle) as most of her workers. She is "actually benevolent," though "in a harsh way": she pays far below minimum wage, "but she serves her workers tea." She works them far into the night but then gives them rides home. She allows employees time off to fetch their children from school and bring them to the factory, where she lets them work beside their mothers—"but she fusses over them, combing their ponytails, even hugging them."

"And the workers seem to revere her. They call her *Nü Qiang-ren*, or Strong Woman, an expression that conveys affection and awe. An immigrant and former factory worker herself, Ms. Zheng, the sweatshop boss, is their model of success."

* * * *

The women at the factory are grateful that their children can work beside them after school. One ten-year-old was cutting loose threads from garments as his mother sewed them. His mother didn't think she was doing him any harm."I want my children to work. What else would they do at home? Watch TV and eat junk food? That's evil. I'm instilling the work ethic in my kids."

"Ms. Chen is 19, a senior at Seward Park High School in Chinatown, who works after school, through the night and on weekends. She said she had been a garment worker for four years, laws against child labor notwithstanding. Hard work teaches her what American teen-agers cannot understand, she said. 'They've never had to work and they don't know how to make their own money,' she said. 'All they do is complain about how stupid their parents are. They don't appreciate life as much as I do.' "

Later the workers admitted privately "that they did not like their job, but they were grimly grateful just to have one. They are not in this country to enjoy life but to make money."

Similar conditions exist in many other single-ethnic businesses, including Chinese restaurants. Yet for all its hardships, the "ethnic enclave" economy has served as a foothold for the new migrants in U.S. cities. An "ethnic enclave" is defined as "a partially autonomous . . . economic structure constituting a distinct labor market."[71] Ms. Zheng's garment factory displays the key elements: employer and employees share an ethnic identity (commonly even a dialect or hometown origin); enclave enterprises offer workers entry-level jobs with piecework at low pay that, for cultural reasons (especially language) and lack of documentation, they could not obtain in the primary economy. Ethnic cultural practices (such as reciprocal patron–client obligations) make the business at least minimally acceptable to both management and labor. The exploitation built into the relationship is plain, yet such businesses as Ms. Zheng's can survive only if they are shielded from the standards of the primary economy (wages and hours regulations, decent workplace conditions). The assumption is that outside the enclave, these workers would be either unemployed or trapped on the lowest rungs of the secondary economy (e.g., swabbing floors at Wal-Mart).

New Migrant Associations and Migrant Corridors

Chain migration continues to rely upon the traditional range of particularistic connections.[72] At the neighborhood level, the New Migration in New York has produced many small-scale affinity groups. For Changle immigrants alone, Zhuang Guotu lists thirty-four new voluntary associations in New York as of 2003, mostly based on compatriotism (twenty-one on villages, eight on townships or market towns, and two on cities), one on kinship, and two on Changle high schools. There are numerous and varied coritual groups—religious congregations, both imported Christian denominations and traditional folk-religion temples. Sects imported by the rural Hokchiu poor, whether evangelical Christian or traditional popular-religious (Buddhist, Daoist, or millennialist), are spiritual and social supports for newcomers, particularly illegal immigrants, who must endure cramped housing, exhausting jobs at paltry salaries, and family separation. Taken together, these particularistic affinity groups form the bottom rung of the New Migration, furnishing newcomers hands-on community support, including housing, employment, and loans to help them pay off their creditors (such as illegal travel brokers).[73]

At higher scales of organization, new varieties of leadership have emerged. New York's Chinese communities could no longer be controlled by the traditional "sojourner-leader" (*qiaoling*) merchant elite represented by the Chinese Consolidated Benevolent Association. Although some old-style merchant leaders are still on the scene, they now are enmeshed in a constituency more variegated in terms of dialects and hometowns, and they share power with numerous other groups. Applying for municipal services and public financing has required new leaders, many of them Chinese-American professionals who serve as brokers between the immigrant community and the larger society. The Chinese-American Planning Council (CPC), a nongovernmental social service organization, was founded in lower Manhattan in 1965 to cope with the influx of new immigrants (it now has branch offices in Queens and Brooklyn to serve satellite Chinese communities). Its activities include job training and placement, English lessons, senior-citizen services, and housing development.

Satellite Chinese communities have emerged not through involuntary segregation but through ethnic real-estate networking (Chinese-speaking brokers for Chinese-speaking clients) and ethnic business clustering. The process has worked largely through language segregation: for Chinese immigrants, language has proved to be a compelling centripetal force. After the 1965 immigration-reform legislation and through the 1970s, Flushing in the borough of Queens attracted immigrants from the economically developed fringes of Chinese society: initially Taiwan and Hong Kong and, after 1980, Shanghai and other mainland coastal cities. This influx attracted a range of social classes, from low skilled to highly educated, from poor to rich, bringing the Flushing community both labor and capital. Hong Kong immigrants with capital started garment factories that recruited Cantonese labor to fill low-wage jobs (no English required). Some of the women employed in these factories had worked in professional jobs at home but because of the language barrier could find no comparable positions in New York: an old immigrant story.[74]

Flushing's community displays voluntary associations altogether different from the old-style affinity groups. Besides the CPC branch office, where immigrants are offered language and job training, there is a broker committee of volunteers to help new immigrants negotiate language-intensive tasks (testifying in court) and bureaucratic mazes (filling out forms), a weekend Chinese school, and numerous Chinese Christian congregations. This array of voluntary associations is completely without a hierarchy or directorate but is organized around functional life needs in an urban setting, not in the old manner of affinity groups. This suggests that urbanized Chinese had long since moved beyond affinity groups based on the traditional quartet of linkages (compatriotism, kinship, corituality, and brotherhood), instead finding support and sociability in despatialized, nonparticularistic groupings. Urbanization and the spread of the Mandarin dialect in Chinese education have contributed to this cosmopolitanism. Another feature of the new immigrant communities is that brokerage is becoming more intercultural: rather than buffering the immigrant from the mainstream, it forms links to the mainstream. Language lessons are only a beginning. The Chinese-American Voters' Association of Queens, New York, encourages immigrants to participate in the electoral system—an integrative, assertive posture toward the majority community.[75] In a number of nations worldwide, similar local associations have promoted voter education and, increasingly, support of ethnic Chinese candidates for political office. This appears to be characteristic of the New Migration: local action that honors both cultural diversity and civic unity.[76]

On the other hand, the old Chinatown in lower Manhattan has survived, partly as an employment hub for recent immigrants. Even though workers may have moved out to satellite communities, they need Chinatown for jobs. But these jobs are not necessarily in Chinatown or even near it. A visit to a Chinese restaurant in an upstate New York village reveals that the all-male staff have no kin relationship and do not even know the name of the owner. They are bussed by van from New York Chinatown, having traveled by subway from their dwellings in the outer boroughs, and are housed in a dorm for each week's work stint. Similar arrangements can be found in other rural towns of New York and New England.[77]

New Migration also expanded the templates of voluntary associations to the scale of nation-states and beyond to transnational networks. Models of community organization brought from China persist but have been stretched and molded to fit new settings in modern surroundings. Fitting the scales and requirements of the modern state has required ethnic community leaders to consolidate immigrants from different compatriot and dialect groups to lobby government agencies collectively. Historically, we have seen aggregated "umbrella" organizations of pan-Chinese scale amid majority populations that were hostile and culturally impervious to Chinese immigrants. In some respects, these recall the "officer system" of the colonial empires, in which the rulers delegated public order to the immigrant elites rather than trying to penetrate and understand an inscrutable alien community. Non-Chinese political elites had trouble distinguishing one variety of "Chinese" from another (dialect or regional distinctions were insignificant from the majority's point of view), so they found it more convenient to treat—or mistreat—all of them equally. In response, the Chinese minority needed larger, more inclusive associations as effective brokers with the venue society. In contemporary European venues, association leadership has been recognized and, in some cases, supported by state authorities, including both the government of the venue society and the Chinese embassy. Patronage from either state presumed a pan-Chinese format.[78] During the Cold War, national- scale umbrella groups often split Chinese migrant communities into rival camps of Taiwan and PRC supporters at the expense of a unified immigrant voice.[79]

