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The Mandarin–capitalists from Nanyang

Overseas Chinese enterprise in the modernization of China 1893–1911

MICHAEL R. GODLEY

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Dedicated to Marilyn, Heather and David

Preface

The research for this book was begun in Singapore in 1970. I remain particularly grateful to the University of Singapore for granting use of its facilities, including an office provided by the History Department. The Institute of Southeast Asian Studies and Josef Silverstein, who was then the director, were most helpful. Sharom Ahmat, R. Suntharalingam and Eunice Thio helped break the monotony of the task with companionship and good conversation. Yen Ching Hwang shared his considerable knowledge of Ch'ing relations with the Malaya Chinese during two brief but profitable lunch hours.

In Providence, Rhode Island, several friends read parts of the original draft. Joseph Cheng was indispensable in matters of translation and the excitement he always displayed in the project kept the author going when progress was inevitably slow. Jerome B. Grieder, Eric Widmer and Michael Y. M. Kau made helpful suggestions. The greatest debt of all is owed my adviser and mentor, Professor Lea E. Williams of Brown University, who taught me Malay and gently persuaded me to follow his pioneering footsteps in the study of the Chinese in Southeast Asia.

The Late Ch'ing Reform Workshop at Harvard University in the summer of 1975 provided the stimulus needed to begin the process of converting a dissertation into a monograph. Paul A. Cohen and Linda Shin, among many others, were most encouraging. The eventful decision to seek a publisher came in the fall of the year when Professor Denis Twitchett and Robert Seal, then at Cambridge University Press, read the dissertation and urged revision. An old friend, Otis H. Shao, gave a final push in the spring of 1977. Later, even after the manuscript had been submitted, some very special people at the Australian National University gave more support and comment. Not the least of these was Professor Wang Gungwu.

Thus, a volume in the making for a full decade has benefited from much in the way of constructive criticism. A dozen libraries and their staffs have provided assistance, particularly those at Brown, Harvard,

Cornell, Chicago and Singapore. Louis P. Warsh read over the manuscript while Yu Yee-kwan checked the Chinese characters. I have only myself to blame for factual errors, logical inconsistencies and the poor quality of the typescript. But, Marion Barnett of the Press made up for some of these shortcomings with a fine job of editing and surely gave the entire text a needed coat of polish. Of course, married scholars never get far without the support and cooperation of their family and I, too, wish to thank my wife, Marilyn, who followed me half way around the world in search of material.

Thanks should also go to the Harvard University Press and two academic journals which provided showcases for portions of this manuscript. Much of the argument in Chapter 5 first appeared in Paul A. Cohen and John E. Schrecker (eds.), *Reform in Nineteenth-Century China* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Council on East Asian Studies, 1976; 2nd edn 1979). It is reprinted by permission of the publisher. Chapter 7 was originally published as 'Chang Pi-shih and Nanyang Chinese Involvement in South China's Railroads, 1896–1911', *Journal of Southeast Asian Studies*, IV, No. 1 (March 1973), pp. 16–30. A summarized version was published as 'The Late Ch'ing Courtship of the Chinese in Southeast Asia', *Journal of Asian Studies*, XXXIV, No. 2 (February 1975), pp. 361–85. Both articles have been utilized with permission.

Hilo, Hawaii
1980

Michael R. Godley

Note

Romanization of the many sounds represented by Chinese characters is at best an imperfect art. Perhaps one of the greatest frustrations experienced by the student of the overseas Chinese in Southeast Asia is that there is no commonly accepted means of rendering names. The pronunciation varies considerably from one dialect to another while the Western spelling itself changes from one colonial setting to another. China scholars generally compromise and utilize the Wade–Giles system for romanizing the Mandarin or Peking dialect. This system works well when dealing with individuals in China proper but overseas Chinese are usually better known by the Cantonese or Hokkien form of their name. To use only the Mandarin pronunciation would be to strip away their Southeast Asian identities and make it virtually impossible for the reader to cross-check careers in popular Western-language source materials. For this reason, all but the major overseas Chinese capitalists who undeniably established reputations in China are identified in the text by the most common dialect spelling found in Southeast Asia. Full Chinese characters for most individuals can, however, be consulted in the Glossary.

Likewise, a similar problem can occur with the small but necessary word 'dollar'. Unless otherwise indicated, it should be assumed that Straits dollars are being used in Malaya and Singapore and either Mexican or Chinese silver *yuan* in China. Because trade dollars of different sorts circulated widely in Asia, the precise currency is not always stated. The general reader may feel free to ignore the difficulty and treat all dollars as very roughly equivalent. The specialist is advised to use all unspecified figures with customary caution.

Bangkok
INDOCHINA
Saigon
SIAM
Banda
Atjeh
ATJEH
PERLIS
KEDAH
Penang
PERAK
Taiping
Ipoh
MALAY
STATES
Belawan
Bentong
DELI
Medan
SELANGOR
PAHANG
Kuala
Lumpur
Laboen
Malacca
JOHORE
Bengkalis
Singapore
SARAWAK
Pontianak
SUMATRA
BORNEO
NETHERLANDS INDIES
Banka I.
Billiton I.
Batavia
Tandjongpriok
JAVA
Semarang
Surabaya
0
500 km

Introduction

At the time of the Revolution in 1911, as many as ten million Chinese lived abroad. The majority were poor coolies but a minority had already moved into the business pursuits for which they are well known today. Within this group, particularly in Southeast Asia, could be found a stratum of very wealthy merchants. Because few individuals viewed their expatriation as permanent but rather sought to identify with the homeland and its culture, there had been considerable interest in the events of the late Ch'ing period. It is widely assumed that the multitude actively opposed the Manchu regime and gave its support to the reform or revolutionary movements encouraged by K'ang Yu-wei and Sun Yat-sen. This traditional conclusion is unfounded. Although most overseas Chinese had lost faith in Manchu leadership by 1909, only a small percentage took political action. In fact there was a time, forgotten by some historians, when prosperous merchants abroad wanted closer relations with the Ch'ing dynasty.

In the closing decades of the old order, the absence of a strong and independent bourgeoisie stood as a formidable obstacle to modernization. There could be no development along Western lines without an innovative entrepreneurial group, but no such element was likely to emerge in a society which had long denigrated the importance of businessmen and kept them in the shadow of the bureaucracy. Hence, it appeared at first that only foreigners could provide the capital and technical skills needed. Students were sent abroad but their exposure to Western ways only served to undermine the existing system and did nothing to assist the national treasury. Finally, in a last-minute move to introduce both capital and expertise, while still maintaining some features of the traditional society, the Manchu government turned to the overseas Chinese. By largely ignoring this Ch'ing effort, scholars have heretofore missed an entire side of Chinese history and a unique opportunity to assess the problems of that nation's early modernization.

Of all immigrant peoples, the Chinese in Southeast Asia (Nanyang)

may well be the most remarkable. Famine, population pressure, revolutionary upheaval and oppression have driven other peoples to leave their homelands before, but historical circumstances combined with the specific cultural predilections of China have lent an unusual character to overseas communities. Although the movement toward assimilation has accelerated in recent years, the six hundred years or so during which the Chinese have taken up residence in the neighboring tropics have been marked by a loyalty to the homeland and culture uncommon in other immigrant groups beyond the first few generations, and by a paradoxical ability to adapt sufficiently to local conditions to improve economic status through industry and frugality.

While many an immigrant Chinese no doubt found life in Nanyang just as difficult as his lot in China, there is no question that, as a group, the Chinese have thrived on the opportunities provided them abroad and achieved an economic pre-eminence far out of proportion to their actual numbers. Indeed, the one fact that immediately stands out is the frequency with which Chinese, when overseas, have gravitated to commercial roles and been successful. When in an alien environment, the Chinese not only turned into hawkers and small tradesmen, but created syndicates and corporations, and became entrepreneurs whose ability matched that of even the West's industrial giants. There are some who would argue that the Southeast Asian setting was able to produce 'Chinese capitalists' while traditional China was not.

At any rate, the foreign atmosphere, dominated by Western concerns for international commerce, seems to have been conducive to the growth of bourgeois values. As was the case in the treaty ports, many overseas Chinese became cosmopolitan in their views. Unlike the inhabitants of coastal China, however, the immigrants were not as easily alienated from the traditional system. The China-born among the prosperous overseas business community remained socially conservative. As previous generations on the mainland, the most respected individuals continued to be those closely associated with classical education and bureaucratic rank. Consequently, a majority of the successful overseas Chinese entrepreneurs at the turn of the century attempted to disguise bourgeois wealth with the prestige of purchased degrees, titles and brevet posts.

There are a number of reasons for this tendency to identify with an existing elite tradition even while away in the midst of a flourishing commercial milieu. First, merchants were denied entry into the European ruling class. They were also almost exclusively of peasant background with strong ties to families in the hinterland. A certain Chinese uneasiness about unrefined wealth also seems to have survived the move south. Furthermore, riches earned abroad still re-

quired protection at home and this was best secured through the attainment of traditional status. For many years, returning individuals faced discrimination often tantamount to extortion at the hands of local magistrates, since to leave one's family to search for wealth in far-off places violated at least two basic Confucian principles. Thus, to overcome both the social and the practical disadvantages of long residence abroad, prosperous overseas Chinese in the second half of the nineteenth century felt pressure to achieve the approbation of the traditional system. Yet, it must be understood that rather than being a denial of the emerging bourgeois standards of Southeast Asia and the treaty ports, this inclination to seek gentry-bureaucrat station was complementary to the on-going transformation of the Confucian order. It was but part of a broader movement to redefine the qualifications for membership in the ruling class.

For the most part, modernization studies have concentrated on the direct confrontation of modern Western and traditional Eastern values first stimulated by the Caucasian visitors themselves and later mediated by several generations of Chinese students returned from short-term stays on a foreign university campus. With only a few exceptions, the role of the overseas Chinese in China's effort to enter the modern age has been neglected.

There have, of course, been a number of credible works dealing with overseas Chinese participation in the events surrounding the establishment of the Republic, and countless references to the contributions made by the Chinese abroad to that government and its successor. The neglected Chinese on foreign shores have not been the rebel sympathizers of early years or the nationalistic expatriates who sacrificed so much to support the cause of Chinese independence during the traumatic years of war in the Pacific. The overseas Chinese to be discussed in subsequent chapters, in an effort to set the record straight, are those who supported the Ch'ing dynasty.

The following pages will outline the development, fruits and legacy of an important, if tardy, campaign to modernize pre-1911 China with the capital and skills of the overseas Chinese. Beginning with a discovery of the plight of coolie laborers in the 1860s, the Ch'ing dynasty shaped a policy which, in its final form, granted returning businessmen a major part in economic affairs. Gradually, the strategic emphasis shifted from the protection of workers to the encouragement of renewed contacts with the motherland to the outright exploitation of overseas experience and wealth. Ironically, this effort, which helped foster the growth of overseas Chinese nationalism, simultaneously produced forces which would act to unseat the ruling house. In the process, however, the Manchu government created institutions that

were instrumental in the courtship of overseas Chinese during the Republican decades.

Regardless of the degree of political involvement, the one thing that virtually all Nanyang residents came to share by the year 1900 was a connection with the fate of the China homeland. At first, sojourners – through their tales and communications – broadened the traditional peasant view of the world. Others, because of savings and remittances, played a part in economic development. For some this was only an expression of filial piety but others, more modern in outlook, purchased a token share in the railroad which they hoped would bring prosperity to their native region. Individuals served as intermediaries in the early opening of China or took the lead in defending ethnic and, then, national interests. Growing numbers added to the emerging bourgeoisie upon returning home. A few outstanding figures took advantage of the leverage even purchased honors gave within the traditional framework first to protect their own interests and then to introduce new elements into the late Ch'ing scene.

Unquestionably the foremost example of an overseas Chinese entrepreneur is Chang Pi-shih (tzu: Chen-hsun; 1840–1916). Born in rural Kwangtung, Chang began as a provisioner for the Dutch in Java and, by the 1890s, had utilized colonial support to make extensive investments in the Netherlands Indies. His dozen ships dominated the Sumatran coastal trade and flew the Dutch flag. He soon had an interest in almost all the major revenue farms on either side of the Straits of Malacca and was also involved in mining, banking and large plantations. In the formative years of Chinese industry, between 1895 and 1910, he expanded to China where he set an example of economic diversification for the entire country to follow. He established the famous Chang Yü Pioneer Wine Company at Chefoo, textile mills, a brick factory and a glass-making operation. He was also connected with the salt monopoly, cattle, mining, cotton and general commerce. As one of the leading proponents of railroad development, his name was associated with every railroad project in the coastal provinces of Kwangtung and Fukien. He was the largest private shareholder in the Imperial Bank of China and on the board of directors of this and other early financial institutions. He took the lead in the organization of chambers of commerce and in the years immediately preceding his death, Chang was the most famous Chinese entrepreneur, honored even by America's Wall Street.

For present purposes, it is enough to say that Chang Pi-shih, receiving varying degrees of support from a number of important reformers, attained positions of power and honor in China. Although

originally recruited into the well-known *kuan-tu shang-pan* system at the merchant-managing end, diplomatic position, successive brevet ranks beginning at the taotai level and an external source of wealth beyond the touch of the government gave Chang the weight needed to become an official supervisor. He also catapulted himself ahead with several well-timed contributions. Such subscriptions gained him the first of many imperial audiences and metropolitan rank. Eventually he was made a vice-president of the brand new Board of Trade. Even greater recognition followed.

There would have been no place for enterprising overseas Chinese, of course, if the Ch'ing government had not looked favorably upon their participation. As the third chapter will document, the interest the Nanyang Chinese began to take in Ch'ing-sponsored plans to develop China was the end-product of a well-orchestrated campaign. Although such noted reformers as Ting Jih-ch'ang, Chang Chih-tung, Hsueh Fu-ch'eng and Huang Tsun-hsien all influenced this course, the decisive role was played by Chang Pi-shih. In conversations with the empress dowager and in a number of memorials, Chang repeated the same basic arguments.

In brief, he believed that the throne needed the full and active support of the new commercial community if it were to survive. But he warned that treaty port and overseas merchants were not likely to take part unless positive steps were taken to purge the bureaucracy of its corruption and anti-commerce stance. Furthermore, he suggested that commercial success itself was qualification for office. Unquestionably, however, the argument which caught the attention of high officials was his fervent belief that other overseas Chinese could be attracted back to China to provide a still missing entrepreneurial thrust while gaining the confidence of the native bourgeoisie for the embattled old elite.

The participation of such entrepreneurial types in the traditional 'establishment' raises important questions that directly address critical issues of the period including the transformation of the elite, the fate of Confucian norms and the meaning of reform in the Chinese cultural context. What is more, investigation of the way overseas Chinese were brought into the Ch'ing bureaucracy and the conditions under which they were permitted to begin new enterprises not only casts light on the process of modernization and those factors which may also have inhibited industrial growth, but reveals the complex forces at work in Nanyang.

This book will now examine the clash and interaction of values, old and new, Chinese and Western, as the dynasty made a final effort to modernize yet meet the West on its own terms by enlisting the assistance of overseas Chinese. At center stage will be the name of Chang Pi-shih.

PART I

The rise of the overseas Chinese capitalist

1
The foreign experience

The years of foreign imperialism in China produced many tales about the humiliation of the Chinese. There was the now notorious park in Shanghai's foreign sector that allegedly excluded both dogs and Orientals as well as the slightly less galling but even more basic expropriation of sovereign rights and national treasure by outside powers and their commercial representatives. It should not be surprising that some of the most widely told anecdotes about the major overseas Chinese capitalists relate instances when these Eastern businessmen bested their foreign rivals, forced acquiescence on a point of prestige, or otherwise gained respect for their business acumen. One such story has to do with an overseas Chinese millionaire known locally as Thio Thiau Siat.

Near the end of the nineteenth century, when China's defeat at the hands of the Japanese had exposed the weakness of the Chinese modernization program, Thio was the dynasty's consular representative in Singapore. Having been ordered to return immediately to China for official consultation, Thio sent an agent to purchase a first-class steamship ticket. The German shipping company that he approached refused to issue the ticket on the grounds that non-Europeans were not permitted to travel in the superior accommodations. Even though Thio was a government official, the management refused to break the long-standing rule and allow a Chinese to purchase passage as a first-class passenger.

The Chinese consul found it difficult to contain his displeasure. What, however, could a Ch'ing official in an English colony of that period do about this blatant discrimination? There was probably little he could do as a representative of the weak Chinese government, but Thio was also a shrewd businessman who knew precisely how to handle the situation and the Imperial German government that stood behind the offensive steamship line. Almost immediately, the Singapore consul placed an advertisement in the English-language press announcing his desire to hire merchant vessels and engage the necessary

captains to traverse the route from the Southeast-Asian port to Hong Kong and back. The proposed company would, of course, cater only to Chinese and carry only the goods of Chinese merchants. To make his ships even more attractive, Thio also promised to cut the German tariff exactly in half. The fact that he intended to break the resolve of the unyielding foreign firm through competition, not diplomatic protest, was now quite clear. At first, the Germans did not take the challenge seriously and talked as if the consul had lost his mind. The frivolity at the steamship company's office was, however, very short lived. In a few days the management discovered the extent of Thio's business empire and personal influence and, once his plan seemed feasible, the special permission for this Chinese to travel in the class of his choice followed forthwith.

This victory did not satisfy the consul and having forced the Germans to take one step backward he hardened his position and demanded that the unequal regulation be totally rescinded. If it was necessary, he was willing, or so the almost legendary story goes, to sacrifice his entire fortune to obtain his lofty end. The Germans in great awe retreated once again and discarded the old discrimination no doubt confident that only a handful of Chinese could afford first-class travel anyway. Singapore's brash Chinese consul had, however, accomplished the token integration of the salons and smoke-rooms of the Imperial German merchant fleet and he abandoned his own plans to launch a competitive line. In one instance, at least, Singapore Chinese felt that the imperialists had been beaten at their own game.[1] Who, however, was Thio Thiau Siat and where had he constructed such a powerful financial base?

Thio left his home in rural South China when only seventeen years of age. Sources disagree as to the exact social status of his family but he definitely experienced poverty in his youth. Determined to make his fortune in Southeast Asia, he was able to build a commercial network with connections throughout the entire area. By the time he had become Chinese consul in Singapore in 1895, his business operation was firmly rooted in Java, Sumatra, the Malay States and the Straits Settlements of Penang and Singapore and he was just beginning to expand to the China homeland. Shortly before his confrontation with the German shipping line, his career in Nanyang could boast of the following accomplishments.

With the aid of his inlaws, he had established his first business in Batavia at the age of nineteen. Trading largely in foodstuffs, he became a provisioner for the Dutch army and navy and by gradually gaining the favor of the colonial authorities, he used his position to advantage and made successful bids for a number of monopolies made

available in Western Java including opium, tobacco and spirits. His arrival in the Netherlands Indies fortunately coincided with a period of concerted Dutch expansion. Unsatisfied with local labor and leadership, the authorities turned more and more toward Chinese for the necessary labor and managerial supervision. Thio was among the earliest Chinese businessmen to receive the very lucrative contracts offered by the colonialist companies for the development of plantations and the reclamation of previously unutilized land areas.

With the Dutch supplying most of the capital and the tools as well as the market, Thio furnished the coolie labor and managerial supervision and established his first major company, the Sjarikat Yü Huo Tidak Terhad, an unlimited concern for the development of coconut and rice plantations. In 1875, only twenty years after his initial arrival in Java, he was one of the most prominent Chinese businessmen on the island and, as the Dutch shifted their attention to the conquest of Sumatra, so did Thio Thiau Siat. In two short years, again with the strong cooperation of the colonial power, his business had extended to embrace the whole northern half of that island. He was soon farming all the major revenue farms. In Deli (now called Medan), the leading trade center of Northwest Sumatra, he set up a company to plant land in coconut palms, rubber and tea. Inevitably, his attention moved to British-ruled Penang which was the strategic transhipment point for the produce of Sumatra and, in partnership with friends (the captain of the Chinese community in Batavia named Li Ya-i and a Wang Wen-hsing), he opened the Li Wang Company with branches in both Deli and Penang to expedite the export of Sumatran products. In a short time, Thio gained sizeable interest in almost all the revenue farms on the Malay side of the Straits of Malacca.[2]

The Dutch program for the development of Sumatra was thwarted from the beginning by the resistance of the Atjehnese Sultanate at the western tip and, as the Dutch army and navy required supplies for their military campaign against Atjeh, Thio was again the provisioner. With so much potential and real influence with the ruling imperialists, he was able to place many of his cronies in important positions as headmen under the Dutch system of using Chinese to supervise Chinese. The Dutch authorities honored him on many occasions and he was able to secure a number of commercial plums. Not only did he receive the opium farm at Atjeh when the trading town was finally subdued, but the European rulers also permitted the overseas Chinese Thio a virtual monopoly of coastal shipping. In 1879, his first steamship, the S.S. *Rajah Kongsee Atjeh* was making a profit all along the west coast and by the mid 1880s his three steamers were said to dominate the area's trade and to be reaping a fabulous profit. It was much more than

coincidence that his vessels flew the Dutch flag. He received a salute when he entered port and Anthony Reid, a leading authority on Anglo-Dutch rivalry in Sumatra during this period, has found that the Dutch authorities even paid the $25,000 ransom when one of the ships, the S.S. *Hok Canton*, was plundered by rebellious Atjehnese in the summer of 1886.[3]

Long after he had shifted his base to Penang and Singapore, Thio still farmed six districts near Batavia for a Dutch limited company. As astounding as it may seem, the *Straits Times* observed that 'the area of all these districts is sixty miles in length by thirty miles in width and is inhabited by over 100,000 men and women'. With at least the foregoing 1,800 square miles of Dutch-owned land under his hand, Thio also owned outright a place called Karatan reported to be eight by ten miles in dimension with as many as 8,000 inhabitants.[4]

By 1895, Thio's steamship business had expanded to the English port of Penang where he started a company with nine more steamers running along the Sumatra and Malay coasts between Penang, Perak and Deli. Shortly before his struggle with German interests, it was widely reported that Li Hung-chang had specifically offered him the management of the China Merchants' Steam Navigation Company.[5] No wonder the Germans decided it was prudent to take Mr Thio's challenge seriously. His career, however, was just getting off the ground, for Thio is the Hokkien rendering of the surname Chang and the Singapore consul of 1895 is none other than Chang Pi-shih.

In March 1902, when the world's great powers were planning the dismemberment of China as a penalty for the inconveniences caused by the Boxers in the north, another overseas Chinese capitalist had become a favorite of the British in Malaya. With Mr Robson, the well-known proprietor and editor of the *Malay Mail*, along as mentor, Loke Yew and his family left Nanyang for a vacation in Europe which included a stop in London for the coronation of the new British monarch.

Born in South China's Kwangtung province, the only son in a family of five children, Loke Yew came to Singapore in 1858 just as the Western penetration of China was gaining momentum. He went to work in a local shop and while still only in his teens managed to save enough to open his own small business. With the capital raised in this concern he began to gamble in the risky but rewarding development of the Malay peninsula's bountiful mineral resources. He was nearly wiped out by a considerable drop in the price of tin on one occasion and had several nearly disastrous early years. Such, however, was the speculative nature of early mining and when luck finally sided with him, Loke Yew made a true fortune. His successful mining endeavors

were complemented by stakes in various revenue farms, land holdings, banking and eventually transportation. At the time of his death in 1917, he was the uncontested financial king in the Federated Malay States.[6]

Upon his return from Europe, Loke Yew was already imitating the life-style of European wealth. He purchased a steam yacht from the governor of German New Guinea and was among the first Chinese to utilize the automobile. Indeed, his wife had been credited with being the very first Straits Chinese lady to ride in an auto having taken her maiden trip in the spring of 1903. Her husband was so impressed by the potential of the horseless carriage that he opened a private motor mail service in partnership with a Britisher named Kester. With a capital of 100,000 local dollars, the two men reportedly purchased fifteen cars of various sizes ranging from five to twenty-five horsepower. One vehicle was said to be able to carry as many as seven first-class passengers at a top speed of twenty miles per hour. The fare for an eighty-three-mile journey was set at $20 and the operation was launched in March 1905 when the governments of the Malay States of Pahang and Selangor awarded a mail contract.[7]

Other transportation interests included shares in the Straits Steamship Company. The newspapers of 1905 also carried news that Towkay Loke Yew had become a large shareholder in the century-old Scottish engineering and shipbuilding firm of Messrs Alexander, Hall and Co. Ltd of Aberdeen.[8] Whether the report is accurate or not is almost irrelevant for the remarkable fact is that the English-speaking population was quite willing to believe that Loke Yew could be an actual owner of an otherwise totally European venture. This recognition of overseas Chinese business ability is starkly contrasted by the almost wholly negative picture the same newspapers painted of Ch'ing China in the early years of the present century.

Loke Yew's greatest fame, however, rested not on his ability to make money (although he was certainly a model overseas Chinese capitalist) but on his love for giving it away. Five wards of Singapore's Tan Tock Seng Chinese Hospital were named in his honor after a $50,000 gift and his estate pledged an equal sum to Raffles College. He gave a Methodist boys' school the land and money to construct a playground and property along with $30,000 cash to build a paupers' home in Kuala Lumpur. The same amount was contributed toward the opening of a technical college for the Federated Malay States. When the miserable state of conditions on Singapore's St John's Island, the quarantine facility for incoming coolies, became a public scandal, it was Loke Yew who embarrassed the lethargic colonial officials into action with the pressure of a $50,000 grant expressly for the improvement of the island immigration station. Almost every charitable and educa-

tional endeavor on the Malay peninsula listed his name near the top of its subscribers. A hundred dollars here and a thousand Straits dollars there helped innumerable projects for the public good to make ends meet.[9]

Loke Yew's philanthropic reputation gained its lasting credentials over 1,000 miles away with his significant participation in the establishment of the University of Hong Kong. He backed the opening of the institution with a $50,000 gift in 1912, reportedly loaned an interest-free half million more and also set up a scholarship trust for poor Chinese boys from the Malay States. His concern for higher education was acknowledged when the University of Hong Kong awarded him its third honorary Doctor of Laws Degree (LL.D.) in 1917 and publicly praised his devotion to education and philanthropy.[10] A bust of Loke Yew stands today in the main hall of the university as a lasting tribute to the man.

C. A. Middleton Smith, one British observer, was so impressed with Loke Yew that he included a special chapter about this millionaire in his book, *The British in China and Eastern Trade* when it was published in 1920. According to Smith, the reason for this chapter, appropriately entitled 'A Chinese Captain of Industry', was simply to prove that China had indeed been able to produce one industrialist of modern stature. After favorably comparing the Southeast Asian resident with the famous Andrew Carnegie, the author concluded that 'because Towkay Loke Yew devoted his astonishing ability and ceaseless industry to the cause of progress . . . his life of industry should be made known outside of his own circle of acquaintances'.[11] The same can be said about several of the gentleman's peers.