Financial support and private fund-raising have been incentives for minority ethnic groups to form national-level associations. In Canada, Australia, and the United States, all recent converts to multiculturalism, formal recognition of minority cultures has been encouraged by government and foundations; both have extended financial aid to inclusive Chinese associations (such as New York's Chinese-American Planning Council) on behalf of cultural and service activities, including Chinese-language "Saturday schools." At municipal, state, and national levels, Chinese and other ethnic associations in the settler societies and Europe have received grants in aid for social services to their constituents.[80] Chinese umbrella associations at national levels in Europe (such as the All-Holland Chinese Union of Voluntary Associations) have raised funds to support national and international sports contests. All these activities have required Chinese to form associations that transcend the particularistic affinity-group model.

Nevertheless, there remain functional and class differences between scales of organization. Poor rural new immigrants have continued to form small particularistic groups for mutual support, built on compatriotism, kinship, and corituality. In contrast, immigrant urbanites, already more cosmopolitan, are inclined to make common cause with ethnic Chinese from different geographic and dialect origins. Urbanites are also more likely to be aware of national issues and to feel comfortable with pan-Chinese ethnicity expressed through professional associations.[81]

Reorienting China's Policies on Emigration

In the background of the New Migration has been a turnabout in Chinese government policy toward travel abroad: from fear to caution to encouragement, from treating foreign travel as a political issue to classing it as a normal, legitimate human activity. Travel abroad may include, of course, travel with intent to emigrate. In China's drive toward "modernization" and economic growth, this will surely be one of the most consequential events. In stages since 1985, getting documents to leave China has been simplified and liberalized. It is now possible for anyone to get a passport for foreign travel. Tourism is also permitted; study abroad is encouraged and even subsidized (both can become channels for long-term emigration). By 2005, in conformity with World Trade Organization rules, passports were available to residents of cities and towns on simply showing an identification and residence card. Students have been encouraged to study overseas and to visit home whenever they want and of course have been urged to return to China to work. Although many students still use study abroad as an emigration channel, the return flow has been increasing. This new attitude toward movement of people illustrates the comprehensive, pragmatic thinking behind the openness policy: economic development and national security are enhanced, not endangered, by the free movement of Chinese abroad. The effort to catch and punish "snakeheads" and their clients has more to do with China's embarrassment toward the nations whose immigration laws are being flouted than with domestic concerns. Nothing signals the newness of the New Migration more clearly than this reversal of Beijing's attitude toward foreign travel and emigration.[82]

In the tradition of "overseas Chinese affairs management" (*qiaowu*) inherited from the Republican period, both the PRC and Taiwan maintain networks of state and local institutions specifically to oversee relations with Chinese overseas. In the PRC, the national "mass organization" is known colloquially as "Qiaolian" (for "National Association of Overseas Chinese, Returned Overseas Chinese, and Dependents of Overseas Chinese"), which has branches in every territorial jurisdiction. Within government proper are the Overseas Chinese Commission under the National People's Congress and a cabinet-level policy committee directly under the State Council. Thus, agencies concerned with "Overseas Chinese Affairs" are now embedded in government and society at every level. In Taiwan, the analogous organs are grouped under the Overseas Compatriot Affairs Commission (OCAC), which is headed by a cabinet minister and three vice ministers. Both regimes consider relations with Chinese overseas and the protection of their families at home to be state priorities. For the rapidly developing PRC, the aim is to cultivate the wealthy and talented and to enlist their resources and skills to promote the "four modernizations."

One form of cultivation is sponsored travel to China, either to attend business or scientific conferences or to visit old *qiaoxiang*. State agencies assume that, through investment and technology transfer, such travel will repay the effort and expense manyfold. The scale of this program is impressive: delegations from overseas to Fujian in 1995 numbered some 70,000 persons.[83] Biennial conventions of "World Chinese Entrepreneurs" are held both in China and abroad. Beginning with Singapore, convention sites between 1991 and 2007 were Hong Kong,

Bangkok, Vancouver, Melbourne, Nanjing, Malaysia, Seoul, and Kobe. Addresses by Chinese officials have hewed to the politically correct "spirit of Bandung": insisting that the civic and economic obligations of Chinese with foreign nationality are owed primarily to their adopted countries. A government luminary at the 2001 Convention in Nanjing presumed diplomatically that ethnic Chinese businessmen would "make fresh and greater contributions to the development of their countries of residence, of China, and of the world at large."[84] Nevertheless, there remains considerable confusion about what all this portends politically.

Notwithstanding the predictable alarms about "Greater China" and "Bamboo Networks," history suggests that this emerging coordination of overseas Chinese business has a Janus-faced identity: facing one way toward the interests of the Chinese state and the other way toward the needs and ambitions of Chinese overseas. Note that the two are not diametrically opposed, because each is capable of making use of the other. The first represents the "discourse" of the New Migration as propagated by PRC official media. It has been described by a Western scholar as "a triumphalist, unificatory and mobilising myth" that celebrates "Chineseness" as a common inheritance, which unites Chinese of all national citizenships and perpetuates traditional "Chinese" virtues.[85] This carefully honed propaganda campaign purports to be cultural, not political. Indeed, it is politically neutral on the surface (and not overtly contrary to the Bandung principle of *jus soli*), yet it carries implications that may prove unsettling to majority populations in postcolonial Southeast Asia and in the West, where anti-Sinitism is fueled by suggestions that overseas Chinese are being manipulated by Chinese governments. One worst-case prediction warns that if the current PRC policy continues, "we are likely to see broader, more organized, and better controlled relations between the PRC and the overseas Chinese that may turn overseas Chinese organizations and businesses into representatives of PRC interests."[86]

This concern puts many overseas Chinese in an awkward position. In a keynote address to the Fifth World Chinese Entrepreneurs Convention in Melbourne, Senior Minister Lee Kuan Yew of Singapore (ever wary of "Chinese chauvinism" at home or abroad) stressed that commerce must be kept separate from politics:

> It is most important that Chinese who have migrated should give total political loyalty to their new homeland. In Southeast Asia, this is a historical process which has gone through many twists and turns since the Second World War. . . . More and more Chinese are participating in local and national politics in Australasia, in North America and Latin America. As these Chinese communities strike deeper roots in their new homelands, there will be less discomfort when Chinese entrepreneurs co-operate across national boundaries in a globalised economy.[87]

A necessary caveat about "discourse analysis": normative verbiage does not necessarily resonate with its intended targets. How deeply are Chinese overseas affected by official hymns celebrating unified Chineseness? Although many may be pleased and flattered to be welcomed in China and thankful that their *qiaoxiang* will not suffer for their being abroad, the history of Chinese overseas suggests that matters other than "traditional" Chinese attributes and ethnic unity are closer to their hearts. Their perfectly reasonable concerns are the security, success, and status of themselves and their families: goals that are not necessarily crass or cynical but draw moral force from the ethos of the Chinese family system.