Thio Thiau Siat was also included among the earliest supporters of the Hong Kong college. He contributed at least $50,000 of his own in 1912 and, with the aid of the representative of his estate after 1916, has been credited by Brian Harrison, the official historian of the university, with having almost alone kept the Faculty of Arts going in the institution's difficult formative years by supplying working funds in an annual gift. In 1916, the very first Doctor of Laws Honoris Causa granted by the University of Hong Kong was awarded to Thio who was known to the Cantonese speakers present as Cheung Pat Sze.[12]

Years earlier, another overseas Chinese, Foo Choo Choon, was also honored as an 'Eastern Carnegie'.[13] While Loke Yew was still reaching for the top, Foo was already established as the chief mining personality in the Malay States. Foo was born in Fukien in 1860 but his grandfather had emigrated to Nanyang a century earlier and his father had been born in Penang. His father returned to China to undertake classical studies and remained there. He, nevertheless, sent his

China-born son back to Southeast Asia when the youngster reached the age of thirteen. In Penang, Foo had the advantage of living with fairly well-known and established relatives. One uncle was involved in mining and through his help Foo opened his first mine in the town of Taiping when he was only twenty years old. In just a few years he was in a position to marry the daughter of one of the area's most influential leaders. He returned to China for a while but eventually concentrated all his attention on one special Malayan mining project. The endeavor was noteworthy because Foo began the exploitation of tin workings abandoned by others as unprofitable. He consulted with European experts and brought in modern machinery. As a pioneer in mechanized mining, Foo Choo Choon paved the way for the success of other Chinese mining capitalists, but as long as he lived he alone was called the 'tin king'.

As will be discussed, Foo's wealth was matched by philanthropy and community status. He took part in the establishment of Chinese chambers of commerce in several cities and opened hospitals and schools in Penang, the Malay States and back in China. He always assisted poor scholars and, when in China, constructed granaries or otherwise provided relief.[14]

The second honorary graduate of the University of Hong Kong was yet another overseas Chinese millionaire, Chang Hung-nan of Sumatra who earned his academic recognition just before Loke Yew in 1917. Chang, known throughout the Netherlands Indies as the *Majoor* Tjong A Fie, was the highly honored and extremely powerful headman of the Chinese community in Deli. As the administrator of Thio Thiau Siat's estate, he was a man upon whom the trustees quickly bestowed honor.[15]

Chang Hung-nan and his brother Chang Yü-nan (also known as Tjong Yong Hian) were born in Moy Hian county, Kwangtung, and, almost certainly at the urging of their cousin Thio Thiau Siat, followed their successful relative to Sumatra in the late 1870s. The subsequent history of Sumatra was punctuated by their careers and the Dutch openly gave the brothers much of the credit for the island's profitable exploitation. Their Nanyang success story owes its beginning to Thio's patronage. Chang Hung-nan got his start in the management of the Sjarikat Li Wang and both brothers served Thio's vast empire while building up their own identity, acting with the latter capitalist's power of attorney for a good number of years. At an early date, they obtained interests in the various revenue farming operations and earned Dutch respect. In 1884, the elder brother, Yü-nan, was appointed *Luitenant der Chineezen*, a headman of the Deli Chinese, and the next year his younger sibling received a slightly lesser position in Laboen. With this

jump, their own initiative soon sent them ahead. First one and then the other became the undisputed leader of Sumatra's Chinese.[16]

While there were fewer than 4,000 Chinese laborers on the east coast of Sumatra in the year 1870, Chinese coolies were recruited by the thousands in the years thereafter to work mines and farm the large-scale rubber, tobacco and other plantations begun by the Dutch. It is recorded that between 1888 and 1931 some 305,000 more coolies, most of them from Swatow, were recruited and landed in the Deli region.[17] These laborers were indispensable but also aliens requiring the closest supervision and control. The Dutch colonial rulers, lacking the neeessary knowledge of the Chinese language and culture, realized that direct rule of this large immigrant community was impossible and, as had been the case nearly everywhere else in the archipelago, the government chose to avoid unnecessary interference in the day-to-day life of the Chinese.

This pattern of rule had been initiated by the officials of the Dutch East India Company soon after the founding of Batavia in 1619. They found the most expedient way to supervise the Chinese was to appoint leading merchants or influential elders from the Chinese community as 'captains' and 'lieutenants'. As long as these representatives kept order and maintained the expected level of profits for the colonialists, they were left much to their own devices. Although not originally under salary to the Dutch, the Chinese who attained headman status were rewarded for loyal service many times over. The company policy of farming out monopoly rights for opium and wine, gambling and essential foodstuffs naturally helped make the Chinese merchants who held most of the concessions quite wealthy. More times than not, the headman or his intimates controlled the more profitable of the monopoly farms.

As a general rule, the Dutch viewed their Chinese subjects as little more than necessary evils and sometimes with even less charity. They were, consequently, extremely reluctant to offer more than strictly economic rewards to helpful Chinese. For most of its existence, the term 'officer system' was, frankly, a misnomer. With an almost total lack of status in Dutch eyes, headmen were not colonial officials. The only real power the Chinese officers held was by Dutch default and at Dutch pleasure; it meant little in matters European, and the headman outside his own community was usually treated with as much contempt as the lowliest manual laborer. While in factual terms there is no question that the Chinese officers were agents of indirect rule, the Netherlands Indies officialdom was very slow to afford them a corresponding administrative authority or to recognize them formally as indirect rulers. The distinction is not as minute as it might at first appear.

The system designed to oversee the Chinese in the land which is now Indonesia was predicated upon the Dutch assumption that wealthy

Chinese, no doubt just like their European counterparts, were the most influential members of the community and individuals who could be counted on, in usual circumstances, to be conservative and protective of their own vested economic interests. After first naming rich merchants *Luitenant*, *Kapitein* or later *Majoor*, and subsequently by granting these nominal officers even greater economic privileges, the Dutch assumed that Chinese so blessed would somehow see to it that law and order were maintained. The system worked remarkably well in practice until the most successful officers demanded European rights to go with their ranks. Eventually, when the nationalist spark touched Nanyang, the overseas Chinese began to make political demands of their leaders and to turn away from those who too openly served a foreign master.[18]

Like Thio Thiau Siat, his cousins were at the right place at the proverbial right time. Not only were the Dutch pressing their campaign to develop Sumatra, but the entire period ahead, from the time of their arrival to the end of the century, was a notably laissez-faire time in Dutch colonial history. In these years, the ruling power abandoned the somewhat notorious and ultimately unprofitable *cultuur* system which had depended almost exclusively on forced native cultivation of export crops and turned more and more to Western private enterprise. Under a new and liberal policy, European capital was used to develop great estates for the principal export crops such as sugar, tobacco, rubber, timber and the spices. The management of many of these plantations preferred Chinese laborers and, as more and more Chinese workmen were brought in, the success or failure of the Western enterprises themselves became increasingly dependent on the stability of the Chinese working community. The growth of the Chinese population on Sumatra, and on Java as well, placed a heavy burden on the older tradition of indirect rule.

Whereas in centuries past, Chinese in the Netherlands Indies occupied a middle ground between the colonialists and the colonized, taking their cut as goods passed first in one direction and then in the other, economic liberalization gave the most able Chinese an opportunity to become imperialists themselves. As the government had granted revenue farms to enterprising Orientals before, Dutch companies, desiring to expand operations in the colony, turned to Chinese land-development firms such as the one established by Thio Thiau Siat as the obvious contractors.

It is somewhat doubtful that Chinese under contract to European firms can be called great entrepreneurs. The capital investment was not Chinese and the Dutch were surely the innovative spirit behind such projects. But more enterprising individuals like Thio used coop-

eration to amass enough capital to launch their own independent concerns. By 1900, in fact, ownership of many of the smaller estates had passed into Chinese hands, but only a very few individuals were ever able to muster enough capital to overcome, even temporarily, the distinct advantages held by European-based companies in marketing and distribution.[19] One such exception was overseas Chinese capitalist Oei Tiong Ham of Semarang.

In 1903, when Loke Yew was making his first tour of Europe, Oei returned to Semarang after a round-the-world trip. The more traditional Chinese community was, of course, shocked by the fact that Oei came home minus his *queue*, that symbol of subservience to Manchu China; but even more fascinating was the fact that his carriage occupied by his wife and two daughters had won the second prize at a May flower festival somewhere on the European continent.[20] Turn-of-the-century Chinese were not expected to be the toast of Western society, yet one source has also found that this particular tycoon once simultaneously entertained crown princes from Denmark and Greece at his home.[21]

Oei was born in Java, the son of a prosperous China-born merchant who had fled his homeland because of the disorder caused by the Taiping Rebellion in the middle of the nineteenth century. He expanded his inheritance from his father and founded the firm Handel Maatschappij Kian Gwan, a trading company destined to become the most successful Chinese-owned concern in the Netherlands Indies. Even today, over fifty years after his death, his business empire retains branch offices in at least a dozen of the world's leading commercial cities. Oei was well on his way to fame and fortune in 1890 for in that key year he closed out his closest competition and cornered the sugar market, proceeding in the following years to establish himself as the chief sugar merchant as well. In quick succession, and in accord with the usual pattern, he gained control of the opium and other government monopolies up for lease in his area and became *Majoor* of Semarang's Chinese in 1896. As time went by, Oei expanded into the production of other export crops including kapok, rubber, tapioca and tea and set up offices abroad. Strategic Singapore was soon made an auxiliary base of operations and a secondary place of residence. By the end of the first decade of this century, Oei Tiong Ham had gained a controlling interest in the Heap Eng Moh Steamship Company of that city and with this transportation concern added to the smaller Samarang Steamship Navigation Company also in his grasp, he was able to ship his own produce to the Singapore collection point and share in the Java trade.[22]

Like so many other overseas Chinese millionaires, Oei was also known for his great charity. He subscribed to all types of public

undertakings, particularly those connected with education. He once gave $150,000 for the construction of a central hall for Raffles College and was recognized for many generous contributions to the University of Singapore.[23] Oei is, however, probably best remembered as a leading figure in the cause of Chinese nationalism in the islands. He was active in the establishment of pan-Chinese schools intended to bring together overseas residents of varying dialects and home districts and his Kian Gwan Kongsi dominated the Semarang Chinese Chamber of Commerce from the very outset. But, paradoxically, his greatest contribution to the growth of a Chinese common cause may well have been his years of loyal service to the Dutch. It was Oei who placed the first serious strain on the headman system and this he accomplished, not through revolutionary intrigue or revolutionary activity, but simply by being so very successful as a businessman.

The Dutch system of indirect rule was based on the separation, indeed segregation, of the Chinese community. As the present century began, most Chinese were confined to urban areas. Freedom of movement was greatly restricted by a complex system of zoning and internal passports. Before 1911, Chinese were legally required to wear their characteristic dress and to retain their *queues*. Excluded from the privileges available to European businessmen and even the major portion of rights granted to Indonesian natives in the later years of Dutch rule, the Chinese community felt oppressed and discriminated against. While it is only fair to observe that nobody in the islands liked to pay taxes, the ambiguous status of the Chinese made them especially sad to part with their payments. The years of Dutch economic liberalization unquestionably proved extremely prosperous ones for the Chinese; but, in one of those ironies of history, the Hollanders' restrictive rule probably appeared most onerous to those Chinese who had made the greatest progress under it. The newly arrived coolie probably felt secure in an all-Chinese neighborhood; it was the wealthier merchant, the aspiring capitalist who wanted to expand his business, who most resented what he viewed as the unfair trade advantage held by his Dutch competitor. It was in this context that Oei's career stands out. In 1889, the Semarang *Majoor* asked his Dutch lawyer to make an issue of dress and he successfully obtained permission to wear European-style clothing.[24] Once again it was Oei who severed his traditional hairpiece and got away with it. Thus Oei set a disturbing precedent for the headman system.

As other Chinese officers began to build lesser, but nonetheless significant, business concerns they too demanded special status. The Dutch firms which let out land-development contracts to Chinese did not want the activities of their agents curtailed, and more and more of

the successful overseas businessmen turned headman either because of Dutch direct appointment or indirectly by virtue of their own employment of great numbers of laborers. The foundation of the headman system was, however, changing. Additional concessions and contracts were not enough to attract wealthy Chinese for the would-be officers now wanted the prestige and opportunities available to Europeans. Beginning in 1908, Chinese officers – and the group includes a great number of merchants who secured honorary ranks – were granted freedom of travel and residence, trial by European courts and permission to wear a Western-style military uniform with the ornamentation appropriate to the rank. Children of some of these new-style headmen even found it possible to enroll in Dutch schools. Inevitably, a substantial number of these post-reform officers gravitated toward Dutch culture losing touch with the very people they were to lead and inspire.[25]

Lea Williams has rightly shown the ultimate folly of the Dutch tampering with the officer system and traced the role the move played in undermining the headman system for good by alienating the selected leaders from the very community they were expected to supervise and lead. First in one city and then in another, officers were attacked as lackeys of the Dutch until the wiser Chinese in foreign uniform gave only lip-service to the colonial power and aided the interests of pan-Chinese nationalism instead.[26] What has not always been adequately pointed out is that new-found status in European eyes enabled the most capable officer-capitalists to consolidate their own commercial kingdoms often at the expense of the Dutch masters. Oei Tiong Ham's position in Java comes immediately to mind but there is an even more outstanding example of *imperium in imperio* and that is the case of the Chang family in Deli.

As the Chinese community on the island of Sumatra reached for and surpassed the quarter-million mark, the Dutch concept of indirect rule faced another stern test. The old maxim – 'let the Chinese take care of their own affairs' – could no longer be casually applied because disorder among the coolies might have a direct and catastrophic impact on the whole economic plan for the island. Fortunately for the Dutch authorities, Chang Yü-nan served faithfully under ten residents, and his brother, Hung-nan, continued the tradition. Building upon Chang Pi-shih's commercial base, the brothers became the wealthiest Chinese on Sumatra. When Chang Yü-nan died in 1911, his younger sibling, then a *Kapitein* himself, was the natural replacement.

Chang Hung-nan had passed much of his career in the shadow of his brother and his cousin, always a step behind Yü-nan in Dutch rank and listed last whenever the trio subscribed to a charitable cause. He was,

nevertheless, a Dutch favorite all along and clearly groomed to lead the Chinese. He stood just behind his brother at Medan first as a *Luitenant* in 1893 and as *Kapitein* after 1905. The Dutch awarded him a gold star in 1904 and, with the first meager attempts at permitting representative government, named him to the committee of the Cultuur Raad in 1906 and the Gemente Raad three years later. Shortly after he assumed his late brother's title, the Dutch took the considerable step of decorating him with the order of *Oranje Nassau.*[27]

While the Dutch system had always implicitly encouraged the growth of Chinese kingpins who frequently ruled their districts with a firm, if legally unrecognized hand, the size of the Chinese population on Sumatra, a fundamental Dutch dependence on coolie labor and a substantial Dutch faith in the reliability of Chang Hung-nan combined to give this overseas Chinese leader unheard-of power and prestige. No less an authority than A. G. De Bruin's semi-official *De Chineezen ter Oostkust van Sumatra* (the title needs no translation) credits the Chang brothers for their great loyalty and notes the almost incredible energy, far-sightedness and brilliance with which Chang Hung-nan, in particular, acted. The work goes on to praise the fact that the *Majoor* successfully kept in rein the activities of Sun Yat-sen and his revolutionary party which clearly pleased the Dutch authorities.[28] Chang Hung-nan truly made a striking picture in his Dutch uniform bristling with medals.

Business ability seems to have run in the family. The firm Chong Lee and Company was founded by the pair and soon became the leading Chinese trading concern in Medan. Perhaps the most significant project undertaken by the Chang brothers was the Deli Bank begun in 1907. This enterprise was the first well-capitalized and Western-style Chinese banking operation on the island. It filled a great gap in more traditional overseas Chinese business practices and, for a number of years, made it possible for Chinese planters to compete on at least a small scale with the mammoth enterprises of European origin. The bank played a dominant role in community life and, with three Changs on the board of directors, reinforced headman control. In addition to Chang Yü-nan and Chang Hung-nan, Chang Pi-shih was, not unexpectedly, the shareholder–director behind the project and its most generous backer.[29]

The Chang hold on Medan was further strengthened after 1911 by the appointment of Chang Yü-nan's son, Pu-ch'ing, as Chinese consul general for Sumatra. From 1911 to 1921, for an entire decade, almost nothing was impossible for the ruling dynasty and the reigning *Majoor* was reportedly known as the 'Medan King'.[30] Less gracious observers probably viewed the Chang family position as a 'dictatorship' and there

was much to back the charge. The conditions under which contract laborers worked in Sumatra were never good and at times the situation was intolerable. One Western critic described the whole Deli region as a huge open-air prison. The opening of Sumatra was to a very large degree the work of indentured laborers. Contracts were strictly enforced and a coolie who transgressed the fine print or otherwise made a nuisance of himself was subject to penal action. The coolie who broke his contract and ran away was hunted down, arrested by the authorities and returned to his employer. Even the many workers who fulfilled the conditions of their original servitude and achieved the status of free laborers were often forced to sign new and not much more advantageous agreements in order to find work.[31]

In the early 1880s, the government of the Straits Settlements (Singapore, Penang and Malacca) intervened in the coolie trade and charged the Deli planters with a number of improprieties including the repudiation of contracts made by their agents in Singapore. As far as the British could control transit laborers they influenced events in Sumatra, but it was not until 1904 that the Dutch government took steps to curb the many abuses on its own soil by establishing a labor inspectorate and by enacting some rules and regulations to protect immigrant workers. Even then enforcement was difficult and Chinese planters or managers were probably greater offenders, at times, than their European competitors.[32]

There can be no question that the Changs played a crucial role in the recruitment and control of thousands of Chinese workers but, in fairness, they were benevolent despots. When the government and Deli Planters Committee finally attempted to protect the coolies, the Changs were right there drafting and implementing the new regulations.[33] The brothers tempered their almost absolute power with an awareness of the social responsibilities they had as headmen. The years of Chang dominance were, therefore, characterized by humanity and generosity. A hospital for the poor, the first Chinese school, a cemetery, parks and temples were all built by the ruling family. There was probably no area concerning public health and welfare in which the headmen did not have a hand and they even constructed a mosque for the Moslem Malays and Javanese. It could perhaps be argued that philanthropy was merely a means of consolidating leadership but the Changs subscribed where local patronage and influence were not at stake, building roads, bridges, schools and hospitals throughout South China.[34]

One of the other reasons why the Chang power base was so secure was the fact that its roots extended outside of the Netherlands Indies across the Straits of Malacca to British-ruled Penang. Chang Yü-nan

and Chang Hung-nan, through strategic marriages and helped by their relationship to Chang Pi-shih, gained great social and economic leverage in Penang. Other leaders of the Chinese in Sumatra also split their power base between the two rival colonies.

A fourth founding director of the Deli Bank, Hsieh Yung-kuang (known locally as Tjia Tjoen Sen), was born in the Dutch possessions and rose to the rank of *Kapitein* of the Chinese at Atjeh. After investing in the opium monopoly there and in Medan, he received a gold star for loyal service to the Dutch. He moved to Penang around 1896 where he joined Chang Pi-shih and other leading capitalists in the Penang opium farm. A few years later he again joined forces with Chang this time to start a mining company with the famous Loke Yew which led to the founding of the mining town of Bentong. Eventually, his son married Chang Yü-nan's eldest daughter and the corporate bonds between the two families were tightened.[35]

Khoo Cheow Tiong, who served as a fifth founding director of the bank in Sumatra, was born in Penang of a fairly well-to-do family. After working in Chinese firms in Penang, Perak and all along the east coast of Sumatra, he married the daughter of a leading rice merchant in Malacca and joined the Penang opium farm syndicate which then included Hsieh and Chang Pi-shih. He never lost interest in Sumatra and was involved at one time or another with the revenue farms of Deli, Asahan and Bengkalis. As early as 1889, he had been made a *kapitein titular* in Asahan and he too received a gold star for his loyalty. Khoo retired to Penang in 1904 three years before backing the new Deli Bank. In Penang he added to the prestige of his family and became a model citizen and wealthy merchant. He acted as a justice of the peace and when the First World War broke out, he donated funds for the construction of a reconnaissance plane, dubbed 'Malaya N. 15', and attained considerable fame.[36]

Oei Tiong Ham's use of Singapore as well as Chang Pi-shih's construction of his business base at Penang have already been noted. Still other leading figures in the Dutch territories operated as if international boundaries did not exist. Wee Leong Tan, for example, was an opium farmer in Bengkalis and an honorary headman (both captain and major) who was favored with a gold medal and also inducted into a Dutch imperial order. When Wee established a shipping business, however, he incorporated in Singapore and based his fleet there. Three of his seven sons also held titles on the east coast of Sumatra.[37] There were a number of other Chinese merchants and firms engaged in coastal trade with the Netherlands Indies around the turn of the century and it can be assumed that many of these ingratiated themselves with the Dutch authorities in one way or

another. It is unlikely that the overlapping character of the community power structures of the two rival colonies was well received by the ruling Europeans, but there is almost no evidence of any concerted effort to limit the free movement of Chinese elites, particularly between Sumatra and Penang, during the years under study.

Produce and capital were, however, different matters. The rivalry between Penang and Sumatra was often intense. During the early years, almost all of the east coast's products were handled through Penang but the Dutch spared no effort in building up Atjeh as an international port so as to by-pass the British middleman. First one government and then the other passed ordinances intended to reduce the other side's profits and each step affected Chinese traders. In October 1903, the British settlements introduced a new Straits currency and prohibited its export while simultaneously excluding Mexican silver and British trade dollars. The Dutch retaliated by prohibiting the import of the new Straits currency and the Chinese spice trade with Sumatra which had depended on the free use of silver faced virtual extinction. The crisis came to a head in November when one of Chang Pi-shih's ships, the S.S. *Pegu*, was seized upon its arrival from Atjeh by the Penang authorities who found 48,000 illegal Straits dollars on board.[38]

Despite commercial obstacles, many Chinese continued to divide their personalities and fortunes between the two empires. For at least twenty-five years (from 1890 to 1915) no list of Penang's top ten Chinese leaders excluded the Chang or Hsieh family. When a Chinese merchant association was organized in 1903, it was no surprise that it protested the confiscation of Chang Pi-shih's ship as one of its very first official acts.[39] Both families were leaders in the establishment of hospitals and schools and a survey of the Chinese-language press finds their names on almost every charitable subscription list. Chang Pi-shih even gave a clock valued at $1,000 to St Xavier's Institute and the same amount to St John's Institute in Kuala Lumpur.[40]

For the most part, the Chinese under British rule enjoyed a greater economic and social freedom than they did in the Netherlands Indies. There were no zones or passes. From an early date, Chinese received relatively equal protection before the law, particularly in commercial matters. Education in English was also made available to a select few as early as the 1840s in Singapore. Although there never was any doubt that the European population dominated society and that the British ruled, the Chinese of the Straits Settlements were given some representation in municipal government. From the closing years of the last century an English-educated professional class emerged and attained considerable social recognition. There was discrimination but when

compared to traditional China or life under the Dutch, Singapore and Penang were remarkably open societies and this fact helps explain why the wealthy Chinese in nearby Sumatra eagerly sought protection under the Union Jack.[41]

The Chinese situation during the first years of British rule was analogous to the experience in the Netherlands Indies. After the founding of Penang in 1786, the Dutch headman system (which had in fact been patterned after that employed in the Portuguese rule of Malacca in the sixteenth century) was formally adopted. The Chinese officers were expected to police the Chinese community and continued to enforce justice until 1808 when their authority was removed and transferred to the Recorder's Court. The idea of using Chinese to rule Chinese was also tried for a short time in Singapore but by 1825 the headmen there were also stripped of all authority. But the absence of legal power, as had been the case under the Dutch, did not destroy interest in the headman concept. For the better part of the century, outstanding individuals were given informal leadership positions in Singapore, Malacca and Penang. Influential Britishers nevertheless continued to advocate the full-scale implementation of the Dutch plan including districting, particularly after bloody communal riots broke out in the 1870s, and there is some reason to suspect that government still regarded the first elected Chinese members of the legislative council as headmen.

The *kapitan* system (named after the Portuguese rather than the Dutch word) had a much more glorious history under the traditional Malay sultans and, indeed, it was the power Chinese leaders attained that helped prompt final British intervention in peninsular affairs. While there is a long history of relations between the Malay kings and China and some knowledge of a few anti-Manchu supporters of the Ming dynasty who apparently trickled south in search of refuge after 1644, Chinese did not immigrate in numbers to the interior until permanent European settlements had been established along the coast. Some of the early *kapitans* appointed by the reigning monarchs of the tiny Malay states appear to have been extremely loyal and frequently occupied trusted positions at court. When the northwestern states of Kedah and Perlis were still tributaries of Siam, it was not uncommon for the Chinese leader to receive an additional title or sometimes even a seal or sword of authority from the Thai king as well. When relations were strained, there were instances when *kapitans* helped lead the Malay resistance.[42]

Social control was the prime function of headmen, but *kapitans* also took on economic importance. In a pattern reminiscent of both traditional China and the Netherlands Indies, licensed monopoly farms

were established and the right to produce opium, rice, salt, gambier, tobacco, spirits and other privileges including, at times, the collection of taxes and duties. The system provided the sultans with needed revenue and gave loyal Chinese an opportunity to become rather wealthy. The arrival of European traders increased the importance of these enterprises and furthered the development of the peninsula. The prosperity of the urban settlements attracted the poor of South China; the lure of the Malay countryside after 1850 drew a steady stream of Chinese out of Penang and Singapore into the tropical jungle. In Johore, the state adjacent to Singapore, increasing numbers of Chinese settled on the land to plant pepper and gambier. At first the sultan issued permits and appointed headmen to supervise the new communities awarding them monopolies over opium, spirits, gambling and pawnbroking. In later years, large numbers of Chinese simply squatted in the countryside and a powerful clique of merchants controlled the market for Johore's produce. Discovery of tin, particularly in the state of Perak, created a demand for Chinese labor, and more and more Chinese moved inland in search of employment and riches. The original mines were also developed by authorized Chinese but as new mining camps appeared overnight and the alien population exploded, local chieftains became political powers in their own right.

The source of this localized power was the secret society. It is reported that the earliest known *kapitan* in Kedah was a traditional Chinese scholar who, having opposed Manchu rule in China in the early part of the eighteenth century, fled south with the slogan: 'Overthrow the Manchus, restore the Ming.' Clandestine anti-government societies have had a long history in China. On a few occasions, the ruling power was actually threatened but, for the greater part of Chinese history, these societies were more local in character. Surrounding themselves with elaborate rituals and high moral principles, the peasant members were rarely a force to be reckoned with except when they were driven by circumstances to organize a sort of vigilante committee to counteract the excesses of the local gentry. When Chinese immigrants suddenly found themselves gathered together in Southeast Asia, often without regard to home district, village or dialect, they naturally searched their past for an instrument of self-government. Wherever they went the immigrants organized themselves for protection and order. The greater the lack of colonial or native authority, the greater the need for self-policing; the more oppressive outside forces became, the greater the necessity for cooperative action. The notion of headman control and the reality of the secret society inevitably met.