Any evaluation of ethnic Chinese relations with the PRC must take account of the increasingly cosmopolitan nature of Southeast Asian "ethnically Chinese" corporations since the 1980s. In both Indonesia and Malaysia, where nativist economic policies are in effect, ethnic Chinese big business has found it necessary to include prominent indigenous figures in their operations. During the Suharto era, the Liem Sioe Leong group forged ties with political and military figures, bringing in *pribumi*-Indonesian stockholders and even managerial personnel. The Robert Kuok group in Malaysia includes a strategic array of influential Malays in its company directorates. Even granting that centralized power is retained within the Kuok family, the diverse interests in these firms preclude any narrowly ethnic Chinese approach to a China relationship.[88]

A "Deterritorialized Nation-State"?

If Beijing's "triumphalist," culturally essentialist line ever took hold among Chinese overseas, we soon would be seeing China as a "deterritorialized nation-state," an imagined entity embracing ethnic Chinese who "live physically dispersed within the boundaries of many other states, but who remain socially, politically, culturally, and often economically part of the nation-state of their ancestors."[89] This turn of events, if confirmed, would be a revelation to historians of Chinese migration. The weakness of "the deterritorialized nation-state" as an explanatory scheme is that it misses the migrants' distinctive adaptative device: getting maximum leverage out of marginality.

This is illustrated by a field study in Holland, which shows that a key adaptive resource of Chinese immigrants is exploiting the comparative advantages of two or more nation-states to get more security, success, and status than could be obtained in one. "They need two worlds: the successful experiences in one can be used to climb up ladders in the other."[90] How do they use their marginality as leverage for their efforts?

Here we confront Janus's other face. Ideally, an emigrant (for present purposes, a Chinese) chooses a venue for good reasons: whether a sound economy, favorable niches and markets, a convenient bridgehead, a stable and benign polity, or a combination of these. Even if he lands blindly, knowing little or nothing about the venue society, he eventually discovers his comparative advantages in the new venue and sets about making the most of them. And the really successful migrant will discover how being Chinese from a particular *qiaoxiang* or having particular compatriots there can augment his fortunes *in the venue society*. He also will discover how his adopted nation can benefit his dealings with China. The point about these calculations is that *national sovereignties, national boundaries, and national differences matter to migrants*. If a venue society provides a stable constitutional order, immunities from arbitrary mistreatment, good schools, and liberal travel regulations, then it might be a good place to settle his family for the long haul. And if China develops a rapidly growing economy and opportunities to make profitable investments, then China might be a good place to direct some of his assets and perhaps even commute there to do business. He would have the best of two worlds. If becoming a leader of an ethnic Chinese association in his adopted country will enhance his status and effectiveness back in China, and if at the same time an honorable reception in China burnishes his image in the venue society, then he will have put his marginality to good use. So an immigrant who forswears effort in one or the other nation-state is not making full use of his strategically marginal position. For a resourceful migrant, national boundaries (cultures and polities) are fulcrums for leverage in both directions. The "two-worlds" concept describes a synergy between native country and adopted country that is perceived and manipulated by the migrant himself.

The leadership echelon of a Chinese voluntary association abroad typically comprises businessmen or professionals who have enough wealth and status to be useful to their communities by furthering or protecting their interests.[91] Their community status is enhanced by being recognized, not just by their constituents but also by the government of the venue nation, as legitimate spokesmen for their ethnic group. But that may not be credential enough because it lacks recognition by the China side. The Zhejiang provincial government organizes annual conclaves of "Prominent Zhejiang Migrants Abroad" in cities worldwide. From the Zhejiang government's viewpoint, these meetings are to focus the hometown consciousness of emigrant Zhejiangese, celebrate their identity as a powerful and successful multinational group, and pique their interest in donating or investing in their home districts. For a leader of a Chinese association abroad, to be invited to such a meeting is a mark of high distinction. To attend is to feel honored in *both aspects* of his identity. His status in his adopted country is reinforced by his inclusion in the Zhejiang conclave; his status *in a Chinese context* (no matter what his status before he emigrated) is respected by his *qiaoxiang* compatriots because of his position of trust in his adopted country.[92]

It is clear that commercial advantage (what Li Minghuan calls "association credit") plays a role in the scramble for directorships of ethnic associations abroad: a business card bedecked with statusy titles opens doors.[93] Historically, businessmen knew that state patronage could be both risky and rewarding. Businessmen in imperial China were expected by the state to perform certain tasks essential to public order (charitable works, support of education, and disaster relief). In return, they might enjoy social status not far below the literati and could be awarded honorary official ranks and titles as marks of ruling-class esteem.[94] Politically, Chinese businessmen overseas often were obliged to please two masters: the foreign governments that allowed them to reside and do business; and the Chinese government back home, where the fate of their home folk and their retirement assets were at risk. If they did regular business with the homeland, they had to cultivate or purchase official blessings (or at least benign neglect) from officials on both sides. Their position might be endangered by mutual suspicion between the states involved. The Chinese government might suspect the motives of a returning migrant who had enjoyed too much status under a foreign regime (such as the unlucky Chen Yi, introduced in chapter 2). For their part, foreign governments were uneasy about immigrants with political links to the Chinese state (such as the Malayan operatives of the Guomindang during the 1920s and 1930s, as we saw in chapter 6) or PRC-oriented Chinese organizations in NATO states during the Cold War.

When dealing with state agencies, migrants have had to balance risks against gains. Noninvolvement was one possible course of action. Yet state patronage—from either side—offers irresistible social and economic benefits to the directors of any large-scale Chinese migrant organization. State recognition—whether from the Chinese side or the venue side—is not only a status lure. It also offers competitive advantage against business rivals. Interviews in Holland and Wenzhou reveal that being director of a pan-Chinese association abroad is viewed by ordinary Chinese at home as equivalent to being a state official. Chinese civil society is so penetrated by the state that attributing "cadre" status to a director of a voluntary association abroad is quite reasonable to a Wenzhou resident.[95] Emigrants and their *qiaoxiang* stand to benefit from such cultural misunderstandings. Besides preferential treatment for present-day relatives of prosperous emigrants, PRC endorsement of an overseas Chinese elite could provide insurance for kinsmen back home against any future reversion to the anti-emigrant line of the late 1950s and 1960s. It would be surprising if the insecurity and stigmatization suffered during the bad years were not on the minds of emigrants and their home folk.

Chinese businessmen in Holland also benefit from membership in associations endorsed by the Dutch state. In 1990s Amsterdam, a costly project was proposed to establish an Asia Trade Center, an out-and-out commercial venture. The director of the project was a wealthy businessman who managed Holland's biggest Chinese restaurant. This man happened to be a chairman or director of several large Chinese voluntary associations (including LFCON, the Dutch-recognized Association of Chinese Associations in the Netherlands). The trade center went forward as a "community plan" thanks to the director's "association credit." He had successfully clothed a private venture in public regalia.[96]

From another perspective, a prosperous Hokchia businessman, now a British citizen living in London, is caught in the emotional riptides of marginality. This man has business interests in nearly every part of the world—except China, where he has no intention of acquiring any. The fact is that he dislikes the "Chinese style" of doing business, mired as it is in bureaucracy and *guanxi* networks. "In China, if you make a lot of money, people get jealous; if you don't, they look down on you. You cannot work over the phone; it takes a lot of traveling, time, and connections. It's very difficult. . . . Over there you need back doors, but we are not used to using back doors here [in Britain]." Yet his sense of obligation to Chinese compatriots keeps him emotionally tied to his Hokchia roots. When a Chinese diplomat urged him not to use his connections to help illegal immigration, he protested, "Their parents knew my parents; I can't reject them. Think about the day I return to China. How can I face them?"[97] Such an independent-minded, culturally sophisticated entrepreneur seems unlikely to become a political tool of any Chinese government. Yet his sense of duty *on a personal level* keeps him from cutting his ties to his native place. Historically, this is the golden thread that runs through Chinese overseas social practice: care for family and *qiaoxiang* does not necessarily involve political adhesion to any particular governing regime.

These examples suggest the ambiguity of China's outreach to Chinese abroad. The PRC's efforts to forge profitable economic and political links to Chinese overseas are likely to be exploited by those very Chinese for their own ends in their adopted countries. The Netherlands case can illustrate how this outreach is received; "What Chinese émigrés want to gain from the strength and prosperity of China, to a certain degree, is primarily improvement of their social position in the Netherlands," which is where they prefer to live. They want "to have their own objectives realized through their efforts to benefit from their social position of straddling the two worlds, but not to simply be used as a tool either by the Dutch or the Chinese authorities."[98] Marginality, for all its awkwardness, offers ambitious migrants priceless opportunities.

Corridors in the New Migration

New Migration corridors display a wide variety of types and scales, some old, some new. Traditional-style corridors operate as in earlier migratory waves: migrants travel in both directions, labor moves out, remittances and investments move back, except that everything is greatly speeded up by technological marvels of travel, banking, and communication. Although the full effect of the new technologies has yet to be explored systematically, one notable innovation is large- scale migrant associations on national templates. These associations convene thousands of emigrants or their descendants, proclaiming linkages either to particular *qiaoxiang*, to kinship or dialect groups, or to the Chinese state. To the extent that these linkages are facilitated or even initiated by

government agencies, they could be considered "state-made corridors." We already have discussed the beginnings of such state involvement in the early days of the Nationalist (Guomindang) regime, when government and party agents were dispatched to Chinese communities around the world to mobilize fund drives or supervise education.

Traditional-Style Corridors

Researchers have found familiar mechanisms of recruitment, sponsorship, and patronage at work between (on the China end) particular counties, villages, and families and (on the venue end) earlier migrant-kinsmen, merchant bridgeheads, and voluntary associations. Fieldwork in Wenzhou reveals patterns of family strategy and mutual support that had characterized village-based emigration to Southeast Asia for centuries. The "envy effect" prevails in communities with galling inequalities of income: families who are relatively poor count on emigration to elevate their social positions to the level of neighbors who are relatively rich—especially if those rich neighbors are emigrant-sending families or returned emigrants.[99] The social capital to be gained by a family on the venue side of the corridor comes from helping friends and relations to emigrate, as well as from expenditures lavished on relatives or communities on visits home. Costly funeral ceremonies and tombs for deceased parents (or prospectively for oneself) are unexceptionable ways to flaunt success. Showy houses and generous gestures to village and neighbors are the expected display of a returned emigrant in the Wenzhou area "returning home in silken robes." Savings from decades of misery as a lowly restaurant worker in Holland can raise the social position of one's family in the home village literally overnight.[100]

Such are the visions and the behaviors that keep a corridor alive. Yet not all corridors have survived generations of separation; some long moribund are being revived to serve present-day needs. A Singaporean ethnographer has studied the curious story of what can be called a "heritage corridor" in Anxi county, Fujian. "Heritage" is sometimes associated with faux-historical reproductions such as the "Chinatown Heritage Centre" in Singapore, essentially a kitschy shopping mall complete with fast-food outlets, set in a hollowed-out block of the old Chinatown district along Telok Ayer Street. It offers culture tourists simulacra of colonial-era dwellings and artifacts in the manner of "Colonial Williamsburg" in Virginia or "Old Sturbridge Village" in Massachusetts.

But sometimes an artificial "reconstruction" can offer participants something more functional, if not more authentic. In Anxi, a historically important Hokkien *qiaoxiang* with many descendants in Singapore, a heritage corridor has been created to bring Singaporeans (including first-generation migrants) "back home" to take part in lineage rituals. The focus of Singaporeans' visits to Anxi is the cult of ancestor worship, the spiritual axis of traditional family life. Although local authorities had practical reasons for initiating the visits (to attract funds for village and county projects), the revived "Anxi connection" has had the effect of restoring the lineage hall to its old centrality in village social and ritual practice. Accordingly, what began as a heritage corridor became something more than a culturally decorated exercise in fund-raising. Around China, many localities are cultivating overseas Chinese through heritage activities, some of which may actually revive important aspects of long-dormant corridors (besides hometown investments). One cadre was careful to observe that the government was supporting Anxi ancestor rituals as "a cultural practice and not a superstition." However the heritage corridor may be rationalized, government cadres intent on funding modernization projects with overseas Chinese donations may find that they are admitting traditional ritual practices (and even long- moribund lineage structures) through the back door.[101]

The Appearance of Worldwide "Affinity Groups"

Since 1980, a new form of Chinese association has arisen on a grand scale: gatherings of thousands of business executives from around the world, mostly on the basis of what are best described as megaffinity groups: worldwide cohorts of businessmen from a certain native place or dialect group or of a certain surname or simply of "World Chinese Entrepreneurs"—a nonspecific occupational affinity. Aside from exploiting traditional affinity-group symbols, megaffinity groups bear little resemblance to the small-scale, particularistic associations that are building blocks of overseas Chinese communities. Instead, they are large, scripted, and deftly politicized. Repeated periodically either in the *qiaoxiang* itself or in such world cities as Singapore or Hong Kong, they establish permanent secretariats and attract top sponsorship from Southeast Asian business leaders.

With thousands of participants annually attending more than 100 such gatherings held since 1980, megaffinity groups have become a significant source of overseas Chinese investments in local manufacturing and infrastructure projects as well as charities. The World Anxi Convention of 1992, attended by more than 3,000 businessmen, resulted in a bonanza for the hometown: for charities, US$5.7 million; to establish factories, $10.7 million; plus an additional $65 million for miscellaneous projects.[102] Although the PRC sends high officials to these conclaves, they generally confine their speeches to atmospherics and polite greetings, along with requisite remarks about Taiwan. But the Chinese state is not the prime mover of these affairs, which "are essentially propelled by the Chinese social organizations overseas."[103]

Our knowledge of how these organizations affect the lives of overseas Chinese is still unfolding. As described in one important study, they serve the interests both of Chinese overseas and of the Chinese state in several respects.[104] These conclaves make the most of the latest travel and communication technology for effective business networking. The World Chinese Entrepreneurs Conventions are complemented by a permanent center for Internet-based communication, the World Chinese Business Network; run from Singapore, it represents itself as "a comprehensive online business information network linking ethnic Chinese enterprises and executives all over the world. The bilingual [Chinese and English] online networking website provides data on Chinese enterprises and corporations in over 120 countries and regions."[105] Being recognized back in their adopted countries as persons of consequence in the wider Chinese world may be another advantage of attending worldwide megaffinity-group gatherings.