The growth of societies eventually led to factional rivalries over tin deposits and revenue farms in the Malay territories. A British refusal to

interfere in the affairs of these states until the 1870s contributed to the power of societies but even the directly governed Straits Settlements were faced by a pervasive and difficult problem particularly when the clandestine organizations began to turn to clearly criminal pursuits. Societies were not limited by geographical lines, so a branch in Perak, for example, did not develop independent of its counterpart sect in Penang or Singapore. In fact, the leadership frequently merged and there was a striking urban–rural continuity. Most of the capital for mining operations in Malaya was raised by Chinese leaders in Penang and channeled through society operatives in the hinterland. Rival groups consequently alternated battlefields. First they would compete to enlist merchant support and assess membership dues and when this was not possible they would extort involuntary contributions through the threat of terror. Then they would continue the struggle inland, contesting for the exclusive possession of a rich mining spot or the sultan's favor. For a time virtually all capital investments made by Chinese in the Malay states came through the secret society route and, as a result, the prototype capitalists were the established headmen or their business partners.[43]

Probably the best known example was *Kapitan* Chung Keng Kwee, popularly called Ah Quee. Born in Kwangtung, Chung left home at the age of twenty to join his father and older brother who had already settled in Perak. There is little known about his early career, but by 1860 he controlled both the Penang-based Hai San triad society and the tin-fields with which it was linked. The Hai Sans had many rivals but the longest and greatest struggle was with the Ghee Hin triad society which shared much of Penang and Perak. Undisguised warfare between these two groups was bloody, vicious and prolonged. At times the scale of conflict enlarged to a point where the considerable wealth of each treasury was converted into war chests and used to construct battle junks and to make weapons. The leader of the Ghee Hins at a crucial stage in the struggle, Chin Ah Yam, pressed the attack and after initial victories encountered several devastating setbacks. The conflict might have gone on indefinitely if secret-society warfare had not gotten intertwined with a succession struggle within the overshadowed Malay aristocracy. With Chinese warriors allied on opposite sides and the coast of Perak blockaded by society vessels, the British government intervened in late 1873.

This is certainly not the place to discuss the intricate details of Malay history, but the outcome of intervention in Perak was the introduction of a system of British residents who took over political affairs. For our purposes, however, the important fact is that the British forced the rival Chinese headmen to conclude a peace agreement. While true

peace did not follow forthwith, the British plan to pacify Perak ultimately had a certain secret-society flavor of its own. In September 1877 the British Resident established an advisory state council with six members, four Malays and two Chinese. The two Chinese, however, were none other than the old rivals Chung Keng Kwee (Ah Quee) and Chin Ah Yam. The state was divided between the two societies for a while but gradually, after 1880, the tin-mines came under Hai San control.

One important and not always discussed consequence of British intervention was the paradoxical legitimacy English rule gave to the *kapitan* system and the secret-society organs that stood behind it. While the political authority and power of headmen rapidly decreased after the British became involved, the economic status of the *kapitans*, protected by the extension of Western law to the interior, made a remarkable upswing. Both Chin Ah Yam and Chung Keng Kwee continued to be licensees of Perak revenue farms. With the old rivalries no longer exhausting resources, the *kapitans* were able to utilize the organizational power of societies for personal business advantage. The really fascinating fact, however, is the speed with which society headmen foresaw the shift to British dominance and jumped on the bandwagon. Before his death in 1899, *Kapitan* Chin managed to visit England. Returning to the original example, Chung Keng Kwee also demonstrated an almost uncanny ability to seize new opportunities and grasp the drift of history. He saw to it that his fourth son, Chung Thye Phin, received an English education at Penang's St Xavier's Institute. When the famous Ah Quee died in 1901, his son took over the management of his father's concerns.[44]

THE MOVEMENT TOWARD ACCULTURATION

There are always dangers inherent in generalization but the trend that emerged was unmistakable. As merchant families in traditional China had sought bureaucratic positions, successful overseas Chinese within the sphere of British rule or influence assigned the task of fathoming the Western commercial spirit to at least one son, and sent him to English-language schools. As might be anticipated, the sons of the English educated tended to follow in their fathers' footsteps and, gradually, a small but influential Anglicized group appeared within the fraction of the community that was local-born. Certainly not all, not even a majority, of the Straits-born Chinese adopted Western manners and dress and, as will be discussed, cultural change was still slow. Even those who did look West were never completely accepted into European social circles nor did they break off all ties with their own

community. Yet the emergence of a group of Christian Chinese, English educated, loyal to the British crown and characteristically modern in outlook, was apparent to all observers by August 1900 when a Straits Chinese British Association was established in Singapore. The four outstanding leaders of this organization were Song Ong Siang, Lim Boon Keng, Tan Jiak Kim and Seah Leang Seah.

Unquestionably the most Anglicized member of the group was Song Ong Siang. His father, Song Hoot Kiam, had been a student of the famed Sinologist, James Legge, first in Malacca and subsequently in Hong Kong in the early 1840s. When Legge, who gained great fame as a pioneer translator of the Chinese classics, returned to Britain on furlough in 1845, he took several of his favorite students along with him. Among these was Song Ong Siang's father who was presented to the queen during his two-year visit to the British Isles. The senior Song returned to Singapore a dedicated Christian, fluent in English, and joined the P. & O. Steamship Company as a cashier. He served the firm in this capacity for nearly fifty years enjoying a comfortable but not wealthy life.[45] If the father was a convert to a Western life-style, his son, born into an English-speaking Christian household, can only be described as an Anglophile.

Song Ong Siang was sent to Raffles Institution in 1871 and ultimately received a law degree from Cambridge University in 1893. He organized a law firm with a British partner upon his return to Singapore. He served for many years as the president of the Chinese Christian Association and helped form a volunteer reserve unit of the British army.[46]

The second Anglicized Chinese of note was Dr Lim Boon Keng. His father and grandfather before him had been involved in the Johore opium monopoly. Ironically, however, Lim was to distinguish himself as an anti-opium crusader. Together with Song Ong Siang, he was at the very forefront of modernization within the Singapore Chinese community. He received advanced degrees from Edinburgh University and set up his medical practice in Singapore. Lim was a Christian, and served as a Justice of the Peace and as a member of the Legislative Council. He, too, joined the volunteer army company when it was organized, traveled to the coronation in 1902 and displayed unquestionable loyalty to the colonial power.[47] But, without negating this loyalty, Lim Boon Keng also led in the creation of overseas Chinese nationalistic feelings.

Lim and Song launched an English-language quarterly, the *Straits Chinese Magazine*, in 1897, to promote a number of moral, social and educational reforms. Although the circulation was, of course, very limited, the publication helped stimulate the interest of Anglicized

Chinese in their ancestral homeland and things Chinese. From 1897 to 1907, during the journal's ten years of effort, there was a most remarkable affinity between the English educated, the merchants and the working class. It is truly a paradox of history that the founders of a Confucianist revival movement in Singapore, a movement which was to spread to the Netherlands Indies, were not traditional scholars but two young Christians, Lim and Song.

Dr Lim had displayed more than a passing interest in Confucian thought for some time when, joined by his friend, he established a Confucian religious society, the Khong Kauw Hwe, in 1898. It must not be assumed that the group intended the religious conversion of its founders. Confucianism in traditional China was never a religion in the strict sense with a firm belief in the supernatural. It was more a philosophy of personal and social conduct. Lim and Song were attracted to classical teachings, in large measure, because Confucianism offered a convenient vehicle for promoting their own Christian viewpoint and, not insignificantly, presented a means of justifying their reformist ideals among the local Chinese population. China scholars will have already noted the significance of the date 1898, for the key year embraced the hundred days' reform effort in Peking when, for a brief period, K'ang Yu-wei and his disciples appeared to be on the verge of initiating a wide-ranging series of reforms in China with imperial blessing and also based on a reinterpretation of Confucian thought. Activities in China most assuredly influenced events in Singapore, but while Lim was unquestionably an admirer of K'ang, having helped shield the exiled reformer from his enemies when he arrived in the colony in early 1900, local conditions and Christian pedagogical considerations also influenced Singapore's Confucian revival.[48]

Four years before the establishment of the Confucian society and six years before the founding of the Straits Chinese British Association, Lim and Song took part in a revealing public debate. In March 1894, the Chinese Christian Debating Society discussed the resolution 'That the Straits Chinese have not advanced beyond their ancestors'. Dr Lim read a paper saying that the Chinese in Singapore had deteriorated morally when compared to their brothers back in China. The reason for this, according to Lim, was the Singapore Chinese relationship with '*orang puteh*', whitemen. The Straits Chinese had turned their backs on their native tongue and literature. In their rush to dress and act as Europeans, they had neglected moral principles and adopted money-making as their chief aim in life. The doctor wore a flowing pale blue traditional scholar's garment and sat next to Song Ong Siang who, characteristically, wore Western garb. Ultimately, the resolution was carried by a majority of one.[49]

To a certain extent, the disparity in dress and the actual debate may well have been contrived. Lim was known for theatrical stunts. When reporters once asked him about the whereabouts of the famous reformer K'ang Yu-wei in 1900, the overseas Chinese doctor answered in largely nonsensical Latin phrases. Several years later, he shocked Singapore when he gave a controversial lecture entitled 'The Devil as a benefactor to mankind'.[50] Nevertheless, the great debate of 1894 was still quite symbolic and the uneasiness with which the Anglicized Chinese viewed the acquisitive side of Western civilization was very real. For the Chinese community as a whole, unable to tear itself from the Chinese tradition, the entire question of the relationship between wealth and power was of even greater importance.

2

Environment and Chinese values

CONFLICT AND CONSENSUS

While it is true that the Anglicization process produced its zealots, including one Chinese British subject who circulated a petition in 1900 volunteering Straits Chinese service against the Boxer Uprising in China, the outstanding feature of the Singapore and Penang Chinese communities from about 1890 to 1900 was the cooperation that existed between the English-educated local-born and the more conservative China-born immigrants. By the turn of the century, there were over 160,000 Chinese in the city of Singapore alone and the growth of the population together with the political debate in China and the modernizing impulse within the Straits Chinese British Association made Singapore a complex sociological melting pot and enabled the Chinese community to select its leadership from an increasingly wider range of viewpoints. The factionalism of the Chinese Revolution and occasional violence reached Singapore after 1908 and caused considerable polarization in Chinatown, but as a general rule, the first decade of this century was characterized by a spirit of cooperation for the public good.

At the heart of the problem of selecting leaders from such a wide field were the old problems of status, education and material well-being. As the Lim–Song debate underscored, all sections of the Singapore Chinese body were acutely aware of the fact that their success abroad depended to a greater or lesser extent upon the degree to which they turned their backs on tradition. All the Chinese immigrants had abdicated direct responsibilities to family and ancestors at home by the very act of their southern sojourn. That the desire to return to China was kept kindled and that many Nanyang Chinese continued to send money to support families geographically abandoned helped assuage the black marks, but as more Chinese took local wives or brought a bride from home and established deeper roots, the lure of British culture increased at the expense of the classical heritage. The

true road to economic prosperity was open to those who undertook commercial endeavors, but merchandizing, too, tended to go against the grain of tradition. Those with a good command of spoken English were sought after by both European- and Chinese-owned firms, but written English took years to master and required a deeper immersion in Western ways.

Referring to the leadership of the Singapore and Malaya Chinese communities, Wang Gungwu has noted that there were, broadly speaking, only two meaningful societal divisions: 'merchants and those who aspired to be merchants'.[1] The above generalization can be applied to the other Nanyang Chinese with a clear conscience for the primacy of wealth through commerce effectively displaced the traditional Chinese differentiations between scholars and non-scholars, officials and aspiring officials. In the communities abroad, social status was largely a function of wealth.[2] But, as some scholars have observed, the speculative and risky nature of mining, revenue farming, trade in export commodities on the world market and, indeed, nineteenth-century shipping made and broke fortunes overnight and offered little guarantee of a permanent spot at the uppermost rung of the social ladder.[3]

East and West, as they met in China, produced a clash of basic values about which countless words have been written. Much has also been said about China's reluctance to open her doors to foreign trade and of the results which occurred once the foreign powers applied force to pry open the lid and gain access to the interior. It has generally been observed by Western and Chinese commentators alike that the ultimate inability of traditional Chinese political and social institutions to withstand the challenge from without was, aside from the imbalance of military might so apparent at the outset, due to the absence of certain basic presuppositions about the nature of man and society then present in the West. Conventional wisdom has it that the very heart of China's difficulty in meeting the demands of modernization was her traditional unwillingness to accept the acquisition of wealth as a social end in itself underscored by the limitations placed on private initiative by the economy. The very existence of successful overseas Chinese entrepreneurs now raises another issue: the role of environmental change and opportunity in transforming the old value structure.

It was not that the people of old China were completely uninterested in making money or the finer things in life that the accumulation of riches could bring. The metaphysical strain in Chinese culture never went so far as to dominate the practical. There was a time when Buddhist monks ran pawnshops and the most unworldly Taoist sages not infrequently practiced alchemy. It would be totally inaccurate to

suggest that capitalism never developed in China or that the profit motive never played its due part in interpersonal relations. Merchants, some of them very prosperous, have been on the China scene since antiquity, for what society can get along without its tradesmen? Skilled artisans have practiced their crafts at home and in their shops for nearly as long, and the nucleus of an urban commercial class has existed since at least the tenth century and periodically shown signs of expansion. But, as a rule, Chinese merchants of centuries past were usually satisfied to gather only enough surplus capital to purchase land and to afford the leisure time required to study the traditional teachings and to prepare for a career as an official. Even those merchants who held fast to their business endeavors or flaunted their opulence usually saw to it that their sons followed another calling, for true social prestige was to be found only in the bureaucratic area.

The ideological bias of Confucian theory stressed the virtue of agricultural work and forever belittled the importance of craftsmen and merchants. While there is no question that this classical scorn for commerce remained a basic cornerstone of socio-political attitudes, it is not in itself enough to explain the merchant's fate for, over the centuries, merchants as a necessary but unappreciated group actually joined forces with the officialdom in a strangely paradoxical, almost symbiotic, relationship. The functional center of this crucial relationship was intimately connected to the factual bearing of education and wealth on power and status.

The introduction of a system of literary examinations and civil service considerations to recruit officials, coupled with traditional Confucian glorification of the 'superior man', helped establish education as the primary determinant of high social standing. Although it was probably easier for the wealthy to become educated and, as will be seen, there were periods when erstwhile merchants were able to purchase degrees and bureaucratic rank, material possessions alone provided little in the way of social prestige. The average scholar-official, however, had wealth to go with his education, the idealistic image of the non-materialistic sage notwithstanding. The fact that the model gentleman looked upon commercial activities with great disdain in no way meant that he was not interested in taking a share of its profits.

Relations between officials and merchants were characterized by the near absolute dominance of the former group over the latter. Those engaged in commercial activities paid dearly for the privilege of pursuing their chosen social roles not only in the abstract sense of moral condemnation, but also in kind. Merchants paid high taxes and licensing fees and their travel and trade were often subject to special

bureaucratic restrictions. Perhaps the greatest restraint on their business pursuits was the conspicuous absence of a codified and predictable system of commercial law. Ethics alone were not always enough to insure ethical conduct. Civil proceedings were costly and the outcome all too often hinged on bribery. Businessmen naturally came into frequent contact with the bureaucracy and were particularly subject to the assessment of 'customary fees' or 'tea money', little tokens for special consideration which had a way of becoming obligatory payments for any service at all. The size of these contributions similarly tended to grow with the seriousness of the matter. With the literati holding a monopoly of social prestige and political power, the merchant class was in a particularly exposed position. Even in the best of times, a little squeeze by magistrates and police was expected, for government salaries and allowances were seldom sufficient to cover expenditures. At other times, however, when the Confucian apologist argued that the dynasty was in a state of spiritual decay, large-scale corruption was the norm for, and indeed the only term for, social intercourse between the ruling and trading classes.[4]

For all that the traditional system condemned those who would buy and sell for a living, the government did not hesitate to enter into the production and distribution of essential items itself or to join hands with successful merchants to monopolize entire sections of the economy. It is easy to visualize long-nailed mandarins using power and deprivation to keep the merchant class down, but the reality was more complicated than that even if the results may have been much the same. One of the more perplexing paradoxes of Chinese history is, in fact, the proclivity of China's rulers to convert bureaucrats into businessmen and to select a small group of merchants for special favors.

In a real sense, business activity in traditional China can be described as 'bureaucratic capitalism'.[5] Poorer entrepreneurs constantly found the fruits of their occupation moving from their purses into the hands of minor officials. Merchants who were more successful were often able to ally themselves with higher officials in a form of client-capitalism usually free from petty extortion but, since the stakes were so much higher, the cost of protection jumped accordingly. Some officials became involved in foreign trade by virtue of postings on the frontier. Other bureaucrats were assigned to supervise monopolies or merchant activities and, consequently, played a substantial if meddling role in commerce. The land-owning literati, generally referred to as the gentry class in a misleading comparison with the Western experience, often abused their position to manipulate the tax structure.[6] Wealthy landholders were the major reservoir of surplus rural capital and the

natural bankers to whom peasants turned when in need. Investment in land was, in fact, the surest way to generate a comfortable living.

As a rule Chinese businessmen fell into two basic groups – outsiders and insiders. Those with direct access to the administrative machinery of state used their position to tax and exploit commerce. Bureaucratic-capitalists were not exclusively officials for there were private individuals who ran state enterprises and quite openly attached themselves to the officialdom either through outright bribery or the more sophisticated means of marriage. The overwhelming majority of merchants were, however, excluded from power and prestige. It has been found that even the wealthy salt merchants keenly felt their lack of social status and tried to make up for what they lacked in prestige with ostentatious displays of wealth and voluntary contributions to the state treasury.[7] Merchants therefore became frantic status-seekers; the greatest ambition of the outsiders was to get inside. Since possession of the qualifications for office and the opportunity to amass a large fortune were so synonymous, merchants who desired greater profits sought office first. This basic desire to be somebody else, to gain respectability through education and bureaucratic service, characterized the commercial spirit of China.

The smallest merchants and craftsmen were barely able to make a living and generally picked up their trade when it became impossible to live off the land. Commerce was often a last resort for the multitude but, paradoxically, it was the one fairly dependable avenue for upward social mobility. Although merchants were occasionally prohibited from taking part in examinations, some education was almost always available to those of financial means. Education naturally served to broaden business horizons and even if the father failed in his attempts to receive a lower literary degree, wealth and leisure time often improved the chances of his sons. One out of a hundred families, more likely one out of a thousand, inched their way upward.[8]

There is yet another dimension to the relationship between wealth and status in traditional China. From time to time, most notably toward the end of the final Chinese dynasty, irregular entry into official ranks became increasingly possible. The sale of degrees and titles became a common practice from the middle of the nineteenth century. While most of the rewards were honorary, and did not ordinarily entitle the holder to an actual bureaucratic appointment, the distinction between the rich traders and gentry became even more clouded.

As a rule, Chinese merchants of centuries past diverted their profits to landownership and the attainment of official rank and, almost as if in self-regulation, the more prosperous of them forswore the roles which had served them so well materially, preferring to avoid the

squeeze and often capricious regulation of officialdom by joining it themselves. In short, the traditional system urged successful businessmen to stop their business and, by taking part in the bureaucratic management of China's resources, to obtain merchant profits without the risks and humiliation of merchandizing. The cultural pressure to conform was underscored by political and economic realities, but it can be a little misleading to write only of the dominant influence of Confucian orthodoxy.

China has always been a multi-valued society. Despite the amazing overall homogeneity of Chinese civilization, and the consistent utilization of literati services by her rulers, China has embraced many cultural cross-currents and displayed a striking ability to tolerate contradictory beliefs and practices. The bureaucratic ethic may have dominated the Chinese historical experience but it was never the only cultural influence. Peasants observed their own local customs and labored in one world while paying tribute to another. The same is true of the merchant class.

At one end of the scale merchants were only peasants with something to sell. At the opposite end, they were educated landowners merely a step away from honor and prestige. The great majority of merchants, however, found themselves living in urban areas somewhat isolated from their more rustic brethren. They ate grain from the countryside and paid their dues to the bureaucratic tradition but, in their day-to-day lives, also developed a sub-culture of their own. In two periods of Chinese history this commercial ethic threatened to disrupt the *status quo.* In the first instance, Sung China witnessed the beginnings of a commercial revolution but then saw further growth of private capitalism inhibited by a combination of social and political factors. In the second case, the Ch'ing dynasty crumbled before the commercial class fully expressed itself.

In a still-controversial argument, the famous German sociologist, Max Weber, concluded that the failure of industrial capitalism to develop in traditional China was traceable not only to legal, bureaucratic and family restrictions but to the absence of a 'particular mentality'.[9] The attitude the theorist had in mind was clearly the Protestant ethic exemplified by Calvinist teachings about the moral virtue of hard work and monetary success. The precise relationship between religion and the rise of capitalism in Western Europe is still debatable but, in attempting to write universal history, Weber happened upon a truism about the Chinese experience: no matter what the reason, the high mark of Sung inventiveness was never surpassed and the commercial class did not take an innovative stance until the West arrived as catalyst. Although China never lacked businessmen or fortunes, indi-

vidual enterprise, held back by the self-limiting size of the family, was rarely enough to shake the system. The entrepreneur, the modernizing man with both capital and innovative inclinations, seldom raised his head and when he did the bureaucracy co-opted his discovery, dampened his spirit with the promise of prestige and converted technological advance into state treasure.

The absence of a scholar-official class in Southeast Asia open to Chinese participation made the search for wealth and power decidedly different in Nanyang. Although headmen received some special privileges through late Dutch reforms and Chinese under British rule did serve as government clerks and functionaries and occasionally attained honorific posts as justices of the peace, with some individuals actually attaining stature with token representation on legislative or advisory bodies, the Chinese abroad in colonial Southeast Asia were really excluded from practical political power. Without bureaucratic leverage, and subjected to the standardized principles of Western law and administration, the Chinese were also without traditional gentry and scholar-official leadership. They consequently turned to their most successful brothers for leadership and protection and these individuals were, of course, merchants.

It is quite misleading, however, to conclude that the god of wealth was the only influential spirit for, like their ancestors in China, many overseas Chinese attempted to convert financial assets into a more acceptable asset and through philanthropy and exemplary behavior conform to the ideal of a 'gentleman-merchant'. Just as many of the West's industrial giants tried to mask profits with cultural refinements, charity and support of education, the overseas Chinese community leaders at the turn of the century also found it necessary to act properly in the public eye. The pressure to share wealth with relatives and home villagers increased with financial success as the parallel commandment to support less fortunate clansmen or neighbors already residing in the tropics also took on importance.

The penchant of successful overseas Chinese to donate to charity has been truly phenomenal. We have already noted a few of the undertakings supported by those of tycoon status, but even the man in the street characteristically reached deep into his purse to pull out a small coin. The number of Chinese charitable endeavors in the Straits Settlements alone during the years under study are uncountable. Chinese made subscriptions to schools and temples both locally and in China. They gave to relieve suffering in South China and sent cash to San Francisco after the great earthquake and fire and also raised money to help coolie laborers in the Transvaal. When the British establishment tried to drum up support for an India famine-relief drive in 1897, the Straits

Chinese community came up with almost $12,000. Penang millionaire and Deli Bank director Hsieh Yung-kuang, then Chinese vice-consul, contributed $200 and Chung Keng Kwee gave $300 more, completely dwarfing His Excellency the Governor who managed only $100.[10] When another campaign was launched in March 1900, the famous Perak secret-society boss and captain above reportedly handed over $15,000 to assure the effort's success.[11]

In the spring of 1906, tin king Foo Choo Choon became famous in South China for his offer to begin a voluntary subscription among the world's Chinese to pay off China's staggering national debt. To start the effort, Foo sent the Canton viceroy his check for $10,000 but the movement was, of course, doomed to failure.[12] At a concert in Ipoh, Perak, in late 1908, Foo paid $100 for a dish of ice cream to aid flood victims[13] and, with a similar flair for the dramatic, the son of a Singapore millionaire paid $2,500 for a bottle of soda water at another Canton Food Fund bazaar.[14] There were, of course, more ostentatious shows of wealth. The automobile was a status symbol right from its introduction in the Straits Settlements. Sightseeing tours of Europe were fairly common for those leaning West while under the British flag while more traditional, usually China-born, merchants made return trips back to the native homeland. The very great merchants of Nanyang built splendid houses and villas complete with formal gardens, fountains and statues. Some homes followed Chinese architectural designs but others were contemporary European or a memorable mixture of East and West.

Conscious of the tangible things that riches brought as well as the more permanent honor charitable subscriptions could bring, the overseas Chinese still needed to satisfy other traditional pressures to elevate the family name and to prepare for their own eventual return to the mainstream of Chinese culture. In this context it is important to remember that Chinese traditionally equated status with education. A very minute number of overseas immigrants saved enough to return home to follow a scholar's career and even to attain rank through the examination life. A more significant, but still minuscule, number sent a son back to China for a classical education. Yet others, at least where there was the opportunity such as in the Straits Settlements, eagerly sent their sons to Western-type schools and were genuinely pleased if their diligent offspring secured admission to an established university and received a higher standing in European eyes. In Singapore the existence of a small Western-educated professional or managerial class helped maintain the tradition of educated wealth.

One of the interesting features of turn-of-the-century Singapore and Penang which can still be seen today was the tendency of the families

who could afford it to send one child to Western schools for obvious commercial benefit while seeing to it that his brother received a more traditional education. This spirit of cultural compromise, at least in educational matters, was actually intensified by the growth of overseas Chinese nationalism. Education for the children of Nanyang Chinese, haphazardly conducted in a variety of South China languages before the nationalist movement gained strength, was of extremely poor quality. Growing nationalism, influenced by and also stimulating further interest in China's international fate and cultural survival, led to the establishment of Mandarin-language schools throughout Southeast Asia. The role the Ch'ing government played in this movement will be discussed in detail in a later chapter, but for the moment the significant point to note is the fact that the more standardized curriculums, set up with Ch'ing blessings and support and with local merchant sponsorship, attempted to combine Western science and business practice with more traditional moral principles including dedication to public service.

Among the earliest of these modern Chinese schools was a model institution opened in Penang in 1904 with very broad community support including the crucial sponsorship of Chang Pi-shih, Foo Choo Choon, the Medan Chang family, Hsieh Yung-kuang and his son-in-law, a wealthy and progressive miner named Leong Fee. One of the primary goals of this institution, as memorialized to the throne by Chang Pi-shih, was the recruitment of talented overseas Chinese youth skilled in Western science and commercial practices into the Ch'ing bureaucracy. Students were to be taught both Western and classical subjects and the doors of its upper divisions were particularly open to students who had, up to that point, been educated in the English-language medium. The best graduates were to be sent directly to Peking as candidates for one of the traditional degrees.

Nationalism did move a number of young overseas Chinese to return to the cultural homeland to contribute their knowledge of Western technology to the self-strengthening and modernization efforts, especially after the Manchu government initiated a well-defined campaign of encouragement. A few patriotic and nostalgic individuals traveled back north on their own initiative including a graduate of the Penang Free School who, having taken a clerkship in the China customs service in the 1860s, joined the Chinese Imperial Navy and commanded a gunboat eventually sunk by the Japanese in 1894.[15]

There is no better example of nationalistic change of heart than Koh Hong Beng, a thoroughly Westernized product of an old Straits family, who lived in a Scottish home for over a decade during his youthful years and received an honors M.A. degree from Edinburgh University. Traveled widely on the Continent and conversant in German and

French, he returned to Nanyang in the 1870s to work for the Singapore colonial government. Inspired by previously hidden patriotism, he discarded the Western garb he had known all his life, grew a *queue* and set sail for China. After passing the imperial examinations at the highest (*Chin-shih*) level, Koh, then known by the Mandarin Ku Hung-ming, served on Chang Chih-tung's staff for twenty-five key years. Koh gained some fame as an author and translator but attained real notoriety as a reactionary and eccentric who continued to advocate the retention of various cultural traits, including the *queue*, concubinage, foot binding and opium smoking, long after the revolution of 1911. He was a professor of English literature and Latin at Peking University for a short while but his *queue* continued to mark him as an object for ridicule in the liberal surroundings of that institution.[16]

THE IMPORTANCE OF CH'ING HONORS AND GUESTS

By far the easiest path to traditional scholastic honor and an official veneer available to overseas Chinese commercial families from the closing decades of the last century was, however, the direct conversion of wealth into prestige through the purchase of Ch'ing honors. Yen Ching Hwang of the University of Adelaide, Australia, has carefully studied the scale of titles and honorary ranks in Singapore and Malaya and found that at least 291 individuals bought brevet honors for themselves or their ancestors in the period from 1877 to 1912.[17] It must be stressed that there was no direct sale of office since overseas Chinese were ineligible for bureaucratic posts in China without special imperial dispensation. Yen calculated that there were fifty-one different titles, ranks and degrees being offered for sale in the Straits by the year 1889. Honors ranged from mere titles of respect such as *chün-hsiu* (a designation applied to men preparing themselves for the first literary degree) to more prestigious official positions, usually *chih-fu* (prefect) and *tao-t'ai* or taotai (circuit intendant). Only perhaps fifty individuals purchased the higher ranks available and a number of those who did were the very well-to-do capitalists who bought more than one title. Chang Pi-shih, Chang Yü-nan, Chang Hung-nan, Hsieh Yung-kuang and Foo Choo Choon all held higher and higher brevet ranks.[18]

At first, provincial authorities recommended the bestowal of these various rewards on overseas merchants who donated generous sums to defense works or relief efforts. After around 1889, however, sale was more direct with frequent notices appearing in the Straits Chinese newspapers complete with appropriate price tags, the address of the local representative, and even instructions on how ancestors might be posthumously honored. Some of the really wealthy refrained from

outright purchase preferring the more circumventive but just as certain route of making grand voluntary financial gestures which inevitably brought Ch'ing recognition. 'Tin king' Foo built and supplied public granaries during a famine in China and gained the honorary prefectural magistrate title. Later donations raised his rank to taotai and commissioner of salt revenue.[19] Eventually, he attained the status of a metropolitan official and even special bureaucratic appointment.

Although some individuals found it possible to translate riches into very high Ch'ing honors, the great majority of Yen's title-holding Straits merchants purchased honors at the *t'ung-chih* level (subprefect) or below.[20] The need to embellish leadership positions earned mostly through financial success with more traditional Chinese value expectations is more than obvious and the purchase of these honors surely served to confirm the status of these merchants. Chinese bureaucratic rank and lesser degrees, although merely honorary, did provide some economic benefits to a merchant when he found it necessary to trade with China and deal at first hand with local magistrates. It should not be surprising to note now that headmen in the Netherlands Indies were frequently observed in mandarin gowns before the Dutch provided them with European uniforms.[21] When left to their own devices, and exposed to the contempt of colonial officials, these informal leaders had to find their own symbols and claim to community power. Headmen were expected to supervise local welfare and to keep the peace and, once Ch'ing rank was possible through purchase, they often began to imitate the life style of traditional gentry members modified to fit the gentleman-merchant ideal of Nanyang.

It was not particularly strange that overseas Chinese of lower-class origins in South China would attempt to realize childhood ambitions and wear the costume of the upper class when merchant profits and a new Ch'ing policy eventually made this possible. Nor was it an outlandish betrayal of tradition for newly arrived coolies to accept the leadership of men who dressed in the mandarin style. The really paradoxical twist in Nanyang occurred when the secret-society headmen, technically at odds with the Manchu usurpers of the Chinese throne, eagerly sought Ch'ing honors. Perak's famous *Kapitan* Chin Ah Yam held such rank as did other well-known Malay state leaders including Chin's bitter rival, *Kapitan* Chung Keng Kwee who even purchased high rank for three ancestral generations.[22]

Ranks or titles were customarily mentioned whenever their holders were referred to in the Chinese-language press. The local merchants present at important social functions were frequently listed according to Ch'ing status and whenever they contributed to charity, the subscription lists were inevitably published and nearly always conspicuous

notation was made of the higher-ranking individuals. The Chinese consul, and later the consul-general in Singapore, invited ranking merchants and headmen to official occasions such as the inauguration of a new consular officer and to the numerous celebrations held to mark the observance of the new year, the emperor's birthday and the birthday of the empress dowager.

The arrival of a Ch'ing dignitary on an official visit to a Nanyang port was cause for special celebration even after there was considerable agitation for reform and revolutionary change. The more important Ch'ing missions dispatched to Southeast Asian countries will be discussed in Chapter 6, but because Singapore was at the cross-roads of Asia, much of the official traffic between China and the capitals of Europe passed through the city and Straits merchants who held rank or honors actually had opportunities to overcome their humble origins and to mix with the highest ranking representatives of the Chinese court.

In March 1894, one hundred and fifty of Singapore's leading Chinese businessmen turned out to honor the arrival of the Chinese imperial fleet commanded by Admiral Ting. According to English reporters: 'All those present were attired in full dress and the orders of rank were fully observed.'[23] When the warships moved on to Penang, there were one hundred and twenty more leading merchants to welcome the Admiral and officers at a dinner given in the name of the vice-consul, Chang Pi-shih, at the gardens of *Kapitan* Chung Keng Kwee. The merchants of the port did not forget the men still on board the vessels in the harbor and sent them 12 pigs, 12 goats, 800 loaves of bread and 8 jars of arrack, a fermented brew. When the fleet left the next day, the vice-consul and many of the wealthier merchants turned out at the pier in full dress.[24]

As Singapore Chinese consul-general, Chang Pi-shih was responsible for the reception given the famous Li Hung-chang when he stopped off on his way to the coronation of a new Russian Czar in 1896. Along with Chang and British officials, between forty and fifty of the principal Chinese residents of the city were present at Government House to receive the viceroy. The Straits governor had reportedly instructed Chang that no one was to be excluded because of rank, or apparently lack thereof, and three of the men who would establish the Straits Chinese British Association – Lim Boon Keng, Tan Jiak Kim and Seah Leang Seah – were also present. At the governor's suggestion and, no doubt, to save everyone embarrassment, Li forwent the traditional kowtow ceremony on the excuse that it would be too tiring. On greeting him at the pier, Chang had, however, observed all the customary rules and prostrated himself three times. After the gov-

ernor's reception and another round of greetings at the consulate, Li toured Singapore and briefly visited the home and gardens of British loyalist Seah Leang Seah.[25]

The issue of the kowtow was quite critical for the British authorities were increasingly suspicious of the activities of the Chinese consulate and, for many years, uneasy about the loyalty of their Nanyang Chinese subjects. The widespread purchase of Ch'ing titles and the frequent appearance of Chinese government and anti-government figures did little to lessen the fear. February 1899 saw the culmination of a scheme launched by Seah to assure the colonial authorities of never-ending Chinese loyalty. On the 26th of the month, the British governor unveiled a statue of Queen Victoria at Government House financed by subscriptions from Straits Chinese. Seah told the governor that the thirty-four Chinese beside him were 'among the most loyal of Her Majesty's subjects in Singapore'. Photos and newspaper accounts of the affair show, however, that at least fifteen of these assembled Chinese gentlemen were dressed in their mandarin gowns complete with the appropriate symbols of rank.[26]

At the end of July 1901, Manchu Prince Ch'un, the younger brother of the emperor, was welcomed at Singapore by the Chinese consul, several dozen individuals dressed in mandarin gowns who all kowtowed and quite a large crowd of onlookers. The real excitement was caused, not by the traditionalists, but by the loyal subjects of the recently formed Straits Chinese British Association who presented the Chinese prince with an address signed by Lim Boon Keng, Song Ong Siang and Seah Leang Seah among others. The translation of the remarks which appeared in English included the following:

Although our country is not at present in a position to compete with foreign nations, yet we hope she will be as rich and strong in time to come as to be equal to others. As China is the country of our ancestors we never forget to love and honor it, and likewise we hope that the Chinese government will never forget that we are real Chinamen although we were born in the Straits Settlements. We are simply here for the sake of earning our livelihood, yet we are living purely as Chinamen and exercise the same Chinese customs and usage. The British government treats us well and just the same as her own subjects. We pray that your royal highness, after returning to China from Europe, will assist our Emperor in reforming so that our government will be on the same footing as the modern system of the other foreign nations.[27]

The editors of the *Straits Times* were outraged at the signatories' apparent claim that the Chinese emperor was their true sovereign.[28] Song consequently took great pains to explain to the readers of his *Straits Chinese Magazine* that he and his colleagues had been mistranslated, but the clear Chinese chauvinism of the address could not be explained away. These pillars of Anglo-Chinese society in Singapore in

early 1901 had obviously been delighted to exchange greetings with the brother of an emperor, a person of Manchu royalty who had traditionally been hidden from public view.[29] Their desire to help build a strong Chinese nation was shared by their more traditionally dressed neighbors.

When Prince Ch'un and his party reached Penang, they were received at the Consulate by Hsieh Yung-kuang who was then vice-consul and by Medan's Chang Yü-nan. A great number of merchants were present and the standard phrase used in the Chinese press to describe any such gathering of the community leadership (*pen-ch'eng Kuang-Fu shen-shang*: 'Our city's Cantonese and Hokkien gentry and merchants') was applied. The 'gentlemen-merchants' of Nanyang were thus assembled at Penang to greet their prince.[30]

Many local businessmen grew a bit skeptical of the constant parade of honor salesmen, fund raisers and special emissaries and, as the more revolutionary newspapers made fun of Ch'ing titles and the British authorities clearly frowned upon the practice, many merchants simply packed their mandarin gowns away in a trunk to avoid too manifest an identification with Manchu office. A few overseas mandarins always turned out to welcome a visiting dignitary and any visit of the Chinese Imperial Navy caused a large crowd to gather. On several occasions, however, the temptation to mix publicly with high officials was too much for many merchants who promptly unpacked their ceremonial robes. In August 1904, the Manchu prince, this time on his way to the St Louis Exposition in America, paid Singapore another call. He was greeted by the consul-general in formal dress and also by Dr Lim Boon Keng in a Western business suit. According to reports, a large group of merchants also appeared in official outfits and stood at the pier for many hours on a humid and rainy day for their chance to honor the dynastic representative. There were, however, no public kowtows.[31]

Two years later, in mid-summer 1906, Tuan Fang, the viceroy of Hunan and Hupei provinces, accompanied by Tai Hung-tz'u who was then president of the Board of Revenue in Peking, also called at Singapore on their way to Europe. The city's leading Chinese residents again turned out for the welcoming festivities held this time at the Chinese chamber of commerce building including a sizeable number of individuals in official robes.[32]

NATIONALISM AND COSMOPOLITANISM

With the opening of the Singapore Chinese Chamber of Commerce in March 1906, the Chinese consulate became less important as a center for community activities. Banquets and diplomatic receptions were still

held and imperial birthdays commemorated there, but attendance seems to have fallen off considerably by the end of the dynasty. It was far less awkward for merchants conscious of the criticism of their British masters and their own progressive children to continue mingling with Ch'ing officialdom at nominally commercial gatherings. The chamber of commerce must not, however, be taken as a rival organization. The Singapore body was initiated at the prodding of Chang Pi-shih, an official Ch'ing representative, and all the similar organizations started throughout Southeast Asia and the world at the time received charters from Peking. In the Netherlands Indies, chambers of commerce substituted for the lack of consular presence and frequently carried out official Chinese business.

The first president of the Singapore Chinese Chamber of Commerce, Goh Siew Tin, was, according to Song Ong Siang's description, 'a very fine Chinese scholar and a perfect gentleman of the old school'. Goh had traded largely with Java, supported Chinese education and purchased rank. He proudly wore a mandarin gown on numerous occasions, including important chamber of commerce functions, before his death in early 1909.[33] Dr Lim Boon Keng who truly seemed to have a foot in every door was one of the founding vice-presidents of the Singapore merchant society. The association always appeared quite proud of its multi-millionaire members which included Loke Yew and Tan Jiak Kim. As this investigation will uncover, the Singapore Chinese Chamber of Commerce was a key link in a Ch'ing government plan to recruit overseas Chinese wealth. The differing temperaments and backgrounds of its early supporters and of the membership of similar commercial bodies elsewhere, along with the fact that these organizations continued to flourish after the 1911 Revolution, also suggest that Peking's desire to organize overseas Chinese coincided with the needs of the Nanyang communities themselves.

Before the growth of pan-Chinese nationalism, many overseas Chinese had very little in common aside from the fact that they were Chinese and were living overseas. Social intercourse was organized along extremely narrow lines usually dependent on place of origin or dialect spoken but there were countless exceptions. Rivalries were often intense and tribal warfare was not at all uncommon. The pattern was much the same throughout Southeast Asia although the details and dominant groupings varied from place to place.

In Singapore, for example, there were Hokkiens and Hokchews from two separate districts of Fukien province, Changchow and Foochow, Teochews from Chaochow and Swatow in Kwangtung province, Khehs (or Hakkas) who came from a variety of spots in the two provinces and spoke their own dialect as well as the lingua franca of

their particular home region. There were Macaos from Canton and the Pearl River delta and Hylams from the island of Hainan. Cantonese-speaking immigrants were extremely fragmented and maintained a great number of territorial associations finely delineating the origins of members. The Teochews and Hokkiens were slightly more united because of the distinct languages they used and also because of their hatred for one another. But different villagers even within the larger group still kept up their own temples to honor local deities and ancestors back home.[34]

Cutting across territorial and linguistic claims on their loyalty were family clan organizations for mutual protection and benefit. Triad societies also often defied other priorities. A number of industrial guilds emerged with their own rules, secret passwords and self-servicing intrigues embracing carpenters, builders, tailors, barbers, shoemakers and others, while powerful commercial associations attempted to monopolize trade in key commodities. These monopolies were more secure if dialect, clan or regional interests also tied the group together, and there were cases when one family name dominated a certain business throughout Southeast Asia. One group sometimes tried to control trade in a basic staple such as rice which was for a long time the special domain of Teochews.

There were, however, also associations based on friendship, classmate standing, recreational preference, philosophical predilections, and religious faith along with the often studied mutual loan association which enabled merchants to draw comparatively large amounts of capital from a common fund. Although the British government took a dim view of political activities, there were, of course, political factions too. As has been discussed, the question of local or China birth influenced social connections and the introduction of Christianity, English-language education and pro-British considerations – sincere or simply for profit – confused the picture even more.

The spirit of British loyalism nurtured within the Straits Chinese British Association was not always antithetical to the drive for a pan-Chinese identity that might bridge all the divisions and antagonisms. Not only were Song and Lim responsible for renewing interest in Confucian thought, but they and their colleagues, by paradoxically offering an alternative target for ultimate patriotic affection, provided an example of how Straits Chinese might work together. Both men remained somewhat confused themselves as to where their hearts really lay. If British society in Singapore had completely welcomed Chinese with Western professional skills, the situation might well have proved different; but the Singapore colonial environment remained discriminatory and the most fervent Anglicization impulse eventually

met frustration in the European unwillingness to accept Chinese as fully equal. Thus, failing to obtain the sought-after stature in Western eyes, progressive Chinese worked to purge their less-developed countrymen of the superstitions and backward practices of the time which were tarnishing the Chinese image in as much as the British continued to practice racism and entertain thoughts of cultural supremacy. Song and Lim consequently called for modernization and education; they crusaded against opium and factional strife while elevating traditional moral teachings in a Christian context. The movement for reform abroad soon merged with the demand for reform in China for was not the homeland the true source of those cultural weaknesses found abroad as well as the fundamental reason for foreign contempt and exploitation?

The most progressive, Western-educated Straits Chinese were, however, able to influence the larger community only through cooperation with the more traditional and powerful commercial leaders. Although the Anglicized group in Singapore and Penang was much closer to the source of political power in the colony, the China-born gentlemen-merchants unquestionably commanded the respect of the masses. Yet, as we have noted, overseas Chinese merchants were never unaware of the benefit that went along with Western favor. In the Netherlands Indies and Malay States, *kapitan* status frequently opened the door to financial gain and *ipso facto* leadership. It was often deemed prudent to educate a family member in a Western language whenever possible and to establish business or personal ties with individuals who had gained the respect of the colonial authorities.

The syndicate which long controlled the Penang opium farm was just one example of a partnership using diversity for strength. For most of its history, three men or their friends and relatives dominated the concern: Chang Pi-shih with his connections in Sumatra and his official position as Penang vice-consul and later Singapore consul-general for China, secret society headman and *Kapitan* Chung Keng Kwee and Cheah Chen Eok who had been born in Penang, gained experience in the Chartered Mercantile Bank of India, London and China in that city and served on the municipal council.[35] Anglicized Cheah was one of the first Chinese to enter the Western insurance business. He sent his eldest son off to England in 1894 and in 1900 gave $30,000 toward the erection of a clock tower to honor Queen Victoria. It should not be terribly surprising to learn, however, that Cheah also managed Chang Pi-shih's various Penang business interests for a time shielding him from British reprisals for his Ch'ing service.[36]

It made sound business sense to maintain ties with the Anglicized side of the Chinese community. Hsieh Yung-kuang helped start the

region's first Mandarin-language school while simultaneously serving on the managing committee of the English-language Penang Free School.[37] Many of the leading merchants contributed to English-language education and through intermarriage brought Anglicized Chinese into the families and businesses.

Marriage was also used to bolster commercial situations and leadership posture. Important families often united in this way, particularly if dialect differences or place of origin would have otherwise created suspicions and inhibited business expansion. Family ties acted as a form of security and, of course, in all societies marriage can be a means of social advancement. Foo Choo Choon married a niece of *Kapitan* Chung Keng Kwee and not only gained status but converted a possible tin-mining rival into an ally.[38] There is no better example of an overseas Chinese using matrimony to hedge his bets, however, than Oei Tiong Ham. Sensing the day America would be a power in Asia, and for immediate practical benefits, he permitted his daughter to marry Mr Caulfield Stokes, the American consular agent in Semarang in 1909.[39]

Many of the most prosperous overseas Chinese capitalists had an amazing willingness to split their personalities and to draw upon both European and Chinese sources of prestige. Foo Choo Choon, for example, served as the president of the Penang Chinese Recreation Club and was a fellow of the Society of Arts of England. He was a major supporter of the Penang Free School and notably proud of the fact that he had been naturalized as a British subject. But Foo also stood behind Chinese-language education and was instrumental in the organization of Chinese chambers of commerce in Penang and Perak.[40] As we have noted, British subject Foo also bought his way into Chinese officialdom eventually attaining the rank of a metropolitan official. More importantly, he would return to his homeland to take an active part in late Ch'ing modernization. On his way to China in the fall of 1906, he was interviewed at the Singapore Chinese consulate by members of the press. The conversation was conducted in a mixture of English, Malay and Chinese and the *Straits Times* reporter reflected the admiration of the English-speaking community when he observed that everything Foo had touched had turned to gold but that 'with all his huge wealth he is courteous, quiet and unassuming – a perfect Anglo-Chinese gentleman.'[41]

The gentleman-merchant ideal, at least as it developed in the Straits Settlements, consequently introduced an element of Western culture and refinement to the more traditional Chinese value system. There is good reason to suspect that a similar procedure took place in the Netherlands Indies although it was much more difficult to crack Dutch

social barriers and cosmopolitan personalities appeared comparatively late.

Some individuals were, of course, more Westernized than others. Wealthy Wong Ah Fook, who had been in on the opening of Johore, bought Ch'ing honors but saw to it that three of his five sons were educated in England.[42] Eu Tong Sen was born in Penang but raised in China. His wide business interests spread from the Federated Malay States to Hong Kong and Canton. His residence in Singapore, 'Eu Villa', was one of the finest mansions in Asia. The furniture came from London and Paris and the grounds were filled with Florentine sculpture. He sent his eldest son to Cambridge University and made an extended tour of Europe in 1911. In 1918, he followed the example of Chang Pi-shih, the Medan Changs, and Loke Yew and contributed an extremely generous sum to the University of Hong Kong.[43]

Loke Yew provides one of the more interesting examples of a China-born overseas capitalist attempting to acquire European social manners. When the railroad through the Malay States was opened, there was considerable sentiment within the European community to prohibit first-class travel by Chinese. In the summer of 1904, Loke Yew took it upon himself to print up a free handbook for Chinese towkays entitled: 'Etiquette to be Observed by All Chinese First Class Passengers.' Some of the more revealing suggestions follow:

> You are requested to be polite and courteous to ladies and relinquish your seats to ladies if the carriage is crowded. Never allow a lady to stand.
>
> Staring at people (especially at ladies), expectorating, talking in a loud tone of voice, laughing loudly – all are considered ungentlemanly and bad manners.
>
> Your hat should be removed when you enter a carriage in which there are ladies.
>
> Your feet should not be placed on the cushions with or without shoes.
>
> Your jacket, shoes and socks should not be removed nor should you expose your limbs.
>
> You should not smoke in carriages if ladies are present.
>
> Only small packages must be put into first class carriages and anything that has an offensive smell should never be brought into a carriage.[44]

The Western cultural environment had lent another consideration to the relationship between wealth and status. Gradually, the perfect Chinese gentleman began to emulate European social graces.

THE WESTERN CHALLENGE

The fact that the thrust of the Western impact upon China was

commercial and that traders made up its vanguard did much to set the rules for the Chinese response. Although foreign gunboats, missionaries and statesmen had their place in the introduction of disruptive Western values to China, the leading mediators were merchants. Lest the following paragraphs be taken for a defense of economic determinism, the significance of power, philosophy and diplomacy in undermining the traditional order must not be underestimated. Yet, as long as Western treaty demands were designed to establish advantageous trade rights, commercial concerns were, inevitably, critical to the modernization process. Traditionally, Chinese civilization had Sinicized alien philosophical beliefs and bent but not broken in the face of military aggression. But the Occidental glorification of mercantile pursuits stood as an unprecedented challenge. As long as the ground rules for the encounter were so rigged, there could be no Chinese modernization without an innovative entrepreneurial group and no such class could appear without fundamental reorganization of the social and political system. This dilemma was at the very heart of China's quest for modernity.

If merchants were low in status – and there will be another opportunity to discuss the limited role the merchant class played in traditional China – it is not difficult to understand the attitude of the Chinese towards foreign traders who arrived in great numbers in the middle of the last century and also the unenviable position of those early Chinese compradors who, by acting as middlemen for Western business concerns, became the first group to make and maintain considerable capital wealth in disregard of traditional expectations. Many comprador types eventually converted the fruits of their cooperation with the West, both capital and skills, into their own private commercial endeavors; but the pioneers did so at the risk of losing their chance for power and prestige under the old system. The later generation of Chinese merchants who emerged because of the Western stimulus in the last years of the Manchu rule remained largely on the outside suspicious of the intentions and machinations of officials and extremely reluctant to risk their capital in the development of new industries and enterprises.

Since compradors were usually wealthy they, like earlier generations of Chinese merchants, found themselves in a position to purchase examination degrees and official titles and thus secure more respectable gentry status. It is believed that almost all of the better known compradors attained honorary titles in this manner. The purchase of honors not only affected social standing but also improved business relations with lesser merchants while granting even more obvious advantages in the inevitable dealings with the Chinese officialdom.[45]

An independent bourgeois class was a comparatively recent development in Chinese history. Its influential role in the Revolution of 1911 and

the ultimate inability of private enterprise to displace state capitalism as the governing economic force in modern China are questions of great importance. For present purposes, however, the crucial issue is the considerable unwillingness of the rulers of nineteenth-century China to permit the merchant group to play an innovative role and the gentry's determination to remain the monopolistic instrument of change.

In 1860, the Ch'ing government appeared on the verge of total disintegration. Rebels controlled large areas of the countryside, the treasury was drained and, having refused to take the Western powers and their treaty rights seriously, the rulers of China now found themselves driven from Peking by an Anglo-French expeditionary force. A dramatic change of attitude was needed. Fortunately, new blood was brought into the administration in the nick of time and the next dozen or so years were characterized by a truly successful effort to combine urgently needed military and diplomatic innovations with reforms designed to reduce corruption and draw talented individuals into government service. The period from 1862 to 1874, generally referred to as the T'ung-chih restoration in honor of the reigning but not ruling monarch, is a favorite of every China scholar for it was the last stand of traditionalism.

The genesis and nature of the restoration of dynastic power and the fact of its inevitable failure are topics of great historical interest. By using the treaty system to buy off the external barbarians and by surrendering central authority to regionally based gentry armies so as to put down domestic rebellion, the rulers gained time to put their house in order. With a new lease on life, scholar-officials renewed their dedication to traditional principles while initiating a selective program of Westernization. The legal and technical literature of the West was eagerly translated. Diplomatic procedures were, of course, modernized and to facilitate the adoption of modern military hardware, arsenals and shipyards were set up. But the opening of China to the onslaught of Western traders and the establishment of the institutional foundations of a foreign ministry were not accompanied by a corresponding modernization of the economy or traditional attitudes towards commerce and non-Chinese.[46]

The primary goals of the restoration, encapsulated by the term 'self-strengthening', had little to do with economic change. The underlying fallacy of the revivalist movement has been exposed by so many capable writers that it seems truly trite to repeat the controlling slogan made famous at the end of the century by Chang Chih-tung: 'Chinese learning for the fundamental principles, Western learning for practical application.' That half-way modernization was folly and that Western

technology simply could not be grafted on to the corpus of traditional society seem obvious to us today. Many of China's nineteenth-century leaders apparently recognized this and, consequently, opposed even token change. Even the liberals failed to turn away from the traditional disdain for commerce or the fundamental premise of bureaucratic control. China's first attempts at industrialization clearly reflected this fact.