Another angle to the megaffinity phenomenon is less practical than emotional. The world of conventions and megaffinities may be seen as a chance for a migrant to resurrect an old *qiaoxiang* or pan-Chinese identity that has been attenuated by years of living overseas. In this sense, one can temporarily put aside one's everyday identity as a citizen of Britain, France, or the Czech Republic and experience for a short while, risk free, one's other side. In this sense, one's workaday identity has been likened to a coat that is checked in the cloakroom before a theater performance and then reclaimed and put on again after the play. The convention is thus a "cloakroom community," a nostalgic self-indulgence, and a chance to enjoy a side of oneself normally neglected or suppressed.[106]

Participants' motives are compelling but not simple. Charitable donations to *qiaoxiang* infrastructure projects are useful levers for preferential treatment in investment projects to follow. For rank-and-file businessmen, there is the benefit of spreading investment risk by forming partnerships with overseas compatriots—particularly in the case of second- or third-generation emigrant-descendants who lack live connections with the *qiaoxiang* itself. For top business leaders, the motives seem especially complicated. The Sino-Indonesian Liem Sioe Leong from Fuqing (whom we met in chapter 7) reflects the inherent awkwardness, for some Chinese overseas, of the celebratory *qiaoxiang* ethos. In 1995 he proclaimed at a Fu-qing conclave, "After all, we are all from the same county, speak the same dialect, and share common customs. By singing the same clan song, we can forge great unity among our fellow countrymen. Let's collaborate and strive to succeed in economics."[107] Two years later, he felt compelled to protest angrily, "I am more Indonesian than Chinese."[108] As one of Southeast Asia's richest and best-connected ethnic Chinese businessmen, Liem hardly needs additional *guanxi* to establish a factory in Fuqing. But consider his position as an Indonesian Chinese: in the hostile, suspicious Indonesian environment, he cannot celebrate his origins, much less rally other Sino-Indonesians to celebrate with him. He cannot exhort fellow countrymen to "strive to succeed in economics" or safely flaunt his emotional ties to his ancestral homeland. He cannot comfortably display the "public" concern that legitimates personal wealth, usually shown by generosity to kinsmen and hometown, and by public pride in one's *qiaoxiang*. Wherever wealth is not considered in itself a sign of virtue or status, the rich must show that they value something more than money. Because prideful Chineseness is dangerous in Indonesia but obviously not so back in Fuqing, a transnational hometown celebration is attractive to this very exposed Sino-Indonesian businessman. Yet Liem is forced to balance such a display of Chineseness by emphasizing the Indonesian side of his identity.

Nevertheless, Chineseness is no longer so provocative in the rest of Southeast Asia, at least where economics are concerned. In 1996, the Second Fujianese World Convention, held in Malaysia, was honored by the appearance of none other than Prime Minister Mahathir (whom we met in chapter 7) praising participants for enhancing "the business and investment opportunities in Malaysia."[109] That such a gathering can induce a man of Mahathir's background to see the benefits of cultivating

Chinese associations makes it more than a sentimental journey. Here is marginality on a worldwide scale being used as a lever to strengthen the position of a Chinese minority in a postcolonial nation.

For authorities in the PRC, the worldwide megaffinity associations may be regarded as the ultimate "overseas Chinese card" (*qiaopai*) to be played by officials of any jurisdiction. The fact that their range of scales includes umbrella groups (the World Chinese Entrepreneurs Conventions —not sorted by affinity group) to provincial (such as the conferences of Prominent Zhejiang Migrants Abroad) down to municipal and county *qiaoxiang* (e.g., Fuqing) provides handles to be grasped by any administrative level of the Chinese state. It is, of course, a long way from potential to performance, and it remains to be seen how the state uses these new institutions. For Chinese regional politics, megaffinity associations could be trumps among county or provincial governments in competition for development funds, could enhance official careers through fiscal performance and local development, and perhaps could even lever a degree of local autonomy from the center. For the coastal provinces, these rich sources of investment could prove decisive strategic assets for the Maritime Interest: networks of wealthy compatriots who are particularly sensitive to the fortunes of their ancestral regions.

Beijing and Taipei also play this card through rival organizations around the world. In Europe, the PRC and Taiwan have blessed separate pan-Chinese organizations: the European Federation of Chinese Overseas, patronized by Beijing, and the OCAC, a network run from Taipei with national branches in Europe. These are designed as vehicles for keeping contact with European Chinese communities. Although such Europe-wide organizations are not as powerful as national-scale Chinese associations in particular European countries, they offer incentives to pursue business in either mainland China or Taiwan and also draw on European Chinese associations for information on trade opportunities.[110]

Notwithstanding the importance of this new scale of organization, it is worth remembering that most Chinese emigrant-investors probably work through less exalted channels. Thousands of narrowly individualized contacts are being pursued by small-time investors and entrepreneurs. Some Chinese students in Australian universities decided to stay abroad to found an import-export company. "What did we have to lose? We could get credit from China through our old friends and colleagues and they could give us reliable suppliers and customers."[111] In Panyu county, Guangdong, investments and donations by individual Chinese (most from Hong Kong but some from North America and Southeast Asia) are rewarded with honorary Panyu citizenship.[112] Emigrants continue to make their way out of China into the world market while keeping in touch with personal networks of potential partners back in China.

Frontier Enclaves, Past and Present

Now that China has reentered the world economically and culturally, its leaders recognize that only international trade and technology can lift the nation out of poverty. Apart from renewed large-scale migration, both internal and external, how is this new situation related to Chinese emigration of the colonial period? Earlier we observed a long-term Maritime Interest—informal coalitions of merchants, literati, and officials—that rallied at critical moments to defend overseas trade in the face of conventional attitudes and maritime bans. Rather than a continuous political movement, the Maritime Interest has worked in an ad hoc fashion, appearing and reappearing over several centuries as international trade grew along with expanding domestic commerce and demographic pressure. These coalitions among private, public, and official spheres were not "liberal" but pragmatic: adjusting to economic realities while treading carefully across the political terrain. The writings of even the most committed spokesmen for the Maritime Interest used the wealth and power of the state as rhetorical fulcrums. The post-Mao "openness" strategy involved a measured response to the Maritime Interest: if it were to succeed, it had to reconcile commercial openness with regime security. The speeches that Deng Xiaoping delivered on his Southern Tour in 1992 became the legitimating policy documents of the so-called special economic zones (SEZs), such as the new industrial city of Shenzhen, where foreigners and Chinese are authorized to run private businesses under special allowances and exemptions.

The leader who steered China toward the world, Deng Xiaoping (1904–1997), was no liberal. Along with his "reform era" policies of decollectivization, capitalist enterprise, and openness to international investment went a staunch reaffirmation of authoritarian leadership. To Westerners, this looks contradictory—but not to Chinese. In the Chinese context, Deng's "opening" and "reform" policies were pragmatic counterweights to his instinct for order, state security, and

political centralization. Both sides of Dengism had precedents in the imperial policy of allowing vigorous commerce within a system of centralized autocracy. A market economy was acknowledged to be socially necessary, but never was it permitted to challenge the security of the bureaucratic state. In maritime policy, no ruling group has willingly risked internal subversion for the economic benefits of foreign trade. Hence, when Deng took his Southern Tour in 1992 to shore up his policy of SEZs, he trod prudently. He had to reassure conservatives ("leftists" in the post- Mao context: party officials who clung to the old state-controlled economy) that the party autocracy would remain secure; even as he supported the champions of openness by touting its benefits for economic development and modernization. This excerpt comes from a speech delivered in January 1992 at Shenzhen, the first of the SEZs to have been established in 1979.

Deng Xiaoping's Defense of Special Economic Zones, 1992[113]

"Since the beginning of the special economic zones [in 1979], there have been variant opinions, the worry being 'was this establishing capitalism?' The success of Shenzhen has plainly answered those who were troubled by this question. Shenzhen is surnamed *'She'* (Socialist) not *'Zi'* (Capitalist). In Shenzhen, public ownership is the main framework, including township and small-town (*xiangzhen*) enterprises, and foreign investment is only one-fourth. And from foreign investment we can get the advantages of tax revenue and jobs. To permit a bit more *'sanzi'* [three types of investment capital: joint ventures, wholly Chinese contractual ventures, and wholly foreign-owned ventures] is no cause for alarm. As long as we keep alert we have no reason to fear. We are in charge: [In China as a whole] there are the large and mid-scale state-run industries; there are township and small-town industries; and of even greater importance, we hold state power in our hands.