A desire to possess weapons naturally stimulated a longing to make Western military items in China and the importation of machinery inevitably introduced technology at higher and higher levels. The essentially self-defensive character of early Chinese modernization, nevertheless, made industrial progress extremely slow. The strong provincial personalities of the 1870s, encouraged by the successful application of modern technology to extinguish domestic rebellion, were relatively quick to promote industrial enterprises with clear strategic relevance such as those associated with transportation and communication. Convincing influential officials in the capital that telegraphs and railroads were more than expensive toys was, however, especially difficult. Tradition resisted every change. Peasants resented and no doubt feared the encroachment of technology. Modernity frightened animals, disturbed graves and incensed the natural elements. The gentry naturally remained suspicious but, gradually, one development led to another. Li Hung-chang promoted the establishment of the China Merchants' Steam Navigation Company in the second year of the decade. To provide fuel for the newly built fleet, coal mines were developed in the Kaiping area north of Tientsin and, eventually, a railroad was constructed to move the needed mineral resource.

Plans were laid to build men-of-war in 1875 and the desire to create a modern navy led to the purchase of European warships a few years later. To raise money, gold mines were opened and new mints established. Heavy industry made its belated start in the 1890s with the opening of iron mines and works. Projects of less intrinsic military value and those producing consumer goods developed even more slowly. It was 1891 before Chang Chih-tung established a cotton mill at Wuchang.

All of the early efforts had one thing in common: they were sponsored by officials and, consequently, designed to serve official ends. There is no great need to document the historical failure of the bureaucratic promoters of Western-type industry to urge fundamental social and economic changes. The forward steps taken in the nineteenth century were largely the results of mixing traditional patronage with modern production. When merchant capital was available in

traditional China, it rarely remained in private hands. Its nurture, as previously noted, took bureaucratic blessing which is another way of saying official control. The Chinese response to the Western commercial challenge became enshrined in the principle of 'government-supervision and merchant-management'. The *kuan-tu shang-pan* system was the old policy of extending monopoly rights to selected merchants placed under administrative supervision applied to modern industrial development.

Aside from the self-strengthening justification, the objective of this policy was to recruit merchant funds and to tap the supply of comprador capital accumulating in the treaty ports. In actual operation, merchants were reluctant to take part and the infant industrial concerns were forced to rely on government financing. When merchants took part as managers, they were subjected to the whim of officials whose primary concern was filling their own pockets not the encouragement of reinvestment or experiment.[47]

Periodization is certainly an imperfect form of analysis but the year 1895 was a watershed for industrial development. Although the principles of monopoly and control remained much the same on either side of the date, the Chinese defeat by Japan was a major stimulus for Chinese commercialization. A treaty signed with Japan the following year gave Japanese businessmen the right to establish manufacturing concerns in the treaty ports and the same privilege was simultaneously granted to the other foreign powers. New enterprises appeared overnight. In a few years, outside commercial interests had secured numerous concessions for railroad development and the exploitation of mineral resources. The vigorous opening of the interior to foreign traders and engineers forced the Chinese government to reappraise its traditional stance. Further pressure was unquestionably applied when the Boxer Uprising fizzled out in 1900 and exposed China to even greater Western penetration, but new ideas and a more spirited outlook had begun to emerge several years earlier again under the leadership of basically conservative officials.

The traditional scholar-official was notably unsuited for this new role. Early promoters of industry such as Li Hung-chang had little first-hand knowledge of Western methods and their philosophical leanings limited their sponsorship. After Li's death in 1901, Chang Chih-tung became a leading spokesman for the self-strengthening impulse. Although conservative in many respects, Chang clearly recognized that industrial strength was the basis of Western wealth and power. While he missed the significance of political and social institutions as a stimulus to Western industrialization, he urged the introduction of machinery and saw the importance of sending students abroad

to complete their technical education. He spent the greater part of his public life in high provincial posts yet found time to oversee work on the Peking–Hankow railroad and, as noted, sponsored iron works and cotton mills. Administrative responsibilities nevertheless forced him to delegate authority to lower functionaries of the *kuan-tu shang-pan* system and he quickly sensed the urgent need to attract greater merchant participation to save China through industrialization.

After the Boxer Protocol reduced the international status of the Ch'ing government even more and clearly weakened its domestic posture, Chang and other conservative reformers continued to press the promotion of industry. They advocated setting up combined factory-schools, industrial exhibitions, modernization of the examination system, the dispatch of investigation teams to study Western commerce and industry, and the establishment of Western-inspired legal codes which would include commercial activities. Technical schools were opened by the dozens and more and more students sent overseas to learn the secrets of Western civilization. Modern banking was introduced, private industrial endeavors encouraged and new monopolies created. Over two hundred private firms had registered their enterprises in Peking by 1908 but it was extremely difficult to compete against the foreigners who seemed to have unlimited financial backing. Local merchants and gentry joined forces to protest the granting of foreign concessions in their own backyard and attempted to regain control of railroads and mines in particular. Every bureaucrat now memorialized his suggestions to help make commerce flourish and thought himself to be an exponent of modernization despite the limitations of his background.

An actual Board of Trade was established in 1903 and when it was renamed the Ministry of Agriculture, Industry and Commerce three years later, the new trend was in full swing. In 1908, the Chinese government began making extensive plans for a huge industrial and commercial fair to be held at Nanking in 1910. This exhibition was intended to show the world the extent of industrialization and to stimulate a new social recognition of commercial activity at home. China's successes were, of course, small when compared to the pace of events in the West, but motion was unquestionably forward and momentum was gathering. Yet, it was difficult to break traditional patterns and even those officials who displayed more executive savvy still supported the bureaucratic control of commerce.[48]

Officials favored certain merchants and the need to protect monopoly rights often kept the most innovative businessman in the debt of bureaucrats. The state still preferred to maintain the formula of official supervision and launched directly controlled government industries

whenever feasible. The government urged the establishment of merchant associations along the pattern of Western chambers of commerce which flourished in the treaty ports but, in reality, like the guilds of old these organizations were envisioned as local extensions of central control. The Board of Trade and its successor openly recruited merchants and their capital but the problem of corruption remained and a score of regulations were promulgated in an attempt to stamp out squeeze and extortion. Under these circumstances, it became increasingly difficult to attract the wholehearted participation of the emerging bourgeois class in the last minute Ch'ing effort to revitalize traditional China.

Incentives such as the lure of honorary titles worked for a while, but the same outside stimuli which forced the Manchu government to elevate the importance of commercial endeavors also gave Chinese businessmen a prestige they had never enjoyed before. More and more merchants felt inclined to participate in government schemes on their own terms. The increasingly difficult task of tapping the new merchant affluence fell to the supervisory personnel of the *kuan-tu shang-pan* projects.

The most outstanding of these figures was Sheng Hsuan-huai (1844–1916), a former secretary of Li Hung-chang who, having failed to pass the provincial examinations, established himself as the leading industrial executive and, consequently, gained a reputation as a professional fund raiser. He set up a Railroad Bureau to take charge of government railway construction, managed the China Merchants' Steam Navigation Company and the Imperial Bank of China. His low rank and connection with commerce greatly limited his ability to deal with the mandarin guardians of the Chinese treasury and relations with needed merchants were handicapped by his identification with these very officials. Early in the search for capital to begin the construction of railroads and to back establishment of the bank, Sheng became interested in the overseas Chinese living in Southeast Asia.[49]

THE OVERSEAS CHINESE PROMISE

If the richest Chinese in Batavia had not been the most respected in 1620, the Dutch system, which attempted to make selected wealthy Chinese even wealthier, helped shape a new attitude toward the accumulation of riches. In subsequent years, colonial authorities throughout Southeast Asia fell in line and conferred higher and higher social status and responsibility on wealthy Chinese merchants.

Property and personal financial resources consequently came to play a role in social relationships in Nanyang unprecedented in the China

homeland. To a significant degree, the overseas Chinese caught the spirit of Weber's elusive Protestant ethic. China scholars have often considered how the traditional value structure inhibited the growth of a capitalist spirit; but this question becomes more perplexing after one has studied overseas Chinese communities and been forced to recognize the proclivity with which Chinese abroad have taken to merchant roles. Colonial policy together with the need for middlemen obviously provided overseas Chinese with an opportunity and official encouragement that may well have been absent in China. The fact that overseas Chinese viewed themselves as sojourners only temporarily away from their homeland and out to make as much money as possible helps explain the paradoxical tendencies to save and speculate, but the emergence of a true capitalist outlook requires a fuller explanation.

Excluded from political power in colonial Southeast Asia, Chinese merchants were not tempted to seek an official career except as a headman and the lure of these offices was clearly economic and not social. Part of the free enterprise system undoubtedly rubbed off on Chinese merchants particularly in the Straits Settlements and in Indonesia after the failure of the *cultuur* experiment. The assimilation of certain Western business practices was accelerated by English-language education and the frequent necessity to neutralize some of the advantages held by European competitors. The need to conform to the rules of commercial law was another factor that stimulated an overseas Chinese awareness of basic Western business values.

Environmental change was obviously a critical element but the overseas setting was not all that alien. There were, in fact, some notable similarities that helped ease the transition from Chinese immigrant to Nanyang capitalist. The large majority of the wealthy overseas Chinese capitalists got their real start under some form of official government sponsorship. The policy of awarding monopolies was consistent with Chinese experience. The fact that headmen usually controlled the most profitable monopolies also helped confirm traditional expectations since merchant profit was still tied to official favor. Almost all of the examples of capitalists discussed in this chapter made a sizeable portion of their initial fortunes as a direct consequence of tax farming monopolies, the lease of valuable mining rights and other special concessions.

Although the acquisition of wealth does at first seem to have been an end in itself, the overseas communities made up almost exclusively of individuals whose Southeast Asian residence was motivated by a basic desire to get rich quick, were not able to tear themselves from the traditional Chinese distaste for the unrefined man of means. Lee Bok Boon, the great-grandfather of the Singapore Prime Minister Lee

Kuan Yew, returned to China and purchased a Ch'ing rank in the nineteenth century. And Lee was not an isolated case. For those who remained in Southeast Asia, wealth had its special responsibilities including public works and charity. Education, even training in foreign languages and skills, was widely sought by those of any means at all.

Many overseas Chinese merchants became remarkably cosmopolitan in outlook and combined traditional Chinese values with traits acquired in their day-to-day contacts with the Western world. At the turn of the century, a cosmopolitan world view was probably a contradictory and paradoxical life-style. Foo Choo Choon was a British subject with Ch'ing titles and position. Chang Pi-shih maintained homes in Java, Sumatra, Penang and Singapore as well as in North and South China. Each location no doubt looked upon him as a native son. Dutch headmen became British subjects and Chinese mandarins. Wealthy men of Han owned motorcars and steamyachts. Many spoke Chinese while their children learned English. Others were native speakers of English who eagerly sponsored a traditional Chinese education.

In the *Straits Chinese Magazine* of 1904, Lim Boon Keng wrote that he now saw China as a 'new and almost limitless field' for the exploitation of overseas Chinese merchants. Hinting that Straits Chinese might actually take the place of the Japanese (who were, of course, Asian yet Westernized) as middlemen in the modernization of China, Lim urged Nanyang capitalists to undertake 'great enterprises in China'.[50] The nationalist spark had touched Nanyang, and Lim, about as Anglicized a Chinese as you could find, was convinced that the overseas Chinese entrepreneurial model was just what China needed.

It is probably not improper to question the entrepreneurial credentials of most of the overseas Chinese merchant community. A number of Western business practices had, indeed, been grafted upon Chinese merchandizing procedures but most businesses were small-scale family concerns limited by the size of that family group and an ever-present shortage of capital. On one occasion a Chinese businessman in East Java began a project to raise mulberry trees and eventually silkworms, and another enterprising merchant, in an effort to avoid a Dutch tax on matches, hit upon the idea of utilizing old matches by putting new heads on them.[51] It is highly doubtful, however, that such projects really introduced new factors of production into the Netherlands Indies economy.

The majority of overseas Chinese capitalists remained merchants trading in basic commodities and the necessities of life. The fact that they sank capital back into their business did not make them a modernizing force. In like manner, the overseas Chinese who simply

managed European plantations or enterprises were not really entrepreneurs in their own right. The capital and plans were still of Western not Chinese origin. Those individuals and combinations that secured the lucrative monopolies in Southeast Asia and the right to open the wilderness and develop mineral resources were far more creative. Perhaps they were even irreplaceable, but they were still just part of the overall imperialist thrust in Asia and since their activities depended on Western sponsorship the colonial governments could take away the special privileges they once granted.

A few remarkable individuals were, however, able to move beyond the comprador and monopoly farm level to launch new enterprises and to take an active role in the development of Southeast Asia. Although the sponsorship of colonial authorities played its critical part in their rise and in their early accumulation of needed capital, there can be no question that men like Oei Tiong Ham, Loke Yew, Foo Choo Choon and Chang Pi-shih outgrew the limitations of the times to help shape economic developments on both sides of the Straits of Malacca. The fact that Chang's ships flew the Dutch flag must not hide the fact that his vessels played a crucial role in the opening of Sumatra. Nor should the undeniable fact that Foo and Loke Yew leased their land from the government deny their own accomplishments.

It is not surprising that when Chang and Foo returned to China to initiate a great variety of industrial projects they stood head and shoulders above China's native businessmen. Indeed, even the lesser Nanyang Chinese figures could play an entrepreneurial role in their China homeland where both capital and Western business know-how were greatly lacking. Even before Lim Boon Keng's exhortation, overseas Chinese merchants and capitalists had begun to return to China to play a significant part in China's early modernization.

3

China's discovery of the Nanyang Chinese

EMIGRATION AND THE EARLY COOLIE TRADE

The Chinese government had not always displayed great concern for its overseas subjects. The Manchu conquerors of China inherited a general Confucian revulsion against those individuals who dared to forsake family obligations in order to search for wealth in far-off corners of the earth. The Ming dynasty, like its successor, actually forbade its subjects to go abroad. Those who ignored the prohibition and chose to leave home generally did so as a last resort, when the pressure of population growth or natural disaster left no viable alternative save banditry and rebellion. Indeed, it was not at all uncommon for those who ultimately sought refuge outside of China to have already tried the route of insurgency before they fled southward. There was, therefore, more than ample reason for the Confucian Ming rulers to view the sojourners abroad as *yu-min*, unproductive vagabonds who would not be missed. The prohibition was, thus, somewhat relaxed in its application to permit potential trouble-makers to find self-imposed exile.[1]

During the transition from Ming to Ch'ing, the new rulers of China, in their effort to extinguish rebellion in the southern coastal region, more actively enforced the earlier regulations assuming that emigrants might plot the overthrow of the Chinese government from the safety of a foreign base. The famed rebel Koxinga who occupied Formosa and made frequent attacks along the Fukien coast to embarrass the Manchus helped reinforce Confucian attitudes and Ch'ing suspicions. The resulting Ch'ing Law Code was therefore quite specific:

> Any official, subject or soldier who privately goes to sea to trade or emigrates to a foreign island for the purpose of cultivation shall be beheaded for communicating with rebels, and any prefectural or county official who conspires with them or who knows the fact and acts to conceal it shall likewise be delivered to the place of execution.[2]

Since this same law was periodically enforced until 1860 and re-

mained on the books at least in theory until thirty-three years after that, it is not difficult to appreciate the unsympathetic attitude the imperial government held toward the Chinese abroad. Great massacres of Chinese in the Philippines in the early sixteenth century had caused few waves of emotion in Ming China and the Manchu successors paid no heed to the slaughter of Chinese residents in the Java of 1740.[3]

The K'ang-hsi Emperor did, however, pay momentary attention to the overseas Chinese in the year 1717 when he offered to grant pardons to those of his distant subjects who desired to return home. The Yung-cheng Emperor saw fit to permit a limited number of traders to go abroad under license some eleven years later but in 1728 he clearly ruled that Chinese out of the country without proper credentials were permanently expatriated.[4] It was obviously difficult to enforce the letter of the law and the imperial court generally took little more than a passing interest in its enforcement. The same cannot, however, be said of local officials who zealously upheld Confucian principles for personal profit by blackmailing returning overseas Chinese in return for yamen inaction and by squeezing local families for a share of whatever 'illegal' fruits their relatives overseas managed to send back home.

Perhaps the most controversial and notorious case was that of Ch'en I-lao which came to the court in 1749. The Ch'ien-lung Emperor like his predecessors had shown some willingness to tolerate traders who formally asked permission to go abroad and returned within an agreed period of time. He was even known to have allowed time to be extended. Ch'en had, however, left his native Kwangtung without the necessary credentials and eventually became a headman for the Dutch in Batavia. When he returned to China very wealthy, the Chinese officials took these factors as proof of his bad character and he was harshly punished. Some sources contend that he was put to death while others state that only his property was confiscated. At any rate, enough news of his fate at the hands of greedy and intransigent officials filtered back to Nanyang to put fear into the hearts of other Chinese who had stayed away too long.[5] For the next hundred years, the Ch'ing government remained unwilling to welcome those Chinese who left home without proper authorization and continued to look with marked disfavor upon the Chinese then in Nanyang.

It was China's unequal early relationship with the Western powers in the years following the Opium War that finally brought the Chinese government to the reluctant recognition of the right of subjects to emigrate. The Treaty of Nanking in 1842 had contained a somewhat ambiguous condition that 'English subjects may, at their convenience, hire any kind of Chinese person who may move about in the perfor-

mance of their work or craft without the slightest obstruction by Chinese officials.'[6] The most-favored-nation clause contained in subsequent treaties with France and America bestowed a similarly clouded right to those powers permitting the engagement of Chinese ostensibly for use within the foreign sectors of the treaty ports. In the year 1845, however, the first shipment of Chinese laborers under contract to foreigners set sail from Amoy in a French vessel destined for the Isle of Bourbon thousands of miles from their homeland. The Western-sponsored coolie trade had begun.

In 1847, a Spanish company induced eight hundred Chinese workers to go to Cuba under long-term contracts and within five years upwards of ten thousand more had agreed to go to Havana. Several thousand others had sailed for other parts of Latin America, while a few had been introduced into California as free agricultural workers. By 1852, it was estimated that twenty-four thousand Chinese had left through the port of Amoy for service in distant lands.[7]

The common designation for the early coolie trade was 'buying and selling pigs'. Poverty-stricken Chinese in the treaty ports were recruited by unscrupulous fellow countrymen by deceit, force and promises and, then, kept under guard in warehouses ignominiously known as 'pig pens' until shipment abroad. Life aboard the pioneering ships of the coolie trade showed no improvement over that of its predecessor, the slave trade. The harsh conditions on crowded ships led to frequent mutinies. In May 1852 the captain and a good portion of the crew were murdered on the American ship *Robert Brown* which started off with 440 coolies bound for California. Many captains refused to carry Chinese laborers because of the highly volatile nature of the human cargo, but nine more vessels arrived in Amoy in August 1852.[8]

Public indignation at Amoy finally reached the point of open conflict in November 1852. Local scholars and merchants issued proclamations opposing the human trade and the situation remained so tense for some years thereafter that the center of the trade shifted away from Amoy to Macao and Hong Kong.[9] There would not, of course, have been so much trouble in the first place without the active connivance of local mandarins, but the foreign powers must take much of the blame for the inhumanity of a trade where revolt and suicide were common and the mortality figure on the long voyage to a foreign port was known sometimes to have exceeded twenty-five percent. Although greater efficiency was included among their motives, it is to the credit of the British government and its representatives in China that some serious steps were taken to improve the situation. In 1855 the 'Chinese Passengers Act' was passed which, although continually evaded for several decades, theoretically enforced sanitary conditions and hu-

mane treatment at least on British ships. Four years later, the British government actively intervened in the trade when Canton was an occupied city and opened an Emigration House, a depot through which coolies would be required to pass to assure that they were not recruited against their will. Mr Parkes, who helped set up the first such depot with the full cooperation of the Chinese governor-general, expressed the optimistic hope that the new regulated system would 'prove so much cheaper than that of man-stealing that those foreigners who do not adopt it from motives of morality will do so with a view to economy'.[10]

In 1860, the British unilaterally demanded the inclusion of a clause in the Peking Convention of that year to establish a legal basis for the coolie trade as it then existed. According to the Peking agreements, the emperor pledged to issue a decree commanding all provincial authorities to proclaim that Chinese subjects were now 'at perfect liberty to enter into engagements with British subjects . . . and to ship themselves and their families on board any British vessels at the open ports'. The two parties then promised to get together at some future date to draw up the necessary regulations to guarantee the rights of emigrating Chinese.[11] As has been noted, it took the Chinese more than three decades to remove the prohibitions from the statute books, but it took only a few years for the Chinese government to recognize the inherent evils of the burgeoning coolie trade. To be accurate, a good portion of the pressure came from concerned foreigners, but China eventually exploited a common interest and joined in an effort to negotiate some limits to the practice. Besides providing an early test for newly learned Western diplomatic skills, the discussions which followed resulted in an almost overnight discovery of the Nanyang Chinese.

In 1864, Mao Hung-pin, the governor-general of Kwangtung and Kwangsi, was again reporting instances of kidnapping and the overt selling of persons so that they could be sent abroad. Working with the Board of Punishments and the Board of Foreign Affairs (the Tsungli Yamen), Mao managed to bring the ringleaders to justice. Nevertheless, the Chinese authorities were sufficiently alarmed and, realizing that this was a problem which could not be unilaterally resolved, Prince Kung asked Robert Hart to seek British and French cooperation in accord with the terms set forth in the Peking Convention.[12]

The French and then the British ministers replied in the fall of 1865, although the latter seem to have taken the lead in the actual talks. While the parties appeared quite far apart in the particulars, there was immediate accord on the need to reach a satisfactory settlement. Aside from assuring enforcement, the principal point of controversy centered

upon a new Chinese recognition of the existence of free Chinese laborers overseas, individuals who were not directly recruited in the coolie trade but who went abroad as free agents in search of wealth. It was clear that these individuals were not coolies and would not fall under the regulations eventually decided upon. The Chinese workers to be included in whatever treaty arrangements that were made were those who had signed contracts to go and work abroad for a specific period of time. Once this time-limit expired, however, many coolies were hired as monthly laborers joining their brothers who freely set out without contractual agreements. To the Tsungli Yamen those who fulfilled contracts and remained abroad were still Chinese subjects comparable to those only loaned a foreign consulate in one of the treaty ports. For the first time, the Chinese government expressed a real interest in the welfare of overseas Chinese. New regulations could be made to eliminate the most flagrant abuses in the recruitment process and the Chinese government argued most vigorously for firm rules governing the fulfillment of contractual terms abroad, but the Chinese negotiators were still not sure that the laborers who had already served their contracted time would find adequate protection.[13]

After months of negotiation, Prince Kung together with the British and French representatives, Rutherford Alcock and Henry DeBellonnet, signed a tripartite convention in Peking on 5 March 1866 designed to regulate the engagement of Chinese emigrant labor by British and French subjects. Russia, the United States and Prussia agreed in principle to the articles drawn up to safeguard the moral and physical well-being of Chinese contract laborers and, although the Tsungli Yamen was understandably hesitant to celebrate any accord which served to institutionalize something that was so completely antithetical to the traditional wishes of the Chinese government, the convention was a minor victory for Chinese diplomacy.

While the Chinese were never given the right to refuse permission for the two European powers to set up their emigration stations and the official with the most power to supervise the trade would remain the foreign consul, the sovereignty of the Chinese government was nominally recognized by the procedure and the Chinese local authorities were, at least, given the right to issue licenses and to examine facilities. The Chinese were clearly left without any authority to revoke a license unless they received the concurrence of the foreign consular official directly concerned. Retaining total extraterritoriality in the matter, those agents who failed to live up to their end of the bargain were subject to the laws of their home country and free from any sort of Chinese discipline.

In its international aspect, the convention of 1866 stipulated that no contract could be for longer than five years and that a six-day week and

nine-hour day were to be rigorously observed. Coolies were promised free medical attention and guaranteed the return trip to China. Husbands were not to be separated from wives or small children from their parents. All in all, the document was a liberal statement which was a potential remedy for many of the most common abuses. But, as was the case in so many of the unequal treaties negotiated with China in those years, enforcement and implementation depended solely on the good faith of the West. Unfortunately, the French and British never had an opportunity to prove either sincerity or fraud. Because of the objections of French planters and certain British interests, the home governments never ratified the pact and, since the Chinese were not particularly anxious to surrender so much authority to the foreign consuls, there were no further efforts to arrange collective control of the coolie trade with the British and French colonial empires.[14]

It is interesting to note, however, that the Chinese nevertheless demanded that British and French labor contractors conform to the provisions of the discarded convention.[15] Chinese desires remained without legal force although the Hong Kong authorities eventually equated the coolie traffic with the illegal slave trade. Other British colonies slowly reacted after that. In 1877, for example, Singapore established its own Chinese Protectorate which revived the spirit if not the letter of the abortive agreement of 1866 by taking steps to insure the welfare of all coolies passing through the port.[16]

THE MOVEMENT TO ESTABLISH CONSULATES

The Chinese government was far more successful in its dealings with Spain. In the Sino-Spanish Treaty of 1864, Spain attained the same right as the major powers to recruit Chinese laborers and inserted a similar provision that 'local authorities shall, in concert with Spanish representatives, frame regulations for the protection of immigrants'.[17] In great need of laborers for the development of the island of Cuba, the Spanish had imported ever increasing numbers of Chinese coolies – many of them by force or deception. By 1874, conditions in Cuba were reportedly so bad that the Tsungli Yamen dispatched a special commission of inquiry to investigate the situation first-hand. The commission was headed by Ch'en Lan-pin who would become the first Chinese ambassador to the United States, Spain and Peru and later the chief of China's first permanent legation in the American capital. Ch'en supervised the collection of 1,726 depositions which, according to his own report back to Peking, revealed that eight-tenths of those interviewed felt that they had been kidnapped or decoyed.

The sample was virtually unanimous in depicting inhuman treatment and horrid working conditions.[18]

The Spanish authorities in Cuba appear to have been cooperative and anxious to find a means to regulate the coolie trade. Three years after Ch'en's visit to Havana, Spain and China signed a treaty governing the immigration of Chinese to Cuba and also providing for the establishment of Chinese consulates.[19] Although the Ch'en mission of 1874 has been given little attention by historians, it was a fairly important event in the development of an aggressive Chinese stance in international relations. China's very first delegation to the West, a semi-official venture composed of relatively low-ranking mandarins chaperoned by Robert Hart then beginning a long career in the employ of the Ch'ing government, had not embarked until 1866. Two years later, the Chinese engaged the American, Anson Burlingame, to escort two technically equal Chinese envoys on another grand tour of the Western world. When the delegation returned to China in 1870 minus Burlingame who died on tour, the first all-Chinese mission to Europe departed. These officials did not, however, set out to meet the European heads of state as the representatives of an equal and fully sovereign China but to beg forgiveness of the French for the excesses of the Tientsin massacre.

Given the somewhat timid nature of China's initial overseas undertakings, Ch'en Lan-pin's commission to Cuba in 1874, with its clear purpose to secure the fair treatment of Chinese subjects abroad, stands out as a major step toward a more assertive Ch'ing presence in foreign lands. Havana was, of course, certainly not London or Paris and Spain was clearly not a major world power, but the fact that the Chinese government chose to press the issue of protecting the overseas Chinese in far-off Cuba is itself of major importance.