"Some people believe that one more bit of foreign investment means one more bit of capitalism; if there are more *'sanzi'* enterprises, then capitalist things will develop, and capitalism will spread. These people lack even basic knowledge. In our present situation, under our current regulations, foreign firms will make some money from *'sanzi'* enterprises. But our State will also get tax revenues, our workers will get salaries, and furthermore we can learn some technology and some management methods. Also we can get information and can open new markets. So *'sanzi'* enterprises under our overall political and economic control are a valuable supplement to the socialist economy. Fundamentally, they are an advantage to socialism."

* * * *

"To follow the Socialist Road means that we must gradually implement the principle of common benefit. The main point of 'common benefit' can be explained this way: Some areas of the country, which have the requisite conditions, develop first. Other areas develop a bit more slowly. The areas that develop earlier will give a boost to those that develop later. Finally common benefit is realized. If the rich areas simply get richer, and the poor areas simply get poorer, polarization will develop. But a socialist system ought to avoid polarization, and moreover can avoid it [through gradual transfer of wealth and technology from richer to poorer areas]."

This deftly crafted defense echoes the old Maritime Interest's reconciliation of commercial openness with regime security. Assurances are given that foreign contact can bring no harm to the state and its rulers. Benefits are cited for the livelihood of the common people. Conservatives are reassured, while local economic interests are protected. The new element in Deng's approach is the policy of "common benefit" (i.e., channeling a share of the profits to the interior provinces and hence to the nation as a whole). Benefit to the state may have been implicit in the emperor's policy declaration of 1754, but it probably was limited to the fiscal interests of the Imperial Household Department, whose agents collected customs duties at the seaports. That was long before national economic development became a ruling concept. By the late Qing, however, the rhetoric of the "foreign-affairs faction" (*yangwu pai*) proclaimed the benefits of foreign trade and technology for building "a wealthy state and powerful military." This formula was not far from Deng Xiaoping's, lacking only the "Socialist" component. It assured establishment elites of the late empire that foreign technology would be overlaid with Chinese characteristics because the political system would remain solidly based on Confucianism.

It is hard to miss the common elements in these pro-maritime policies: 1) a realistic view that foreign intercourse was economically valuable and 2) an assumption that the state autocracy would

remain secure. Equivalents of Deng's assurance, "We are in charge," can be glimpsed in the policies of the Maritime Interest over the preceding centuries.

Functionally, the SEZs of today's China can be seen as "frontier enclaves," successors to the "treaty ports" that had been established by imperialism in the interest of foreign business. The "unequal treaties" aroused nationalist anger in the twentieth century, particularly against the special privileges that protected foreign imports from high Chinese tariffs and foreign persons from Chinese courts. These privileges eventually were discarded over the course of the Chinese revolution. Looking back from the perspective of the SEZs, however, there is much that is familiar. The treaty ports were specially crafted enclaves where Chinese and foreigners could do business with little interference from the conservative, rent-seeking Chinese bureaucracy. They were a foreign imposition; nonetheless, Chinese businessmen and the Qing government made a lot of money from them.

Looking further back, what "frontier enclaves" preceded the treaty ports? The specialized hybrid environments that permitted Chinese and Europeans to do business outside the Chinese system were the port cities of the European colonial empires and native monarchies. Seen in this light, the busy foreign ports—Manila, Batavia, Malacca, Penang, Singapore, Macao, Nagasaki, Bangkok, and Hong Kong—were in effect SEZs outside China, governed by foreigners with the collaboration of Chinese merchants.

What all these frontier enclaves had in common were rules under which Chinese merchants could deal with foreigners under conditions that were not subject to Chinese government restrictions. China was not prepared to compromise its security and upset its social equilibrium by opening markets where Chinese and foreigners could mingle and negotiate unsupervised. Nevertheless, China's coastal populations, whose livelihood depended on trade, were determined to go out and do business in distant frontier enclaves, at considerable personal risk and often in defiance of government bans. At length, foreigners implanted frontier enclaves on the China coast as "treaty ports"; more recently, the Chinese government established SEZs and "open ports" in strategic marketing, administrative, and manufacturing centers. The important difference today is that these most recent frontier enclaves were created by a Chinese government and that their special privileges and exemptions for Chinese and foreign business firms are designed to fit Chinese priorities: same historic functions but under new management.

Overseas Chinese—whether sojourners or settlers—played leading roles in all these frontier enclaves and continue doing so today. An official of the Special Zones Office under the State Council wrote, "Party Center decided to found the special zones in order to make use of their special locational conditions (proximity to the Hong Kong, Macao, and Taiwan regions) and their human advantages (*as major hometowns of overseas Chinese and their extensive contacts with other countries*)."[114] Chinese overseas are now officially valued not only as investors of capital but also as conduits of information and as cultural brokers with the rest of the world—roles they have been filling unofficially for centuries.

Notes

1. "New migrants" has also been used, in another context, to designate immigration to the United States during the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries by peoples from eastern and southern Europe. See Dunlevy and Gemery (1978).
2. Chin (2003), 50–51.
3. Hing (1993), 36–38.
4. Hing (1993), 81–82.
5. Ngai (2004), 262.
6. Li (1998), 34–35, 89–90, 103–4, 113 (chaps. 3, 7, and 8).
7. Glick (1980), 774.
8. Australian Government (2007).
9. Australian Government (2007).
10. Chen (1951), 18–23.
11. Fitzgerald (1972), chap. 4; Wu (1967), 147.
12. Coppel (1983), 3.
13. Fitzgerald (1972), 142.
14. Fitzgerald (1972), 147.
15. See chapter 1, note 17.

16. Li (1999b), 38.

17. Chan (1999), 55; Murphy (2002).

18. Alexander and Chan (2004), 618.

19. Solinger (1999), 43–44.

20. Alexander and Chan (2004).

21. Murphy (2002), 220–22.

22. Giese (1999), 201.

23. Chang (1957), 85–86.

24. Ng (1983), 96–98.

25. Wang (2007). I am indebted to Mr. Wang, a native Wenzhounese and a seminar student of mine, for kindly allowing me to cite his unpublished research paper.

26. Wang (1995), 63–64.

27. Thunø (1999).

28. Li (1999b), 31–32.

29. Li (1999a), 182–83.

30. Whiting (2001), 32–33; Xiang (2005), 32, 44; Zhang (2001), 52.

31. Wang (1995), 64.

32. Xiang (2005), 13–20.

33. Zhang (2001); Xiang (2005).

34. Tomba (1999).

35. Zhang (2001).

36. Zhang (2001), 53; Liu (1992), 294.

37. Liu (1992), 306, 312–16.

38. Li (1999b), 40; Li (1999a), 191–93.

39. Li (1999b), 191.

40. Zhuang (2006), 3. On ship jumpers as establishers of bridgeheads, see Watson (1975), chap. 4.

41. Zhuang (2006), 1–11. Quoted by kind permission of Professor Zhuang and of *Huaqiao Huaren lishi yanjiu* 华侨华人历史研究.

42. Watson (1975), chaps. 4 and 5.

43. Xiang (1999), 228.

44. Li (2005).

45. Ch'en Ta (1940), 198–99. Ch'en did not identify his field sites by name but called Xin'an "Community Y."

46. The *Longshan tang* is now a prominent tourist attraction. It is still among the richest such organizations in Penang. Khoo (1994), 59–61.