It had not been until 1867, immediately after the experience of negotiating the Convention to Regulate the Engagement of Chinese Emigrants by British and French subjects, that Li Hung-chang and the Tsungli Yamen began to consider the establishment of Chinese legations and consulates abroad. It was also more than pure coincidence that Li and the Chinese Foreign Ministry soon brought the condition of overseas Chinese into the discussion of the establishment of some type of external diplomatic representation.

In the fall of 1867, Ting Jih-ch'ang, a rather progressive official known for the support he gave to the self-strengthening movement and early Chinese modernization, proposed the sending of special officials to those nearby ports visited by Chinese junks (probably in Southeast Asia) and also to those places where there were large concentrations of Chinese subjects. Ting expressed awareness that a large number of

Chinese from Kwangtung and Fukien provinces had gone abroad to trade or work and he urged the selection of capable officials to manage their affairs. He estimated that there were over 30,000 Chinese in Siam, perhaps the same number in the Philippines, eight or nine thousand more in Penang, 100,000 in Singapore and another 50,000 scattered about the world.[20]

The most remarkable feature of the new discussion was Ting's perceptive recognition that the overseas Chinese, besides needing protection, might also be of service in China's infant modernization campaign. He therefore suggested that whatever officials might eventually be dispatched, 'should also be instructed to seek out among the emigrant Chinese, those who have particular skills such as the ability to make machines, to steer steamships, to handle foreign firearms, and to send them back to China with paid passage so that these men will be useful'.[21] From this early date onward, there would be repeated demands for both the supervision and the utilization of Chinese abroad. The calls for both protection and exploitation would become mixed from the start with diplomatic intrigue and the establishment of Chinese consulates. But the full value of the overseas Chinese as entrepreneurial agents would not be realized for another twenty-five years.

THE EARLY SINGAPORE CONSULATE

Just as Straits-born Chinese Song Hoot Kiam, the father of Song Ong Siang, had been among the first of his kind to visit London having made the pioneering trip in 1847 under the guidance of James Legge, so too the first Chinese consul abroad was a Singapore merchant, born at Whampoa near Canton, named Hoo Ah Kay. Known to nearly everyone as Whampoa, Hoo did not assume his office by virtue of Ch'ing appointment or the action of the Tsungli Yamen for he began as the acting Russian, not Chinese, consul in the port of Singapore. The precise circumstances surrounding Hoo's unusual post are rather obscure, but Song Ong Siang tells us that he possessed a special consular uniform with a sword given him by the Russian government although he only wore it once because he considered it ugly looking.[22]

By 1867, Hoo's activities were definitely known in far away Peking. Ting Jih-ch'ang made special reference to the well-respected Chinese who was already serving the Russians in Singapore, and, even more importantly, suggested that Hoo was just the kind of man the Chinese government should appoint to bring the overseas Chinese together and to agitate for their return to China.[23]

There is certainly not enough evidence to establish Hoo as the example, the added stimulus needed to push the Chinese empire into creating consulates of its own, but the situation is so pleasingly ironic that it merits further investigation. In recognition of his loyalty to the colonial administration, the British also named Hoo the first Chinese member of the Legislative Council in 1869, and, apparently shortly after that, the British on their own initiative made him the honorary consul for China in Singapore. Thus, in a very round-about and unofficial way, Hoo Ah Kay became China's first consul.

Although Ch'en Lan-pin engaged in a kind of circuit-riding diplomacy when he was appointed concurrent ambassador to the United States, Spain and Peru in 1875, the first permanent Chinese legation abroad was set up in England in 1877. China's pioneering envoy was Kuo Sung-tao, a highly competent diplomat who passed through Singapore on his way to his new post on 13 December 1876. On that date, Kuo was met at the pier by none other than Whampoa who had by then added the title of Japanese consul to his other claims to notoriety. Since Singapore was British territory, the new Chinese envoy to London recognized that the colony would come under his jurisdiction and there was a clear need to establish a formal consulate to 'protect and manage' the estimated 100,000 Chinese residents. In October of the following year, Kuo memorialized from his new London address an official recommendation that the Tsungli Yamen take steps to set up a consulate in Singapore.Who else but Hoo could be named the new consul? With the consular figure already at his station, Kuo saw the task ahead as a relatively simple one. Aside from an initial Chinese government expenditure, the Singapore gentleman of many hats would be expected to run and finance things by himself. In addition to his other titles, Hoo was now styled the consul-general for Nanyang.[24] When the Tsungli Yamen finally got around to endorsing Kuo's suggestion some eight months later, China formally acknowledged what must have seemed obvious to the Chinese of Singapore.[25]

Like so many overseas Chinese leaders, Hoo Ah Kay had taken on the personal attributes of a multi-national corporation. Kuo Sung-tao referred to him in his memorials as a *tao-yuan*[26] so it seems quite clear that Hoo had also purchased a high Ch'ing rank to go with his Russian sword and ultimately British imperial honor (Companion of the order of St Michael and St George).[27] He was the first of a number of eminent Chinese who would hold the nominal leadership of Singapore's Chinese community in the closing years of the Ch'ing dynasty, individuals who would leave a clear impact on their contemporaries and who would themselves be influenced by the liberal intellectual atmosphere of that British colony.[28]

The famed Whampoa died in 1880 and the Chinese government immediately sought to establish a full-fledged consulate in Singapore officially recognized by Great Britain. The man selected for the vacancy was Tso Ping-lung. It would have been hard to find an individual more ideally suited to cosmopolitan Singapore. Tso had passed the traditional civil service examinations at the provincial level and was considered a fair classical poet but he had been assigned to the national school for interpreters by the Tsungli Yamen in the early 1860s as one of the first positive steps in the self-strengthening movement. Tso graduated from the institution fluent in English and soon gained a reputation as one of the finest translators in China. Tso was extremely valuable to the Chinese government in any capacity, and his arrival in Singapore, in mid-August 1881, symbolized China's new interest in the fate of the overseas Chinese.[29]

Tso clearly recognized the importance of education in raising the cultural level of Singapore's Chinese and, apparently quite shocked by the distance Straits Chinese had already drifted from the traditions of their homeland, he set out to stimulate a new interest in China and her heritage. Shortly after his arrival, he organized a literary association, the Hui Hsien She, to encourage traditional scholarship. He initiated a literary contest with a new topic announced at the beginning of every month and with cash prizes to the winners.

It was no coincidence that the *Lat Pau* first appeared in the year 1881. This newspaper was the first commercial daily in the Chinese language in the whole of Nanyang and one of the earliest Chinese private newspapers published anywhere. The *Lat Pau* was very closely tied to the Chinese consulate from the start and remained so until about 1906. It is, in fact, the existence of such a newspaper intimately related to official Chinese policy that makes it possible to reconstruct the late Ch'ing relationship with Nanyang's Chinese with any accuracy today.[30]

Tso was also very progressive given the times and he encouraged the learning of English. Apparently in imitation of the British Singapore Debating Society, Tso launched a rival Chinese Celestial Reasoning Association in 1882, to debate a host of problems. He approved of a number of European practices and, speaking at the opening meeting of the Straits Chinese Recreation Club in 1887, an organization dedicated to the enjoyment of Western sports activities, he made the following statement quite out of character with the image of a traditional Chinese scholar:

Whilst in China, I am sorry to say, no play whatever is allowed to students in the school. Those who study too hard very often suffer from consumption or other diseases merely on account of not having sufficient exercise. It is a pity

that they do not understand what the proverb says: 'All work and no play makes Jack a dull boy.' I believe no member of this club is likely to become a dull boy.[31]

Tso also labored to fit the stereotype of the good Confucian official. He obviously felt that the moral and physical well-being of Singapore's Chinese was his responsibility. He cooperated with the British-staffed Chinese Protectorate in order to try to regulate the coolie trade and a growing traffic in prostitutes and constantly spoke of his concern for the common people. In the final analysis, however, Consul Tso Ping-lung made a far greater impact on the more affluent constituency composed of Chinese merchants and English-educated professionals giving the first great boost to the growth of Chinese nationalist feeling in Southeast Asia. It appears, however, that besides stimulating loyalty to China, Tso was expert at exploiting the sentiments he helped stir up.

Soon after he assumed the consular role, the campaign to sell Ch'ing ranks and honors gained momentum. With the *Lat Pau* now printing titles where all could see and fancy diplomatic affairs frequently held at the consulate, the lure of traditional status increased dramatically. In addition to inciting interest in China, the *Lat Pau* carried Chinese appeals for financial help and gave publicity to those who subscribed funds. In June 1885, the newspaper published letters from Fukien authorities asking Straits Chinese to donate money to compensate families killed by French military action in the province. Titles also sold fast and some $65,000 was reportedly raised.[32] Tso collected a similar amount that same summer to aid in Cantonese flood relief and the following year two Ch'ing agents visited Perak to seek support for the construction of Kwangtung coastal defense works.[33] One student of the subject has even discovered that there was a campaign launched to raise money not only for South China but also for northern provinces.[34] In apparent recognition of his great success, Tso was promoted from the rank of district magistrate to that of taotai in 1888.[35]

THE BEGINNINGS OF CONSULATE EXPANSION

Tso's activism in the decade of the 1880s must not be taken as an isolated Straits phenomenon but seen in the context of a changing Ch'ing attitude toward the Chinese abroad. In 1875, Ch'en Lan-pin's appointment as ambassador to the United States, Spain and Peru was clearly motivated by a Tsungli Yamen desire to protect the interests of the overseas Chinese. There were, of course, many other factors but the available documentary record conspicuously mentions the problem of protecting Chinese subjects abroad.[36] After the establishment of a permanent legation in Washington, Ch'en petitioned the Tsungli

Yamen in March 1878 to urge the founding of consulates to guarantee additional protection of overseas Chinese interests.[37] Not long after the first consulate was established in San Francisco, Chinese merchants in Honolulu, led by a Ch'en Kuo-fen who possessed the brevet sub-prefect rank, began to agitate for their own consulate.[38] In 1881, the Tsungli Yamen responded favorably and in 1883 steps were begun to open another consulate in New York.[39]

Since Ch'en Lan-pin was concurrently ambassador to Spain, it was not long before the Chinese in the Philippines caught the spirit and demanded a consulate too and, in 1880, Ch'en forwarded the request to Li Hung-chang. Edgar Wickberg argues that this was the first known attempt by the Chinese in Manila to tie themselves politically to China and if this is indeed the case the date stands as an important mark in the development of overseas Chinese nationalism.[40] Li hesitated a little but eventually suggested that the Tsungli Yamen might dispatch an investigatory mission similar to the one that had visited Spanish Cuba several years earlier.[41] Ch'en pursued the matter with the Spanish government as did his successor Cheng Tsao-ju but nothing definite was accomplished for a full five years.[42]

A new phase in the Philippine Chinese consulate negotiations began in 1885 when Chang Yin-huan replaced Cheng as China's ambassador to the three Western nations. Before leaving to take up his new position, he stayed over in Canton to discuss the general problem of the overseas Chinese with the noted modernizer Chang Chih-tung, then governor-general of Kwangtung and Kwangsi.[43] Chang Chih-tung had become interested in overseas Chinese affairs for a number of reasons. He was especially intrigued by the remittances that the Chinese abroad had been faithfully sending to their families at home. Estimating the total at somewhere around $20,000,000 each year, Chang was also aware of the growing amount that was being raised for relief and national defense and he was extremely eager to exploit the potential for even greater contributions. His memorials of the period reveal considerable knowledge about the numbers of the Chinese abroad which he (rather conservatively) estimated at about one million. He seemed particularly well versed about the ports in nearby Southeast Asia and was definitely aware that a number of Chinese had become very wealthy in their foreign sojourn.[44]

As early as October 1885, Chang had devised a clever scheme for combining the elements of protection and exploitation. He proposed that a fleet of half a dozen warships should be constructed to come to the aid of Chinese not only in Nanyang but also in the Americas. The fleet, however, was to be financed exclusively through overseas Chinese contributions since the Chinese abroad would surely pay for

their own security. Speculating that everyone would donate something, Chang was convinced that the necessary money could be quickly raised. If the promise of naval protection was not in itself enough incentive still more titles and scholarly degrees could be opened up for public purchase.[45] The plan never really caught on but, as will be seen, a token number of Chinese warships were to pay almost yearly visits to Southeast Asia and the idea of soliciting contributions for the imperial navy would be revived several times before the fall of the Ch'ing dynasty.

In line with his philosophical conservatism, Chang envisioned protection of the overseas Chinese in traditional terms and suggested that Confucian academies ought to be established in conjunction with consulates to insure the proper training of Chinese isolated on alien soil. Several years earlier, Ch'en Lan-pin had given some thought to the creation of Sino-Western schools to educate bright young Chinese in America, Cuba and Peru so that they might be sent back to China to work in factories or to serve in the navy much as Ting Jih-ch'ang might have proposed. In November 1885, Chang Yin-huan again memorialized that such schools should be established and a modern model school was opened one year later at the consulate in Havana.[46]

With the two Changs most directly concerned with molding the Ch'ing attitude toward the overseas Chinese together in Canton, four leaders of the Manila merchant community seized the opportunity and traveled to Hong Kong with a petition and a pledge that the Philippine Chinese would underwrite a consulate if one were set up. Meeting Chang Yin-huan in Hong Kong in early 1886 together with the directors of the Tung Wah Hospital who often acted as the intermediary in Ch'ing relations with the overseas Chinese (usually to convince contributors that their money would really be used for charitable purposes and would not fall into the hands of corrupt officials) the Philippine delegation argued that one consulate in Singapore was not enough. Chang Chih-tung and Chang Yin-huan needed little persuasion. On 30 March 1886 they revived the abandoned idea of a tour of investigation originally proposed by Li Hung-chang, but the commission would not limit itself to the Philippines but would visit all of Southeast Asia.[47]

They selected two distinguished gentlemen to head the commission of inquiry – Brigadier General Wang Yung-ho who had lived in Penang and a Cantonese named Yü Ch'iung. Chang Chih-tung would have liked to use Chinese naval vessels for the trip but apparently Li Hung-chang had the final say and it was decided that the two commissioners, accompanied by a very small party, would have to make their way on commercial liners. The group left Canton in August 1886 and in a year's travel visited the Philippines, Singapore, Malacca, Penang,

Rangoon, Deli, Batavia, Semarang, Surabaya and several cities in Australia.[48]

The commissioners missed Bangkok and Saigon and had trouble getting visas for the Netherlands Indies but the journey proved a great success. Lea Williams notes that the mission was the first direct contact the Dutch colony had ever had with Chinese officialdom.[49] From the public relations standpoint, the commission's visit to the Straits Settlements in the fall of 1886 was exactly what Tso Ping-lung needed to generate overseas Chinese enthusiasm. But the inspection tour also served all the more to whet the appetite of China's official policy makers.

The two commissioners urged the establishment of a Chinese consulate in Manila but that would remain a diplomatic impossibility until after the United States attained possession of the islands. They also recommended that vice-consulates be located wherever there were large numbers of Chinese. The report brought back by the commissioners was fairly extensive but other than discussing the need for consular expansion the Ch'ing sightseers emphasized only numbers and wealth.[50]

THE STRENGTHENING TIES: HSUEH FU-CH'ENG AND HUANG TSUN-HSIEN

Chang Chih-tung and the Tsungli Yamen had many other problems to occupy their attention, and interest in the overseas Chinese in Nanyang might possibly have waned if it were not for the activities of another renowned early modernizer Hsueh Fu-ch'eng. Although Hsueh was Chinese ambassador to four European powers from early 1890 to 1894, his great claim to fame has not been considered of a diplomatic nature. He is known not for what he did in Europe but for what he saw and wrote. Hsueh left a personal and very instructive *Diary of a Mission to the Four Countries of England, France, Italy and Belgium* in which he came to the conclusion that China could only be saved through modernization.[51]

The fact that has generally been overlooked is that Hsueh came to regard himself as something of an expert on the condition and affairs of the Chinese in Southeast Asia. His *Diary* makes numerous references to all of the Nanyang nations. He mentions the selection of Chinese *kapitans* in the Netherlands Indies and even the special trade relationship between Penang and Atjeh. He cites the Singapore *Straits Times* and also notes that one-third of the miners in the Straits were under the control of a Cantonese named Cheng (*Kapitan* Chung Keng Kwee). He frequently comments about Tso Ping-lung since Singapore and the

whole of Malaya were more or less under his direct jurisdiction as Chinese envoy in London.[52]

In his brief stay in London, Hsueh became a staunch advocate of expanding consular protection to all the Chinese abroad. The need to establish consulates in the major cities of Southeast Asia, a hope which the Wang and Yü mission had raised some years earlier, was a frequent topic for comment in his *Diary*. Singapore Consul Tso Ping-lung, pressed by the merchant community and no doubt in need of assistance in his multiple fund-raising activities, also kept a fire under his London-based superior.[53] Their case received special added support from Admiral Ting who visited the Straits in his flagship in 1890 and also petitioned the Tsungli Yamen to ask for vice-consulates at Penang, Malacca and at several inland locations.[54] In the meantime, the stalemated negotiations with Spain over a Manila consulate also kept the general condition of the Nanyang Chinese before the Peking government.[55]

Toward the very end of 1890, Hsueh recommended that vice-consulates should be set up in Penang and in Malacca under Tso's supervision. Tso would be formally named consul-general for China at Singapore while, one would assume, also retaining the less formal designation of Nanyang consul-general. In February of the following year, Hsueh pressed the opening of consulates in all British colonies or territories including Hong Kong. Three months later, he singled out the need to make Singapore a consulate-general once again, proposing this time that the key post should go to Huang Tsun-hsien. With Tsungli Yamen approval and British concurrence, Huang arrived in Singapore as the first official consul-general in October 1891. It would take two more years before the British would agree to the opening of just one vice-consulate at Penang.[56]

Hsueh Fu-ch'eng's desire to strengthen the ties between Nanyang Chinese and the China homeland, and the selection of Huang Tsun-hsien to administer Ch'ing policy, ushered in a new era. The campaign for the wealth and support of Nanyang Chinese was about to begin in earnest.

Huang is a rather famous Chinese in his own right. He earned considerable fame as an innovative poet and diplomat but was probably best known as one of the reformers of 1898 and as a very close and influential friend of Liang Ch'i-ch'ao. He seems to have gathered his enthusiasm for reform through world-wide travel. In 1876, he entered China's emerging foreign service and accompanied the first legation to Japan in the following year. After six years in that country, he had mastered Japanese, associated with leading scholars there and established himself as an expert on Japan, all facts that would eventually

lead to his selection as ambassador. He was impressed by the Japanese success at modernization – as many later generations of Chinese students would be – and came, at a very early stage in his career, to hope for a similar course of events in China. In 1887, he published a monumental work, *Jih-pen kuo-chih* (The history of Japan), which would become the standard Tsungli Yamen text about China's threatening neighbor.[57]

From 1882 to 1885, he served as Chinese consul-general in San Francisco and was assigned to Hsueh's staff in London, experiences which would help generate a passionate concern for overseas Chinese matters and contribute directly to his choice as the man to introduce a really aggressive Ch'ing policy in Southeast Asia.

Huang held the *chin-shih* degree and combined exceptionally advanced ideas picked up in his many years abroad with conservative Chinese values. He reportedly wrote a long and sad poem when, in San Francisco, he heard of the forced recall of Chinese students in America by an imperial government unwilling to run the danger of subversion by Western ideas and contact. His overall impression of the United States was not, however, particularly good.[58]

One of his first acts in Singapore was to renovate Tso Ping-lung's Hui Hsien She, double the prize and modernize the essay topics to embrace discussion of China's foreign and domestic problems. He also introduced questions based on the practical experiences of the overseas Chinese, such as: 'Explain why European governments ban prostitution but not in their colonies.'[59] This type of thinly disguised criticism of British rule did not make Huang particularly popular with the authorities who were also put off by his reluctance to use English. While Tso Ping-lung had ingratiated himself with the colonial power and attempted to balance his various patriotic activities with kind words of encouragement for English-language education and some Western cultural traits, Huang was far more independent. Forgoing cooperation with Singapore authorities, and casting aside the good will Tso had managed to build up, he appears to have been on a collision course with the ruling power almost from the time of his arrival.

One of the most obvious reasons for this was the tremendous success Huang enjoyed within the Chinese community. In his four years in Singapore, he managed repeated appeals for overseas Chinese relief for disasters in Shantung, Chihli, Chekiang, Kiangsu and, of course, the coastal homelands of Kwangtung and Fukien. Hardly a month passed without some new campaign starting. Sales of rank and titles greatly increased and became even more institutionalized. Wen Chung Chi has done a careful survey of contribution lists published in the Chinese press in the last six months of 1893 and comes to the

conclusion that Huang managed to enlist support from almost every important Chinese center in Southeast Asia. Money flowed in from the Malay States, Bangkok, Batavia, Bandung, Bali, the Lesser Sunda Islands and Celebes, Surabaya, Semarang, Deli, Sarawak, Hanoi, Saigon, Atjeh, Rangoon and the Philippines. As a rough estimate, Wen figures that at least 10,000 people participated.[60]

Huang's success was due in large part to his recruitment of leading merchants and well-known *kapitans* as collection agents. It is quite possible that not all the contributions were voluntary and that the Chinese leaders simply forced their laborers to donate a portion of their wages, but donations under duress could only have constituted a small percentage of the total. The large contributors continued to be individuals who already held Ch'ing honors. Even if their philanthropy, designed as it was to enhance influence and social status, may well have been the result of a type of pressure, it was certainly not forced.

The Singapore and Penang consulates provided the cover and support for an almost constant stream of Ch'ing agents in the ten years from 1893 to 1903. The British government became increasingly alarmed by Huang's activities and in 1903, G. T. Hare, the Straits secretary for Chinese affairs, prepared a secret report on Huang and his successor as Singapore consul-general, Chang Pi-shih. Hare was convinced that Huang had been consciously attempting to alienate the loyalty of the Straits Chinese and concluded that: 'there can be no doubt that if he had remained here another five years, he would have seriously weakened the loyalty, undermined the good feeling hitherto existing toward us among the Chinese'.[61]

Hare warned that the Chinese government's influence in the area was far greater than the colonial authorities realized and that the flow of Manchu agents was ever increasing. According to his own records, more than fifty Chinese representatives had been sent out by China as of the 1903 date, put up in the consulates or in the homes of wealthy merchants. Hare's solution to the increasing Ch'ing presence was to recommend that the British adopt a system of titles and rewards patterned on the Dutch rule in the Netherlands Indies. The point he did not realize, however, was that some of the leading Ch'ing agents were already holders of high Dutch honors.[62]

The inevitable clash between Huang and the Straits government took place in the fall of 1894. Because returning overseas Chinese were often subject to harassment by local Chinese officials Huang began to issue letters of introduction which merchants might present upon their return to China in order to receive more favored treatment. A modest fee of between one and four Straits dollars was assessed according to the merchants' ability to pay. The colonial authorities

immediately protested that Huang was issuing 'passports' and consequently stepping far beyond his position as a Chinese commercial representative. Chinese aliens in Singapore were, after all, under direct British rule and the possibility that Huang would issue official looking documents to Straits-born British subjects was totally unacceptable. The Straits government immediately posted notices and placed announcements in the Chinese-language press to the effect that:

> It is necessary to explain to you that Chinese consular officers are appointed in the Straits Settlements as commercial agents on behalf of China, and that they can in no way exercise any local power or issue notices with reference to local affairs, or like local officers give official commands to Chinese living here under British rule . . . and that the Chinese Consul General can in no way be allowed to come between the Chinese and the local Government.[63]

Rumors spread that Huang had personally made $200,000 out of his consular position and that he was shrewdly exploiting Straits Chinese forcing all residents to purchase the alleged passports or 'ju tans' (*hu-tan* in Mandarin).[64] There can be no question that Huang was doing everything possible to stimulate a new sense of loyalty to China and he was, undoubtedly, well on his way to establishing the *imperium in imperio* so feared by the colonial power, but in the instance of the 'ju tans' the consul-general was acting honorably. He was, however, also following the instructions of the Chinese government and this may have been the decisive factor.

The cause for Huang's disgrace was ironically one of his major accomplishments and the result of close collaboration between the Singapore consul-general and Hsueh Fu-ch'eng in London. On 21 August 1893, the ambassador in London memorialized to the throne and requested the complete rescinding of the existing prohibition against emigration. He further asked the throne to begin steps to protect overseas Chinese who could be induced to come home. He enclosed similar recommendations from Huang including the consul-general's observation that seventy percent of the merchants in Nanyang were Chinese and generally considered wealthy. Huang made a special effort to point out that: 'For more than a hundred years they have adhered to the Chinese calendar and modes of dress. Whenever a subscription has been started to relieve distress in China, they have always subscribed liberally, and take pride in any honorary rank or distinction bestowed on them.' But, because they were subjected to hostility and extortion upon returning to their homeland, it was only proper that they should be protected by the Chinese government and the means Huang suggested was the issuance of passes to all returning immigrants.[65]

The Tsungli Yamen promptly endorsed Huang's proposal and the covering Hsueh Fu-ch'eng memorial three weeks later, and on 13 September 1893, the emperor ordered the following:

Henceforth all Chinese merchants irrespective of how long they have been abroad whether married or with children may return home to practice their trade upon receiving a pass from the Chinese minister or consul. If the situation requires it, they may go abroad again to carry out their business and must not as in the past be subjected to extortion.[66]

At the time, the *Straits Times* published the full text of Hsueh's memorial along with the imperial edict fully noting that the removal of the old and controversial law from the books was the work of Huang Tsun-hsien. Editorial reaction was extremely warm and the action was described as 'a cause of gratulation not only to Chinamen but to Englishmen'. The paper expressed the belief that returning Chinese would, indeed, be issued a pass by the consul-general in Singapore and that many Straits Chinese would probably avail themselves of this opportunity to return home to China. The editor concluded that 'it would, on the whole, be well for them, for China and for England, that they should do so'.[67]

The next year, however, found the British in a far less generous mood and Huang would suffer the consequences. But, the English-language press, in its opinion that the rescinding proclamation would introduce a new relationship between China and the overseas Chinese, proved quite profound. The date was a turning point in Ch'ing policy and the symbolic beginning of a new campaign to attract the active support of overseas Chinese capitalists.

The year 1893 was also important to China and the overseas Chinese because Hsueh and Huang formally brought Chang Pi-shih into the service of the Ch'ing empire on 24 May when he assumed his duties as vice-consul for China at Penang.[68] Chang's appointment was the most significant factor in Huang Tsun-hsien's Nanyang success. With his personal power and charisma in the overseas Chinese communities of Java, Sumatra and Malaya, Chang gave Consul-General Huang all the local assistance he needed. In the years after 1893, Chang Pi-shih would become the most influential overseas Chinese personality in China and one of the key figures in late Ch'ing modernization. Chang, more than any other man, would be credited with the successful Ch'ing exploitation of overseas Chinese talent and wealth. Unlike Tso and Huang who preceded him, Chang Pi-shih would be more than a representative of the Chinese government. He would also be an able representative of the overseas Chinese in Southeast Asia, a modernizer who would bring to China wealth and a business know-how attained abroad and, in so doing, inject new life into the decaying dynasty.

4

The recruitment of Chang Pi-shih

It is really not certain when Chang Pi-shih first came to the attention of Ch'ing policy makers. As an extremely wealthy businessman and community leader he was probably a leading supporter of many of the charitable drives begun by Tso Ping-lung. The *Lat Pau* does refer to his aid in flood relief in the summer of 1889.[1] Chang tells us that he was passing through Hong Kong in 1891 and, on that occasion, he received a cable from Sheng Hsuan-huai, the noted modernizer, inviting him to come north to Chefoo to discuss the management of railroads, mines and other matters.[2] It is hard to believe that Sheng would have issued such an invitation if the two did not already know each other. Even if this was to be their first meeting, Chang's fame clearly had already spread to China.

Sometime in 1892, after Huang had established the consulate-general in Singapore and further negotiations with the British had progressed to the point of dealing in specifics, the name of Chang Pi-shih was formally presented as a candidate for the first vice-consular position at Penang.[3]

In the summer of 1893, about three months after Chang actually assumed his new office, Hsueh Fu-ch'eng informed the Tsungli Yamen that the new vice-consulate had been opened. It took another year, however, before Hsueh memorialized requesting the establishment of regularized procedures for the second Nanyang consulate and informed Peking that, upon Huang Tsun-hsien's suggestion, it had been decided best to utilize local talent and that the post was being filled by Penang's Chang Pi-shih. It is not improper to speculate that one of the reasons for Chang's appointment, as had been the case years earlier with Singapore's prosperous Hoo Ah Kay, was the Tsungli Yamen's inertia when it came to spending money abroad. When Chang opened the Penang operation he was, however, given a token salary of one hundred taels per month drawn either out of Hsueh's European budget or possibly out of Huang's own pocket. Chang was expected to pay his entire staff and manage the consulate on this stipend, so it is obvious that he was not about to make a direct profit out of his position.[4] But Chang and his successors at the Chinese vice-consulate would more than make up for their personal

investment in new-found prestige, commercial opportunity and community power.

In the summer of 1894, Li Hung-chang, the most powerful Chinese official at the time, honored Chang who then held the brevet rank of prefect for what he had done to arouse the support of the local Nanyang 'gentry'.[5] From that time onward, Li was certainly aware of Chang Pi-shih's importance in Southeast Asia even if he missed the Tsungli Yamen's final recognition of the establishment of the Penang vice-consulate which is highly unlikely. Li and Chang would, of course, meet personally in Singapore just two years later and get together at least once more in Canton in the closing years of the century.[6] He would also appoint Chang to the board of directors of several important projects.

There are, however, a number of secondary sources in the Chinese language published in Southeast Asia which adamantly claim that it was Li Hung-chang himself who appointed Chang as Penang vice-consul. On the one hand, this argument is not at all difficult to accept since Li, by virtue of his domineering hand in China's foreign policy, would probably have affixed his mark of approval somewhere in the proceedings. On the other hand, these works attempt to make too much of Li as an active sponsor of Chang's initial recruitment into Ch'ing service.[7]

Although there is disagreement and probable error concerning the date, these accounts agree that Hsueh Fu-ch'eng's replacement as ambassador to England, Kung Chao-yuan, passed through Penang where he met Chang and inquired about the Western methods that had made commerce so successful in Nanyang. He also asked Chang the secret of his own wealth and the overseas Chinese capitalist reportedly responded with the following formula:

> I exhausted the land's resources and observed the changing times; what others sold off I stored up and what they desired to buy I supplied looking for the expensive place to sell something that was cheap; I knew how to handle the unexpected and win; I practiced diligence and frugality and I selected the proper man on the proper occasion.[8]

Kung was so impressed that he promptly wrote a special letter of recommendation to Li Hung-chang stating that China had to find some way to take advantage of Chang Pi-shih's commercial ability. Li is then said to have appointed Chang vice-consul. The great difficulty with this version is the fact that Kung would not even have been appointed ambassador designate to London until late 1893 since Hsueh was still compiling memorials about the Penang operation in mid-1894. By that time, Chang would have already taken office under Huang and Hsueh's sponsorship and whatever Kung did would have been only of a

seconding nature. Later, when the new envoy was in London, Chang would clearly receive his support suggesting that the two may well have met in Penang. The dating is important only to the extent that Kung's sponsorship might have brought Li Hung-chang into the picture. It was in 1894 that rumors first circulated about Li offering Chang Pi-shih management of the China Merchants' Steam Navigation Company and also that was the year when Li recognized Chang's importance in fund-raising. It is also an established fact that Chang returned to China during 1894 and it is hard to believe that he would have left his new duties so soon without the backing of very high officials.

While Chang was back in China on leave, his replacement as acting vice-consul, his cousin Chang Yü-nan, led a parade of mandarin-costumed individuals through the streets of Penang carrying an autographed tablet from the Chinese emperor addressed to the city's merchants.[9] Huang Tsun-hsien was also returning to China when the issue of the 'ju tans' grew to crisis proportions. The interesting thing about the whole episode, however, is the fact that the British authorities must have kept abreast of developments in the Chinese-language press which had almost two weeks earlier announced that Huang, having served three years in Singapore, wished to go back to China and that he had, in fact, already been recalled to service on the Chinese mainland by Chang Chih-tung.[10] A good ten days before the government initiated its attack on Huang's activities, the *Straits Times* reported that he was, indeed, leaving to take up a new position in China.[11] The only possible explanation for the attack against Huang, clearly a lame duck official, was to warn his successor that the government would no longer tolerate an aggressive Ch'ing posture in Singapore.

Huang's Nanyang boldness did, however, eventually return to haunt him and may even have influenced the course of development in China. The immediate reason for his recall was not the British dissatisfaction but the Sino-Japanese War and the obvious need for his special experience and expertise. When the war was over, Huang was expected to enter the diplomatic corps again and was promoted to the post of Chinese ambassador to Berlin in 1896. For some reason, probably because of unfavorable British reports, the German government refused to accept his appointment and his long career as a diplomat came to an abrupt end.

The year 1896 was also significant because it was the year that Huang and Liang Ch'i-ch'ao became fast friends. In the fall of that year, Huang was summoned to an audience with the emperor in which he stressed the need for reform. Soon afterwards, he ended up in Hunan province as a judicial commissioner to Governor Ch'en Pao-chen who

utilized the liberal-minded talents of both Huang and Liang to begin his own reform movement which included the establishment of a current affairs college, the purchase of steamers and plans to construct a railroad and thus provided an example for the more renowned reform movement of 1898.[12]

In the fall of 1894, when Huang was recalled to China, Kung Chao-yuan promptly appointed Chang Pi-shih to the vacancy at Singapore.[13] Inheriting the grave problems of British suspicion and skepticism, Chang assumed the post of acting Chinese consul-general for Nanyang at Singapore in January of the following year. One of the first things he did was to move the consulate into a large Chinese-style mansion which had long been a landmark, greatly enhancing its public image.[14] Chang Pi-shih, nevertheless, also knew how important it was to maintain good relations with the colonial authorities. He not only paid calls on the high authorities as protocol would have required, but also took time during his very first week to visit the Police Court in order to convey his best wishes for the Chinese lunar new year.[15]

Despite Secretary Hare's cognizance of what the consulate was up to, Chang did keep in the good graces of the colonial government even while he was expanding Ch'ing influence in the area. This was in large part due to the soothing presence of Lew Yuk Lin, a real favorite of the British, on Chang's Singapore staff. Brought out to Singapore by Ambassador Kung himself in the spring of 1894 to assist Huang Tsun-hsien as a second translator, Lew was an unmistakable progressive. He had been educated at Andover Academy in Massachusetts and served at China's New York City consulate for five years from 1885 to 1890. Lew also spent two years attached to the Chinese legation in Washington and was fluent in English. He made a lasting impression on the Straits Chinese community by taking up the Western game of tennis. In 1909, years after he had left the colony, the *Straits Times* would still refer to him as 'one of the most enlightened of the present generation of Chinese officials'.[16]

Lew rapidly rose to the position of assistant consul-general under Chang Pi-shih and helped welcome Li Hung-chang to Singapore in April 1896. Because Chang Pi-shih would spend as much time in China as in Nanyang, Lew frequently functioned as the ranking Ch'ing official in Southeast Asia.[17] Near the end of the century, Lew joined the London embassy as a secretary and personally escorted an order of machinery bought by the Chinese government in Birmingham back to China in the summer of 1900. He was immediately sent back to Europe to become chargé d'affaires at Brussels. Lew was honored there as 'Chevalier of the order of Leopold' and called back to China for an imperial audience in 1903. He also gained a reputation as a trouble-

shooter for the Ch'ing government and when the condition of coolie laborers in South Africa became a major problem, he was dispatched as Chinese consul-general for the Transvaal in March 1905. Two years after that, he was recalled to Peking to help establish a commission to try to stamp out opium smoking.[18]

As a career diplomat, fluent in English, witty and Westernized, Lew made a hit just about everywhere he was assigned and he gave the Singapore consulate a special air of respectability in British eyes while his superior, Chang Pi-shih, was simultaneously boosting the consulate's prestige and importance to the Chinese government.

Singapore had long been the unofficial capital of the Chinese communities in Southeast Asia. It was the obvious geographic, commercial and intellectual center for the overseas Chinese world. With the establishment of the consulate and the posting of a consul-general, this informal capital also took a demonstrable step toward becoming the political center as well. Because a consulate was not opened in the Philippines until 1899 and no consular representative was permitted in the Netherlands Indies until after the Revolution of 1911–12, the Chinese consul-general in Singapore was also charged with protecting and exploiting these other areas as far as possible.[19]

Singapore never had much practical influence in the Philippines, and what there was was gradually displaced after 1900, but the British colony became the nerve center for Ch'ing activities in Java and Sumatra right from the start and its importance actually increased as the years went by. China's success in maintaining contact with its subjects under Dutch rule was a direct consequence of the recruitment of Chang Pi-shih. When Chang returned to China in the fall of 1894, he selected his own cousin, the headman at Medan, Chang Yü-nan, to take his place. This Dutch *kapitein* remained as acting vice-consul until June of the following year, months after his sponsor had been promoted. When Chang Yü-nan felt it prudent to return to Sumatra, he was replaced by one of the Singapore consul-general's close associates and another Dutch headman, Hsieh Yung-kuang. When Hsieh finally retired from the post in 1902, his son-in-law Leong Fee took over and helped retain Chang Pi-shih's personal and financial ties with the Penang vice-consulate.[20] The Chinese government, through Chang Pi-shih and his coterie, was able to establish a direct link with the rapidly growing Chinese population in Sumatra and because Penang's Ch'ing officers were so intimately connected with Dutch rank and headman control, the absence of official consular status hardly stood in the way of Chinese objectives.

As will come to be appreciated, it is difficult to exaggerate the important role Chang played in carrying out China's new forward policy

toward the Nanyang Chinese. But Chang Pi-shih also helped shape that policy. The Chinese government had recognized the potential of overseas Chinese capital investment in China for a number of years but there were very few practical ideas aside from the construction of warships. The first really positive act to encourage Chinese to return to their homeland did not occur until 1893 when the old emigration statute was removed. Hsueh Fu-ch'eng did, apparently, try to recruit a Singapore merchant named Tan (Ch'en) back in 1890 to help raise capital in Nanyang to invest in a cotton mill set up by Li Hung-chang at Shanghai, but Chang Pi-shih's meeting with Sheng Hsuan-huai the following year may well have been the earliest case of an overseas Chinese with truly great resources at his command traveling back to China to size up the situation.[21] Overseas multi-millionaire Chang Pi-shih thus brought a concrete reality to what had before been only a theoretical source of wealth and talent.

Chang's 1891 conversation with Sheng Hsuan-huai in Chefoo eventually turned to the area's climate and its suitability for the cultivation of grapes to be used in wine-making. Chang remembered that twenty years earlier when he had been living in Java he, too, had given the matter some serious thought. Chang had been at the French consulate there with a Dutch friend and when the topic for discussion shifted to China, the French consul observed that the Tientsin–Chefoo region was ideally suited for grape-growing. A veteran of the joint Anglo-French expedition of 1860 which had once occupied the area, the French official recalled that the troops, as soldiers might universally be expected to do, experimented in an attempt to produce wine.

Sheng noted that he had tried to do the same himself but that there was no knowledgeable winemaker available. For Chang, an overseas Chinese who was able to break down the racial prejudices of the Netherlands Indies and sit and chat with Europeans, the problem of finding a Western wine expert posed little difficulty but he was worried about the availability of a large supply of wine bottles. Sheng dispensed with this practical problem by pointing out the existence of a glass works in Shanghai and when Chang returned to Penang, he set out to write to Western wine experts to try to learn the secrets of their art. In 1893, when he was opening the Penang vice-consulate, a Western friend was able to recommend a famous winemaker. The contract was signed and plans were made to make a test batch of wine at Chefoo in the summer of 1894, but the foreign expert failed to show up because of illness. After Chang had been transferred to Singapore, he met a German doctor who had secured the service of a Dutchman who claimed to be a licensed winemaker. This master was sent to North

China and returned with a sample product the same year. Chang called in British and Dutch chemists to analyse the contents. They reported that the wine was not mature yet but Chang was optimistic and wanted to proceed with the experiment. He bought land in Chefoo and ordered 2,000 grapevines from America and petitioned the Chinese government for a fifteen-year monopoly and three years' exemption from taxes.[22]

Chang argued that his project to produce Western-type wines would help keep Chinese capital in China and, with reasoning quite in tune with strategies in developing countries today which consider 'import substitution' one of the initial steps in national economic development, he stressed that the construction of his winery would 'take away the profits of foreign merchants'. He also argued that 'the road to national power began with making the nation wealthy and that the cultivation of the land was essential for the management of finances'. These two notions echoed the beliefs of China's self-strengtheners but Chang went a step further to point out that commerce was very important in Western countries which had individuals who specialized in such matters. When it came time to organize a company in the West, shares were sold or money was borrowed. What Chang wanted to do was to organize a Western-style corporation to undertake the construction of a winery at Chefoo. Sheng Hsuan-huai seconded Chang's proposal and forwarded the petition to the governor-general of Chihli, Wang Wen-shao. On 22 September 1895 the undertaking received imperial sanction and the Chang Yü Pioneer Wine Company, reputedly the first Chinese enterprise ever to produce a completely Western line of consumer products, began with private capital.[23]

A few months after the company was formed, it was discovered that the Dutch winemaker who had been engaged was not really qualified and the whole project seemed in jeopardy. In the spring of 1896, however, Chang approached the consul representing the Austro-Hungarian Empire who was able to recommend a member of his own staff, the Vice-Consul Baron M. Von Babo. This new expert disapproved of the earlier choice of grapes and ordered 140,000 foreign seedlings. Only thirty percent survived the long voyage to China and half a million more high-quality seedlings were imported from just about every Western wine-producing country the next winter. French and Austrian grapes were also grafted onto wild Chinese stock and, by 1900, several thousand acres had been planted on the hill slopes behind the town of Chefoo.

Although he had originally proposed to start a company that would go public and issue stock, Chang provided all the initial capital, approximately $3,000,000, himself. He imported the necessary machin-

ery and began the construction of the winery before he set about selling shares in 1898. We are indeed fortunate that the *Penang Sin Poe* obtained and printed a copy of the company's prospectus and thus preserved a great many details about the formative years of one of China's most adventuresome early industrial efforts.[24]

Babo lived on the premises until after the First World War and helped supervise the growth of a financially successful enterprise and the town's main attraction. The wine was stored in a cavernous underground cellar that took two years to build and held huge casks and many thousands of bottles. The winery grounds had its own mule-drawn railroad, the latest machinery and, by the time it was ready to market its product in 1909, Chang was already producing wine bottles in his own adjacent glassworks. The first manager was a nephew of Chang Pi-shih who had been educated at Penang's St Xavier's Institute; it was subsequently managed by other overseas Chinese including a gentleman from Singapore, Chang's fourth brother and Chang's second son. The original market was to be the China coast and the ports of Southeast Asia. Despite the vicissitudes of modern Chinese history and the nationalization of the wine industry many years ago, it was still possible to purchase the red and white wines of the Chang Yü Pioneer Wine Company in Singapore in 1970, exported to Nanyang by the Chinese Communists.

In the summer of 1898, when many Chinese officials were caught up in the spirit of the One Hundred Days' reforms, the emperor issued an edict stating that it was absolutely necessary to investigate industrial skills and to establish factories if the plan, to make commerce flourish so as to attain wealth and power, was to work. The throne noted receipt of a memorial from Wang Wen-shao which described how, as a first step toward this end, a Cantonese merchant named Chang had already started a winery at Chefoo and planted a vast area in a variety of foreign grapes. In a number of years, he would reap his profit. The emperor again endorsed the project and ordered the officials concerned to keep him posted on future developments.[25] While the imperial effort to make commerce flourish would take a back seat to the conservative reaction that culminated in the Boxer Uprising of 1900, Chang Pi-shih's wealth and imagination would still be there when conditions were again ripe for modernization.

In actuality Chang would be far from inactive during the generally reactionary years of 1898, 1899 and 1900. Besides laboring to get the Chefoo winery into operation, he was involved in a number of important undertakings with Sheng Hsuan-huai. Almost immediately after Li Hung-chang's visit to Singapore in the spring of 1896, it was

announced that Chang would shortly return to China for two months in order to pursue business matters.[26] Chang and Penang vice-consul Hsieh did take a few days off the following month to raise money for Canton's Chai Yi Yuan Hospital, but Chang was on his way back to China in another month.[27]

Chang was certainly concerned about the development of the wine industry at Chefoo, but this return trip to North China was unquestionably at the request of Sheng Hsuan-huai. On 22 July, Sheng informed both Wang Wen-shao and Chang Chih-tung that he had already received a letter from Southeast Asia stating that Chang Pi-shih was willing to come back to discuss railroad problems. Sheng had also asked Ambassador Kung in London to approve the consul-general's leave but since no positive steps had been taken, he now urged Wang and Chang Chih-tung to use their great influence to expedite matters. It becomes quite obvious after reading the other cables exchanged by these three Chinese officials that they hoped to appoint Chang Pi-shih as a director of the newly established Bureau of Railroads and to put him in charge of raising money from the Chinese in Nanyang.[28]

Earlier in the year Sheng Hsuan-huai, then customs taotai at Tientsin, had been named chief director of Chinese railroads. China's early government railroad builders were confronted with numerous problems including the need to rely on the foreign powers for engineers and machinery, but the greatest obstacle before Sheng Hsuan-huai was to find a means of financing construction. If Chang Pi-shih could be convinced to support railroads, particularly those in North China, Sheng argued that many other overseas Chinese would follow his example for Chang was the key man to recruit.[29]

When Chang Pi-shih arrived in Shanghai, he told Sheng that the majority of Chinese merchants in Canton, Hong Kong and in Nanyang were not at all concerned about the fate of northern and western railroads but that they might well be interested if projects were started in South China. Sheng was receptive to Chang's logical arguments and the two made plans to organize a company to construct a railroad line from Canton northward to Hankow.[30] It was decided that it would be necessary to sell shares totaling at least $7,000,000. Chang was selected to head the Nanyang fund drive and a similar effort was scheduled for San Francisco.[31] Chang Pi-shih returned to Singapore and the first advertisements announcing the sale of shares in China's railroads appeared in December 1896.[32]

Sometime in early 1897, Chang Pi-shih was able to convert his wealth into the brevet rank of taotai. From this time on, Sheng Hsuan-huai would conform to custom and refer to Chang as an equal and later on as a superior.[33] On 6 February 1897 Sheng wired the Tsungli Yamen that

Chang had been appointed to the directorship not only of China's railroads but also of the first modern Chinese banking institution.[34]

The *Ta-Ch'ing yin-hang* (The Imperial Bank of China) was another one of Sheng's pet projects. His plan was to develop a modern-style financial institution to end Chinese dependence on foreign and treaty port banks and also to help the Chinese government attract merchant capital. He hoped that such a bank would help raise the great amount of capital then needed for the Peking–Hankow and other railroads.[35] The connection between the bank and the financing of railroads was consequently very close and it was only natural that Sheng again turned to Chang Pi-shih.

The desired initial capital for the bank was 5,000,000 taels but Sheng was ready to open for business when only half the sum had been paid up. He managed to draw 1,000,000 taels from the China Merchants' Company and the Imperial Telegraph Administration but the remainder was to be provided by the directors themselves or by the public sale of stock. After the Board of Revenue reluctantly deposited 1,000,000 taels, the doors to the Shanghai office opened for the first time on 27 May 1897. Along with Sheng and Chang Pi-shih, ten of the wealthiest and most influential merchants in the empire made up the founding board of directors.[36] According to one Western source, it took at least 40,000 taels interest in the bank to be eligible for membership on the board.[37] Since it appears likely that the directorship furnished over 1,000,000 taels of the opening capital, some members obviously contributed far more than the bare minimum. A reputable Southeast Asian banking authority contends that Chang Pi-shih was the largest private shareholder in the enterprise and if this is true then his holdings must have surpassed the 100,000 tael mark.[38]

Chang Pi-shih was not just a financial backer of the bank. Sheng needed Chang's name and reputation to try to attract additional overseas Chinese merchant capital. But he was also more than just a name adding merchant respectability to an official supervised activity, for Chang had administrative authority to match his title. In late summer 1898, for example, Chang visited Hong Kong where he personally supervised the establishment of a branch bank.[39] It was widely reported about the same time that Sheng wanted to step down and appoint Chang as the bank's chief director.[40] Five years later, when the Chinese Imperial Bank was reorganized as the Board of Revenue Bank (*Hu-pu kuan yin-hang*), the throne did appoint Chang as bank manager, but the overseas Chinese capitalist declined.[41]

In connection with the Board of Revenue Bank, the *Penang Sin Poe* contended that Chang was named to the managerial post because a certain high official in the Chinese government felt that there was no

other way that it could assure adequate funding for the new bank. If Chang were appointed, however, he could be expected to provide funds himself if the bank ran into financial difficulty.[42] Chang was probably wise to refrain from becoming more deeply involved in Chinese banking.

Chang Pi-shih was never inclined to invest money in a project over which he had no control. In early 1898, he was again recalled from his Singapore consul-general post, this time to undertake the management of the proposed railroads for South China.[43] In the summer he was ordered to assemble merchants and to begin the organization of a company to build the railroad from Canton to Hankow. Because he was respected by Chinese merchants in China and also abroad, he was consequently named general manager. After setting up a Canton headquarters to issue stock certificates, Chang returned to Nanyang to attempt to raise money and sell shares.[44] Toward the end of the year, the general manager of the Canton–Hankow railroad opened a branch office in Singapore to promote the sale of shares.[45] The Ch'ing consul-general had returned to Singapore with yet another purpose.

Although Chang did raise overseas Chinese merchant capital on this and on earlier occasions, it was quite obvious that the sums thus collected would be far from adequate. As he was assuming his duties as a general manager and thinking seriously about the choice of routes, Sheng had already abandoned the dream of merchant financing and instructed Wu T'ing-fang, the Chinese Ambassador to the United States who ironically had been born in Singapore himself, to approach the Americans for technical and then financial assistance. In April 1898 an agreement for construction was made with the American China Development Company for actual construction of the line and two years later the Chinese government made arrangements to borrow 40,000,000 U.S. dollars.[46] But even with the Americans in the picture, the railroad was still Chang Pi-shih's own special undertaking and he did not abandon his responsibility.

An American surveying team arrived in Canton in the early months of 1899. At Sheng Hsuan-huai's request, Chang rushed back to China to meet with the foreign engineers and the civil and military officials of the various localities which would be affected by work on the railroad.[47] After returning to Nanyang to pursue his many business interests, Chang was again summoned back to China in the spring of 1900 to supervise railroad matters.[48] The following year, Sheng still needed Chang's managerial talents and petitioned Li Hung-chang to expedite the recall this time. Near the end of that summer (1901), Chang arrived in Hong Kong on board a P. & O. Company steamer and proceeded to Canton and Shanghai to discuss new problems

concerning the Canton–Hankow railroad project and its American contractors.[49]

Chang returned to Nanyang and was in Penang in May 1902,[50] but our international commuter was back in China a few months later where he accompanied a group of American engineers to Shanghai to see Sheng Hsuan-huai. The extremely slow progress that was being made on the railroad at this time seems to have been the likely topic for conversation and the Chinese were anxious to work out a number of details then blocking the start of actual construction. There were reports that the Chinese shareholders in the line had begun to quarrel among themselves and that Chang had consequently resigned and washed his hands of the whole affair while he was in Shanghai. Whatever the exact circumstances, Chang did take a far less active part in the management of the Yüeh–Han railroad in the subsequent two or three years although he remained chief director of the Chinese organized company. Later, as will be discussed in Chapter 7, Chang Pi-shih would play a central role in the agitation which forced the cancellation of the American concession.[51]

Besides the multiple problems besetting the Canton–Hankow railroad in its early years, particularly while the American China Development Company was involved, a number of other important projects also put demands on Chang's time and energy. Although the line from Canton northward to Hankow was his chief concern, Chang was also put in charge of the development of branch railways to support the trunk route. There was, of course, always the Chefoo winery to worry about as well as problems concerning the Imperial Bank of China. Yet, Chang Pi-shih was constantly looking for new areas for investment and commercial exploitation.

Back in 1897, when the railroad, bank and winery were just beginning, Chang asked permission to open a gold mine on Hainan Island. Sheng Hsuan-huai again appears to have been the intermediary in negotiations with the Chinese government. In petitioning the authorities, the overseas Chinese capitalist wrote:

> I have heard it said that there is no better way to enrich the state and satisfy the people than opening mines. For about one hundred years there have been troubles from without and internal unrest. More and more often our currency has been drained off in the four directions and the treasury has consequently become empty. There have been all sorts of schemes undertaken to borrow funds and raise subscriptions. Ways and means of progressing from poverty to strength have been devised yet we have still experienced deep distress. We have earnestly striven to push such things as the construction of railroads; we have issued paper notes; we have built machinery, made guns and cannons, purchased warships, established schools and put the army and navy in order but all of these things have required funds. The Court, guided by the circum-

stances, has taken China's production of the five basic metals in many places as natural resources . . . and has specially ordered the discussion of plans to exploit mining lands.[52]

Once again, Chang had displayed his ability to go right to the heart of the problems of Chinese modernization and to place himself in a strategic financial and commercial position.