47. Li (2005), 55–64.

48. Li (2005), 50.

49. Li (2005), 51.

50. See also Rush (1990) on the operation of patron–client relationships in Indonesia.

51. Li (2005), 103.

52. Laczko (2003).

53. Li (2005), 107–8.

54. Li (2005), 107.

55. Li (1999a), 185.

56. Xiang (2003), 24.

57. Chang (2004), 101–4.

58. Chin (2003), 65–66.

59. Xiang (2003), 25.

60. Burdman (1993); Nyíri (2002), 233.

61. Hsu (2000), 81.

62. Witness the bitter antipathy between Hokchia and Hokchiu migrants in the United Kingdom, related in Pieke et al. (2004), 153–61.

63. Li (2005), 132–34.

64. Baker (1994), 298.

65. Skeldon (1994), 34–37; Benton and Pieke (1998), 5–6.

66. Benton and Pieke (1998), 1–20; Pieke et al. (2004), 103; Poston et al. (1994), 636–41.

67. Institute of International Education (2006).

68. Chen (1992), chaps. 5, 6.

69. Wang (1998).

70. Lii (1995) (excerpts).

71. Zhou (1992), 4. But see Kwong (1993).

72. Zhou and Kim (2006), 241; Moore (2006), 271.

73. Zhuang (2006); Guest (2003).

74. Chen (1992), chap. 4; Zhou (1992), 199.

75. Chen (1992), chap. 8.

76. Li (1995), 376–86.

77. Author's interviews. See also Zhou (1992), 203–8.

78. Li (1999b), 87–89.

79. Li (1995), 252–53.

80. Li (1995), 312–15.

81. Zhou and Kim (2006), 241; Moore (2006), 271.

82. Xiang (2003).

83. Nyíri (2002), 212.

84. *People's Daily*, September 18, 2001.

85. Nyíri (2002), 220.

86. Nyíri (1999), 272. Beijing's campaigns to "reach out" to ethnic Chinese overseas since the 1980s are analyzed in Thunø (2001). Little is revealed, however, about the perception of those campaigns by their ethnic Chinese targets.

87. Website of the World Chinese Entrepreneurs Conventions and the World Chinese Business Network, http://english.wcbn.com.sg/index.cfm?GPID=24.

88. Li (1995), 125; Heng (1992), 132–34.

89. Basch et al. (1994), 8.

90. Li (1999b), 18.

91. "Voluntary associations" include traditional affinity groups plus trade groups, cultural groups, youth groups, sports groups, professional associations, and so on, as well as associations of associations—umbrella groups at national and international scales.

92. Li (1999b), 206–7.

93. Li (1999b), 213.

94. As illustrated by the case of Cheang Hong Lim (chapter 4).

95. Li (1999b), 210.

96. Li (1999b), 213.

97. Pieke et al. (2004), 159–60.

98. Li (1999b), 217.

99. Li (1999a), 185.

100. Li (1999a), 193.

101. Kuah (1999), 153 et passim; Cheng and Ngok (1999).

102. Liu (1998), 602.

103. Liu (1998), 597.

104. Liu (1998).

105. A July 2007 visit to this site revealed, under "apparel," 4,583 selling leads and 149,532 buying leads; under "iron and steel," 13,755 selling leads and 2,237 buying leads.

106. Moore (2006), 285–86.

107. Liu (1998), 599, citing the 1995 souvenir publication of the Singapore Fuqing Association.

108. Liu (1998), citing the Singapore newspaper *Lianhe zaobao*, May 16, 1997.

109. Liu (1998), 597.

110. Moore (2006).

111. Lever-Tracy, Ip, and Tracy (1996), 136.

112. Yow (2007).

113. Zhonggong (1992), 3–4.

114. Rosen (1996), 49 (emphasis added).

Glossary of Names and Terms

A

Amoy (Xiamen)	廈門
Anhui	安徽
Anxi	安溪

B

bang	幫
baogong	包工
Baohuanghui	保皇會
baoke	包客
baolan ren	包攬人
Baosheng	保生
Beijing	北京
Bincheng xinbao	檳城新報
Bo Gui	柏貴

C

Cai Shizhang	蔡士章
Cai Zhengdu	蔡正篤
Changle	長樂
Changtai	長泰
Chaoyang	潮陽
Chaozhou Fu	潮州府
Cheang Hong Lim (Zhang Fanglin)	章芳琳
Chen Da (Ch’en Ta)	陳達
Chen Dalu	陳大祿
Chen Hongmou	陳宏謀
Chen Laixing	陳來幸
Chen Tien-shi	陳天璽
Chen Yi (governor)	陳儀
Chen Yi (sojourner)	陳怡
Ch’en Hsi-yuan	陳熙遠
Chiang Ching-kuo Foundation	蔣經國基金會
Chiang Kai-shek	蔣介石
Chng, David	莊欽永

Chongqing (Chungking)	重慶
Chongwen’ ge	崇文閣
Chung Sai Yat Po	中西日報
Chuzhou Fu	滁州府
cukong (*zhugong*)	主公

D

Da Qing	大清
Da’ an	大安
Dajiangxu	大江墟
Daoguang	道光
Dasha	大沙
datong	大同
Dejiu	德就
Deng Yayi	鄧亞益
Deng Xiaoping	鄧小平
diaolou	碉樓
Dongguan	東莞

E

Ee Ho Hean (Yihexuan)	怡和軒

Enping	恩平

F

fengshui	風水
Fengtian	奉天
Foshan	佛山
Fu Heng	傅恒
Fude zhenshen	福德真神
Fujian	福建
Fujian neimu	福建內幕
Fuma Susumu	夫馬進
Fuqing	福清
Fuzhou	福州
Fuzhou Fu	福州府

G

Gao Qizhuo	高其倬
gongguan (*kong koan*)	公館
gongtou	工頭
Guandi	關帝
Guangdong (Kwang-tung)	廣東

Guangxi	廣西
Guangzhou (Canton)	廣州
guanxi	關係
Guanyin	觀音
Gui River	桂江
Guiyuan	桂苑
Gulangyu	鼓浪嶼
Guo Chunyang	郭春秧
Guomindang	國民黨
Gwee Yee Hean	魏維賢

H

Ha Tien	河仙
Haifeng	海豐
Hailam (Hoinam, Hainan)	海南
haiwai guanxi	海外關係
Hakka	客家
Han (people)	漢人
Han River	漢江
Han Seunghyun	韓承賢

hang	行
Hao Yulin	郝玉麟
He Gui	何桂
He Shaoguang	何紹光
Hebei	河北
Henghua (Xinghua)	興化
Hengyong	橫永
Hokchia (Fuqing)	福清
Hokchiu (Fuzhou)	福州
Hokkien (Fujian)	福建
Hong Kong	香港
He Nian	鶴年
Hu Zhiming	胡志明
Huang Kerun	黃克潤
Huang Muqing	黃木慶
Huang Naishang	黃乃裳
Huang Tingyuan	黃廷源
Huang Zunxian	黃遵憲
huangzhong	黃種
Huaqiao	華僑

Huaren	華人
Hubei	湖北
hui	會
huiguan	會館
huiguan gongsi	會館公司
Huizhou	徽州
hukou	戶口
Hunan	湖南

J

jia	家
Jiangnan	江南
Jiangsu	江蘇
Jiangxi	江西
Jianning Fu	建寧府
Jianyang	建陽
Jiaying Fu	嘉應府
Jin Li	金莉
Ji’nan	濟南
Jinfengzhen	金鳳鎮

jinshan zhuang	金山莊
jinshi	進士
Jinzhou	錦州
Jit Shin Pau	日新報
Jiulong River	九龍江

K

Kagotani Naoto	籠穀 直人
Kaiping	開平
Kang Youwei	康有為
Kangxi	康熙
ketou	客頭
Khaw (Xu)	許
Khoo (*Kongsi*)	邱 (公司)
Kim Yongjoon	金容駿
Kim Youngdeok	金容德
Kobe	神戶
Kongjiao	孔教
kongsi (*gongsi*)	公司
Koo Bumjin	邱凡真

kumiai	組合
Kyushu	球種

L

Lan Dingyuan	藍鼎元
laoke	老客
Lee Kuan Yew	李光耀
Lee Tsong-han	李宗翰
Li Duomin	李鐸民
Li Minghuan	李明歡
Li Rong	李榮
Li Zhutao	李柱濤
lianbangzhi	聯邦制
Liang Qichao	梁啟超
Lianhe zaobao	聯合早報
Liem Koen Hien	林群賢
Liem Sioe Liong	林紹良
Lim Boon Keng	林文慶
Lim Lian Geok	林連玉
Lin Man-houng	林滿紅

Lingnan	嶺南
Linyuan	鄰園
Liu Guanglin	劉光臨
Liu Muqing	劉木慶
Liu Wenxiu	劉文修
liudong renkou	流動人口
Longmen	龍門
Longshan tang	龍山堂
Longxi	龍溪
Luo Fangbo	羅芳伯
Lüsong	呂宋
luzhu	爐主
Luzon	呂宋

M

Ma Xiaohe	馬小鶴
Mazu	媽祖
Min River	閩江
Minbei	閩北
Ming	明

Mingxi 明溪

Mingxiang 明香

Mingyun 明雲

minjian 民間

Minnan 閩南

minzu 民族

mu 畝

N

Nagasaki 長崎

Nanhai 南海

Nanjing 南京

nanshin 南進

Nanyang shangbao 南洋商報

Nanyō Kyōkai 南洋協會

Ng Chin-keong 吳振強

Nü Qiangren 女強人

O

Oei Tiong Ham 黃仲涵

Ou River 甌江

P

Panyu	番禺
Park Eunjin	樸殷鎮
Phoa Keng Hek	潘景赫
Pucheng Fu	浦城府

Q

Qian Xun	錢恂
Qianlong	乾隆
Qianshan	前山
qiaojuan	僑眷
qiaokan	僑刊
Qiaolian	僑聯
qiaoling	僑領
qiaopai	僑牌
qiaowu	僑務
qiaowuju	僑務局
qiaoxiang	僑鄉
Qing	清
Qingming	清明

Qingtian	青田
Qingyunting	青雲亭
qinpeng haoyou	親朋好友
Qionghai	瓊海
Qiongzhou Fu	瓊州府
Quanzhou Fu	泉州府

R

renqing	人情
renzhong	人種

S

Sanbaoshan	三寶山
Sandianhui	三點會
Sanjiang	三江
sanyi	三邑
sanzi	三資
Shandong	山東
Shanghai	上海
shangzhan	商戰
Shanxi	山西

Shantou	汕頭
Shaoxing	紹興
Shaxi	沙溪
she	社
Shenzhen	深圳
Shiba Yoshinobu	斯波 義信
Shihua	時花
Shilai	時來
Shilin	時琳
Shiroyama Tomoko	城山智子
Shuixi	水西
Shunde	順德
Sichuan	四川
siyi	四邑
Song Ong Siang	宋旺相
Su Aquan	蘇阿全
Su Chengjiu	蘇成就
Su Mingkang	蘇鳴康
Sugihara Kaoru	杉原薫
Suryadinata, Leo	廖建裕

suzhi	素質
Suzhou	蘇州
Swatow (Shantou)	汕頭

T

Taiping Tian Guo	太平天國
Taishan	泰山
Taiwan	台灣
Taizhou Fu	臺州府
Tan (Chen)	陳
Tan Cheng Lock	陳禎祿
Tan Kah-kee	陳嘉庚
Tan Lark Sye	陳六使
Tan Liok Ee	陳綠漪
Tan Siew Sin	陳修信
tang	堂
Tangren	唐人
Tao Zhu	陶朱
Teochiu (Chaozhou)	潮州
Tiandihui	天地會

Tianfugong	天福宮
Tianhou	天后
Tianjin	天津
Tiantangxu	天堂墟
Tingzhou Fu	汀州府
tingzhu	亭主
Tiong Hoa Hwe Koan	中華會館
Tiongkok (Zhongguo)	中國
Tokugawa	德川
Tokugawa Shōgunate	德川幕府
Tong'an	通安
Tongmenghui	同盟會
Tongxianghui	同鄉會
tongzhong	同種
towkay	頭家
tsūji	通事
Tung Wah Hospital	東華三院

W

Wang	王

Wang Gungwu	王庚武
Wang Jingwei	汪精衛
Wang Xiangyun	王湘雲
Wen	溫
Wencheng	文成
Wenzhou	溫州
Wenzhou Fu	溫州府
wo Tangren	我 唐人
Wu	吳
Wu Speech	吳語
wudang, wupai	無黨無派

X

Xiagang	下崗
Xiamen (Amoy)	廈門
Xian Guodu	洗國度
Xiangshan	香山
xiangxun	鄉訊
Xiangzhen	鄉鎮
Xiaobu	小步

Xiaoxi	小西
Xie	謝
xin yimin	新移民
Xin’ an	新安
Xing-bin ribao	星檳日報
Xinghua	興化
Xingzhonghui	興中會
Xinhui	新會
Xinjiang	新疆
xinke	新客
Xinning	新寧
xinxing	新興
Xue Fucheng	薛福成

Y

Yan Fu	嚴複
Yan’ an	延安
Yang Yingju	楊應琚
yanghang	洋行
yangwu pai	洋務派

Yangzhou	揚州
Yangzi	揚子
Yanping Fu	延平府
Yijing	易經
yimin	移民
yimin re	移民熱
Yingqianzhen	營前鎮
Yokohama	橫濱
Yongle	永樂
Yongzheng	雍正
Yoon Seungjoo	尹聖柱
You River	右江
Yunnan	雲南

Z

Ze-hai zhen-ren	澤海真人
Zeli village	澤裏村
Zeng Shaoqing	曾少卿
Zhang Zhidong	張之洞
Zhangzhou Fu	漳州府

Zhao Ayi**n**g	趙阿煐
Zhao Hui	趙輝
Zhao Yahao	趙亞好
Zhaoqing	肇慶
Zhejiang	浙江
Zhejiangcun	浙江村
Zheng Chenggong	鄭成功
Zheng He	鄭和
Zhigongtang	致公堂
Zhili	直隸
Zhixin	志新
Zhongguo haiwai fazhan	中國海外發展
Zhonghua zonghuiguan	中華總會館
Zhongshan	中山
zhongzu	種族
Zhuang Guotu	莊國土
zhuzai	豬仔
zong huiguan	總會管
Zongli yamen	總理衙門
zongting	總亭

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About the Author

Born in England in 1933, **Philip A. Kuhn** attended Harvard College and later studied Chinese at the U.S. Army Language School. After returning to Harvard for graduate study in history and East Asian languages, he received the Ph.D. in 1964. He taught for fifteen years at the University of Chicago, then moved to Harvard as professor of Chinese history. He also served as director of Harvard's John King Fairbank Center for East Asian Research and is a fellow of the American Academy of Arts and Sciences.

Professor Kuhn has been a visiting scholar at the Qing History Institute, People's University, China; the Institute of Modern History, Academia Sinica, Taiwan; Le Collège de France, Paris; National University of Singapore; and The Australian National University. His writings on the political and social history of China include, most recently, *Origins of the Modern Chinese State* (2002). He retired from Harvard in 2008.