The Chinese government had established new mints at Tientsin and Paoting in 1887 and two years later, in 1889, Chang Chih-tung had opened China's first modern mint at Canton.[53] With official patronage, Chang Pi-shih received his license in 1897 and, no doubt, endeavored to provide the Canton mint with precious metals.[54] At about the same time, and one would assume for the same personal and patriotic reasons, Chang also joined a silver-mining experiment in Kwangsi province. It is said that Chang added capital to a floundering project. He brought in machinery and Western experts but the enterprise reportedly failed a couple of years later.[55]

Chang had far greater success in Malaya. In the fall of 1897, he helped found the gold-mining town of Bentong and in partnership with Penang vice-consul Hsieh and the famous mining capitalist Loke Yew, established the Toong Shoon Kongsi to develop the area's mineral resources.[56] Several years thereafter, Chang and Hsieh also invested in tin mines in the state of Selangor.[57] In 1901, the *Hok Canton* and the *Pegu* were still making three runs each to Atjeh every month and Chang's Kong Hok Kiok Steamship Company also seems to have been a going concern.[58] He remained a partner in the Penang Opium Farm[59] and through his agents and attorneys appears to have successfully maintained the integrity of his Nanyang commercial empire.

No wonder Chang Pi-shih found it necessary to be constantly on the move. The jet-set director of a multi-national conglomerate well before the invention of the airplane, he seldom settled down in one spot for long since his widespread business interests demanded frequent personal attention. This, of course, made it difficult for him to give any one project his utmost attention. In late 1896 or early the following year, Queen Victoria had finally approved Chang's selection as Chinese consul-general in Singapore, but by then he was far more valuable to China in other capacities and he was only able to spend a fraction of his time at the consular mansion.[60]

Chang never, however, abandoned his role in the administration of the new forward Ch'ing offensive toward the Southeast Asian Chinese. Although he was being gradually relieved of his consular duties, he began to take a more and more active part in the drive to recruit overseas Chinese capital and expertise. In early 1901, the manager of the newly established Szechwan Bureau of Commerce was ordered to

proceed to Nanyang to raise money for Chihli relief. He became ill, however, and was replaced by two men, one named Yang and the other named Shih Pao-chang. Chang was instructed to assist these two individuals.[61] A few years later, Shih would in turn assist Chang.

The very next year, the Nanyang press reported that the Chinese government was discussing the dispatch of a special official to the various ports where overseas Chinese students resided to try to collect merchant capital and to attract Chinese students to return to China to undertake the management of provincial railroads and mines. It was at first not certain who that official might be but the names of successive Singapore consular figures – Tso Ping-lung, Huang Tsun-hsien and Chang Pi-shih – were those prominently mentioned.[62] Still only an honorary taotai without official bureaucratic position in China, overseas millionaire Chang Pi-shih was just about to break into the innermost of mandarin circles.

Receiving varying degrees of support from Hsueh Fu-ch'eng, Li Hung-chang, Chang Chih-tung, Sheng Hsuan-huai and other modernizing personalities, Chang had rapidly risen from Nanyang obscurity to diplomatic posts and now to considerable stature as one of China's leading merchants. An immense personal fortune no doubt helped his rise but he had also displayed enough managerial skill to be sought by Sheng and recruited into the *kuan-tu shang-pan* system at the merchant–managing end. Yet as generations of predecessors would have likewise aspired, Chang also hoped to enter the ranks of official supervisors someday himself. Along the way, Chang had entered the outskirts of officialdom first as consul-general and then as director-general of railroads in the southern provinces within the Bureau of Railroads. Li Hung-chang and Sheng Hsuan-huai quickly recognized his ability and frequently sought his advice. Tai Hung-tz'u who eventually rose to the presidency of the Board of Revenue had recommended him for special imperial recognition but in early 1903, Chang Pi-shih did something that was impossible to ignore. He personally made the necessary, 200,000-tael outlay the Bureau of Railroads and Mines needed to open its technical school and, as a result, the Empress Dowager Tz'u-hsi called him to Peking for his first imperial audience.[63]

On 19 June 1903 the throne recognized Chang's donation of another large sum for relief.[64] The very next day, by special imperial decree, Chang was awarded the rank of a third-grade metropolitan official and promised a position in the newly created Board of Trade.[65] When the rules and regulations for that ministry were finally promulgated, Chang was named a vice-president in reward for his part in the establishment of technical schools.[66] He had not, however, simply bought his way into the Chinese bureaucracy. Chang had also

talked his way to prominence by boldly sketching his plans for the modernization of China.

In his audience with the empress dowager, Chang discussed the problems inherent in commercializing China and particularly the old curse of official corruption. But he also went on beyond the discussion of difficulties to propose positive steps that could be taken to develop his homeland. He presented the throne with a long and detailed memorial touching on virtually every aspect of modernization. The contents of this memorial as well as its importance in the evolution of a new Chinese government attitude toward commerce in the final years of the Ch'ing dynasty will be discussed in depth in the next Chapter. The memorial was, however, clearly a turning point in Chang Pi-shih's career for it again placed him at the right place at the crucial moment. China was just about to make a serious effort to modernize commerce and industry and, in the summer of 1903, Chang became the empress dowager's personal consultant in commercial matters.

In the fall of the year, the president of the Board of Trade allegedly sent Chang on a secret mission to Nanyang to raise funds for the construction of a railroad from Szechwan to Hankow.[67] A short time later, the empress dowager named Chang to a position at the imperial court as a vice-president of the Court of the Imperial Stud. She also ordered the Grand Council to see to it that he returned forthwith to the capital from whatever he was doing in the south in March 1904.[68]

In October 1904, Chang was again received in audience to expand upon his earlier recommendations for the economic development of China.[69] Chang's ideas were remarkably modern in outlook. He was frequently called to an audience and on each occasion, Chang was instructed to recruit more Chinese merchants. The inevitable conclusion was that the overseas Chinese and their capital would have to be brought home to China. The empress dowager readily agreed and in the first week of November she appointed Chang Pi-shih as a special imperial commissioner to investigate commercial affairs in foreign countries. Chang responded to the imperial kindness and promptly gave the Board of Trade an unspecified sum to begin work on the Peking-Kalgan railroad.[70]

By this time, Chang was quite obviously very close to the Chinese throne. He was promoted to the position of a full director of the Court of the Imperial Stud.[71] On 19 November 1904, he received a special autographed imperial tablet and the empress personally presented him with a ceremonial robe embroidered with dragons having four claws.[72] Six months later, in February 1905, he was permitted to wear the button of the first rank.[73] Having long been a capitalist, Chang Pi-shih was now a mandarin of the highest order.

PART II

Overseas Chinese enterprise in the modernization of China

5

A program for the development of industry and commerce

Chang Pi-shih's twelve-point memorial for the modernization of China was a truly progressive and all-inclusive document. First submitted to the empress dowager and the Board of Trade in mid-1903, his suggestions on how China might make commerce flourish were thoroughly discussed at the highest levels. The contents ranged from a discussion of the traditional problems of agriculture to the standardization of weights and measures and on to the construction of a system of branch railroads. The twelve major topics, as presented in the original document, provide an introductory summary of the scope of the matters discussed. Chang urged:

I. The recruitment of merchants to undertake the management of agriculture, industry, railroads and mines.

II. The recruitment of merchants to promote the opening of hill land for cultivation.

III. Discussion of the advantages of opening the hills for cultivation.

IV. Discussion of the advantages of beginning mining operations in the hill lands.

V. The recruitment of merchants to put irrigation and water conservation schemes into operation.

VI. Water conservation should be planned and managed on both cultivated and uncultivated land.

VII. The recruitment of merchants to set up credit to the tiller associations.

VIII. The recruitment of merchants to begin technical operations and to hire workers.

IX. The recruitment of merchants to begin the management of branch railroads.

X. The recruitment of Chinese merchants abroad.

XI. The unification of units of measurement.

XII. Increasing the number of commercial officials in the various provinces.[1]

Almost immediately after Chang presented his proposals, the dowager ordered Tai Chen and Wu T'ing-fang – the president and senior vice-president of the new Board of Trade – to study the memorial and prepare a report. In due course Wu memorialized on the proposals, concluding that the general thrust of the argument was that agriculture, industry and commerce were equally important. The Board of Trade had carefully weighed their importance and decided that a special official should be appointed to supervise implementation. From Wu's memorial it is quite evident that the Board of Trade was, in fact, adopting Chang's memorial as a sort of guiding outline for its own future activities. Some of Chang's proposals were immediately implemented in full and others had been modified but would gradually be put into effect.[2]

There were three recurring themes in Chang's long memorial. He believed that it was absolutely essential to obtain the active involvement of China's merchant community if the commercialization and modernization programs the throne now sponsored were to be at all successful. He argued that there would be no substantial merchant participation until steps were taken to protect merchant interests and purge the bureaucracy of its traditional corruption. Finally, Chang suggested that, with proper official protection, the overseas Chinese could be induced to return to China to become the vanguard of the modernization drive by providing the capital and experience required just as Chang's own winery had set an example for native merchants to follow.

There is little question that Chang Pi-shih's introduction at court was due to the fact that his plan to use overseas Chinese capital struck a responsive chord at the highest level of the Ch'ing bureaucracy. The campaign for Nanyang support could not, however, be isolated from Chang's overall program for Chinese modernization.

Although he argued that agriculture and commerce were both essential to strengthening the Chinese economy, it was clear that Chang wanted the newly emerging merchant class to take the lead in the development of rural China. He proposed that special commercial officials should be assigned to devise ways to recruit merchant capital to be used to build dikes and run irrigation systems. He suggested that, under official supervision, merchants might be willing to organize large-scale water conservation companies. Unsure of the particulars, Chang speculated that land-owners either would be forced to join the company as investors or they would be required to pay a certain assessment for the proportion of water resources they used.

In traditional China, merchants had always invested surplus capital in land and the role of the gentry and bureaucracy in controlling water-

works is also indisputable. In a sense then, Chang was only following in the footsteps of the earlier generations of self-strengtheners. But, despite China's ancient reputation as a hydraulic society, the application and utilization of water resources had been a rather haphazard business lacking in centralized policy and control. Not all the cultivated land was ever blessed with irrigation nor was poorer or higher land usually included in water conservation efforts. Some areas were subject to drought while other areas, tied in to the national system of waterways, suffered the ravages of flood. There was a conspicuous absence of cooperation between villages and sometimes bitter rivalries emerged between neighboring families. Although everyone was interested in expanding water controls, it was extremely difficult to overcome selfish interests and the great variation in individual needs. One piece of land was on a hill and another fragment in a valley. There was simply no single master. There were hired hands and self-employed smallholders. There was that inevitable gap between the rich with good land and the impoverished with poor land. Even the landlord class itself had trouble deciding on priorities and a common plan of action. Even when there was general agreement, there was always the problem of capital.

When water-works had been constructed, disputes still arose and old friends sometimes became new enemies for, without clear rules and enforcement, it was difficult to assure that those who made investments in money and labor would receive a just share of the benefits. The critical problem, as Chang saw it, was to guarantee that investments made in water conservation would be as secure as those made in the land itself.

His proposals for water conservation were consequently designed to protect and involve the merchant class. Supervising officials would insure the payment of rents and the division of profits. While his ideas were somewhat sketchy, it seems certain that Chang was urging the creation of something more than an agricultural cooperative. He was arguing for the establishment of a syndicate of merchants and landlords that would build water-works for profit as well as for the obvious and immediate benefits of increased crop production. Chang wrote that the water conservation companies he had in mind would be more than just the sum of the individual parts. The syndicate itself could own land and, what was even more important, the operation would be self-perpetuating and grow into 'a business of generations so that even grandsons could not change it or sell out'.[3]

Although some might argue that his plan would only have opened the hinterland to the horrors of monopoly capital and still newer forms of exploitation, Chang always worded his innovations with the moral

convictions of an old-style Confucianist. He spoke not of great profits but of the building of a countryside free from floods, drought and famine where the farming masses might enjoy a good life. For Chang, however, there could be no mistaking the fact that the leading figures of this utopian age were not to be the old-style mandarins but the new superior men of commerce.

Chang's vision is even more sharply articulated in his proposal that merchants should be recruited to set up credit to the tiller associations:

> At present there is poverty and misery in China. If we do not make commercial affairs flourish, the people under heaven will not be able to sustain themselves. But, if in making commerce flourish, we fail to take agricultural matters as the foundation, we will have already lost the people's food and men will not be able to find their livelihood.[4]

Noting that the price of grain had become dearer and that recent harvests had been poor, Chang observed that Kwangtung had been forced to bring in rice from Kwangsi and Chekiang while these two provinces had been forced to import grain from Southeast Asia. He concluded that this unfortunate lack of native production was made all the more critical by the presence of so many foreign merchants, officials and soldiers as well as unproductive Chinese elements in the countryside. Over-use of the land and other unstable conditions including the lack of rural labor made China's food crisis all the more severe. He was aware of the arguments in favor of the use of foreign fertilizers but Chang believed that China's agricultural problems were traceable to the shortage of rural capital.

The situation in the countryside was completely beyond the control of the basic producers and, according to Chang, the farmers were caught up in a vicious circle. Peasants obviously needed credit but how could anyone be induced to loan money at reasonable rates when the rural situation was so uncertain. Interest rates had consequently risen to the point where foreclosure was almost inevitable and many gentry members simply hoarded their treasure while the land stood unworked. Chang's answer to this oversimplified but essentially sound appraisal of China's agricultural problems at the beginning of the twentieth century again depended on the utilization of massive amounts of merchant capital.

The only way Chang could see to avoid the pitfalls of the traditional credit system would be to establish merchant underwritten companies which were incorporated and responsible to a modern system of commercial law. If loans were made on a contractual basis with set interest and a fixed repayment schedule, those with capital would be more willing to invest and the debtors would feel more inclined to make repayment. Only the most cursory outline of Chang's ideas

survives but he was apparently certain that the introduction of enforced contracts combined with large amounts of merchant capital in rural China would drive down interest rates, permit the farmers to buy needed fertilizer and return to their land and thereby lead to less disorder, greater harvests and general prosperity.[5]

Chang believed that much of China's vast area was underdeveloped. Arguing that even small islands overseas could become rich if the land's natural wealth was properly utilized, he lamented the fact that China had theretofore ignored many of her greatest resources. Had not many of the great commercial cities of Nanyang once been uninhabited or wastelands but, under the guiding hands of foreigners, become prosperous in only a few years? Calling upon his personal experience in Southeast Asia, Chang observed that the value of urban property could, consequently, exceed that of even rich farm land. Such settlements had flourished, in part, because of the use of Chinese laborers and increased in value because of the labor thus invested. Yet, the Chinese seemed unable to do such things on their own. 'Was it because the foreigners were wise and the Chinese stupid?' Chang Pi-shih was not about to answer in the affirmative. To him China's developmental problems grew out of the fact that the Chinese did not know where to apply their great energy and not from any character defect.[6]

As noted above, Chang advocated the further development of water conservation projects particularly in those land areas already under extensive cultivation in South China. He did not, however, forget the north and west where the soil was poorer and great land areas had not been fully opened to agriculture. He addressed himself specifically to the great flatland between Peking and Tientsin where water conservation was extremely difficult and the land was subject to the two great Chinese curses of too little and too much water. To provide both irrigation and emergency drainage, Chang proposed a massive engineering program to develop the Chihli area. After an overall study had been made of the water flow, many canals were to be dug as well as a number of lakes, and the entire province was to be crisscrossed with a lattice-work of lesser waterways and ditches. The soil taken from all this excavation work would then be used to build up flood levies along the banks. To shore up these earthworks, Chang also proposed a large-scale program of tree planting. With his plan of long files of strong trees sending roots deep into these dikes, the Southeast Asian capitalist forecast a whole new future for the area and, by the extension of his techniques to other regions, the opening of other stretches of marginal land to extensive agriculture.[7]

Chang Pi-shih admitted that he knew little about North China but in a characteristic statement he expressed his guiding philosophy of life, a

belief that: 'There is no benefit under heaven that cannot be developed.'[8] With this same optimism and entrepreneurial spirit, he turned his attention to the exploitation of China's mountain and hill lands. He told the empress dowager that China's two greatest unexploited resources were her water and her mountains and he proceeded to sketch his plan for the opening of the highlands.

Because of his own personal experience, Chang was particularly struck with the prospect of cultivating fruit trees and grapes for wine-making. There were so many uncultivated hill slopes in China; he was sure that the proper trees could be found for local conditions and that merchant capital could be recruited. It is doubtful that there was a market for all the foreign wine Chang urged China to produce but it appears likely that he was only using vineyards and orchards as an example of the kinds of enterprises that could prosper on unused hillsides.

Chang argued that the planting of trees and other possible crops on the slopes would insure that there was no wasted land and that all land would eventually become fertile. The local inhabitants could be given loans for capital and even the poor might become prosperous. The people could also raise livestock, the area would become rich and China's resources would be more fully utilized. Well aware of the basics of soil and water conservation, he noted the toll of erosion when hills and mountains were left undeveloped. The soil was washed away, river beds inevitably built up and the lowlands suffered flood while the higher elevations remained dry. Deeply rooted trees and other efforts at mountain development would help retain both soil and water. When the mountains had been tamed, new food supplies would be developed to supplement China's shortages. Once again, Chang promised popular benefits and the enrichment of the nation.[9]

Chang argued that the reason that foreign countries had been able to exploit mountainous lands was the fact that they had well-defined laws and regulations whereas the Chinese lacked such a framework and simply did not know where to begin. In China, some land was government owned while other land was private property. Presumably speaking from experience, Chang Pi-shih discussed the multiple obstacles that stood before anyone wishing to open the hills to full-scale development. Private owners quickly became speculators and raised the rental price to an exorbitant level as soon as development commenced. Nearly everyone opposed the use of public land for any private purpose and many a pioneering project had to be abandoned because of local protest or the fact that land values skyrocketed so high as to destroy initiative.

If the Chinese government really wanted to exploit mountain resources, it would have to go out and recruit merchants to develop both the private and the public sector. Chang displayed little tolerance for

those private individuals who left their land undeveloped and consequently he proposed that the throne should formulate rules whereby these people would be given a set period of time to develop their land. If the private owners failed then the state should call in merchants to do the job. As for land already in government hands, merchants should be allowed to form corporations, to open mines or begin plantations. But, again, if a set deadline passed without progress, the corporation would forfeit its rights and other merchants would have to be recruited. In time, Chang firmly believed that there would be no unutilized land left in China.

To avoid speculation and rising rents which had forced others out of business, Chang recommended that the government should supervise transactions and enforce a price ceiling equivalent to the land's original value. If more territory was needed, perhaps for an access road or for expansion, the local commercial officials would also step in to keep rents within reason. He also suggested that companies should be permitted to offer land-holders shares of stock in lieu of rent and that the government should give clear tax breaks as an incentive for the first trial years of any undertaking.[10]

In terms of the development of commerce, Chang felt that the mountains' greatest resources were mineral and that the opening of mines would have an immediate effect. He wrote that most Chinese believed that China's effort to open mines was being frustrated by the absence of skilled engineers, adequate capital and proper machinery. But Chang bluntly dismissed these rationalizations and attacked what he thought to be the real reasons for the backward stance of the Chinese mining industry. Without hesitation this independent overseas Chinese merchant told the empress dowager that China had to overcome problems which were even more fundamental than capital or technology.

Chang attacked the local gentry for their tendency to try to hoard natural resources as if they were a special treasure. True, gentry leaders claimed that mines damaged waterways and fields and disrupted the traditional harmony of the landscape but Chang made it clear that he believed that obstructing mines was not in the best interest of China. When the gentry made a big fuss over disturbing nature, the common people followed their leadership and local officials dared not intervene to argue for the opening of new mines. Higher officials simply assumed that favorable conditions for the development of mines were not yet at hand and generally left well enough alone to keep popular unrest in check. Consequently, the only way merchants were able to begin mining operations was to bribe their way from lower to upper officials. Gentry intransigence and bureaucratic corruption

were, therefore, the major obstacles to the exploitation of China's mineral resources.[11]

There were individuals who recognized the real problems and recommended official-managed enterprises, official-supervised merchant-managed companies or even joint Sino-foreign efforts in order to utilize the bureaucracy or Western influence to overcome local gentry power. Chang Pi-shih observed, however, that government funds were in short supply and even if the necessary money were available, traditional bureaucratic habits tainted official-managed projects and exposed them to numerous abuses. The *kuan-tu shang-pan* model faced the same fate. The capital was put up by merchants, but as long as the real authority remained in bureaucratic hands, few merchants would want to take part. When foreign capital was used, the problems only multiplied.

Chang was not opposed to foreign loans and he was in favor of Sino-foreign banks and factories where land rights were not at stake. But he spoke out against permitting foreign powers to gain an interest in mining land for they would not stop until they owned China's mines outright. In no case should Chinese sovereignty be lost and he warned that allowing foreigners to own shares in Chinese mines was 'like opening the door and inviting the thieves in'.[12]

The only realistic and safe way to develop Chinese mining was to recruit merchants as rapidly as possible and to set out to reclaim China's sovereign rights. Yet in order to attract merchant participation, China had first to establish a system of commercial law and take an active role in the protection of merchants. If these preliminary steps were taken, Chang could envision no reason why the Chinese would not be able to develop mining resources on their own. But it was essential to find some way to assure that profits were fairly shared by everyone involved.

It was absolutely necessary to keep taxes light during the exploratory stage to encourage merchant investment. If the common people were to be rallied to support mining, it was also necessary to convince them of the benefits and the fact that taking metals out of the mountains was 'just like fish and salt out of the sea'. But Chang did not forget officials. Observing that bureaucratic salaries had been too low for hundreds of years, and that officials were forced to accept 'customary fees', he proposed that special charges should be legalized and set just as the tax rate. If matters were regularized by the new commercial ministry, the merchants would be willing to pay and local officials would receive their fair share.[13]

The successful opening of mines and hill plantations also depended on the construction of new roads and rail lines. When Westerners

opened a port or business center they always began with the improvement of transportation and Chang argued that this was for a good reason. He had found the streets of Fatshan and Canton very narrow and frequently obstructed. Roads in the South China countryside were muddy and generally unfit for commercial traffic. He recommended that the new commercial laws include a section prohibiting the illegal use of rights of way and blockage of important transportation arteries.[14]

Ten years before, Chang had established himself as one of China's leading railroad planners and he continued to press the throne in this area. He memorialized that the development of commerce hinged on the development of railroads. Without rail transportation it was difficult to ship goods and provide adequate distribution of products. Those in the know therefore advocated the construction of railroads. Work was, of course, already proceeding on the major trunk lines. Always looking to the future, Chang, however, stressed that the main lines would prove inadequate and that branch lines would also be needed. A number of short feeder routes were on the drawing boards of the foreign companies working on the main lines but Chang saw no reason why China should wait for them to get around to lesser projects. Such a course could only lead to delay and waste and he therefore urged the throne to recruit local Chinese merchants to begin immediate work in their districts.[15]

This tendency to join the treaty port and interior cultures was one of the most pronounced features of Chang's writings. He was determined to facilitate contact between the two worlds, a dream which found concrete expression in his commitment to improved roads and railways. He also sponsored modern schools and other measures to uplift the peasant standard of living. But Chang refused to blame rural folk for the backward state of the nation. 'Criticizing farmers', he wrote, 'was like criticizing those who were not cooking because they had no rice or not weaving when they had no cloth.' The problem was a lack of capital and innovative example – elements that only a new elite class could supply.

A paradoxical identification with poor peasants and wealthy urbanites is easily fathomed when one is familiar with the overseas Chinese success story in Southeast Asia. There, with the West providing the markets, protective laws, capital and the needed example, impoverished farmers did make good. Chang was therefore quick to point out that China trailed the West for reasons other than character or cultural defect. Given the proper tools and mentors, Chinese could match the West.

Although many reformers believed that China's efforts at modernization suffered only from just such an absence of machines or en-

gineers and although Chang certainly agreed, he had the courage to trace the problem one step beyond technology. There could be no modernization to speak of until the negative influence of conservative members of the gentry class was eliminated. Even when there was a progressive impetus, local leaders complained against innovations and provoked the common people to resist the changes which were most in their interest. Unfortunately, government magistrates went along with the prevailing sentiment and were unwilling to stir up trouble. Officials intervened only if heavily bribed. Chang therefore identified gentry intransigence and the bureaucratic corruption which supported it as the real barriers to economic growth for they stifled invention and kept capital away.

True, there had been some progressive officials in the past who recognized the ways in which the existing system discouraged entrepreneurship. These perceptive leaders had therefore recommended official-supervised merchant-managed or even completely official-run undertakings to overcome the resistance of the old gentry. For a time, joint Sino-foreign projects had also been tried but these enterprises only caused resentment and never served as a real model. The problem, as Chang boldly put it, was that the *kuan-tu shang-pan* formula was outmoded. As long as authority remained in the hands of bureaucrats who did not understand the world of commerce, few individuals would ever be willing to risk capital anywhere but in the protected treaty ports or overseas. When foreign funding was used, evils were only compounded.

If it was, in fact, against the national interest to invite Western powers as financial sponsors and teachers, then the only remaining way to develop the country's resources was to permit selected Chinese businessmen to be both supervisors and managers. There is, of course, no question that Chang knew exactly where the throne should search for a new generation of officials who possessed needed capital and were more attuned to the demands of the day.

Chang and his Ch'ing backers were determined to include returning overseas Chinese merchants in their plans to develop the nation. In Chang's opinion, there were countless overseas Chinese who had proven themselves able managers and who possessed large amounts of needed capital. Only a very small percentage had ever returned for investment purposes and some of those that did came under the shield of foreign nationality. They felt safe abroad and ventured home only as alien citizens because foreign countries had a far more enlightened attitude toward commerce. How could local Chinese merchants ever be recruited in adequate numbers if China could not induce the Nanyang merchants to come home? He observed that there were a

number of obstacles standing in the way. Overseas Chinese would never develop an active interest in the modernization of their motherland as long as they feared unscrupulous officials. It was absolutely necessary for the Chinese government to go on record as having promised protection from local abuses and to enforce its statutes.[16]

Thanks to the efforts of Hsueh Fu-ch'eng and Huang Tsun-hsien, the imperial prohibitions against residence abroad had been taken off the books back in 1893. Because of treaty stipulations with the Western powers, local officials had not dared interfere with outgoing immigrants or coolies except to make a middleman's profit in the trade from time to time. They remained, however, generally free to extort, squeeze and harass Nanyang Chinese when these travelers from Southeast Asia eventually returned, particularly if they came home with gold in their pockets. This practice, too, was outlawed after 1893 but, as was so often the case in late Ch'ing China, there was a notable discrepancy between imperial intentions and local practice.

Huang Tsun-hsien had attempted to provide Straits Chinese with some security by issuing special letters of introduction and protection which might at least have intimidated lesser bureaucrats but he had, of course, run afoul of British sensitivities. In 1899, the throne finally took steps to enforce its earlier proclamation when several serious proposals were made suggesting the establishment of a merchant protecting bureau at Amoy to look after the interests of Chinese returning to their home districts from overseas. On 25 May, Hsu Ying-k'uei, the governor-general of Fukien-Chekiang who had a reputation as a leader of the anti-reformist faction, memorialized that there were many Chinese abroad who had originally emigrated from the Amoy vicinity. Since these individuals never forgot their motherland and eventually sought repatriation, he recommended that a special agency was needed to keep track of leaving and returning Chinese. Once proper records were kept, ways to protect them could be found.[17]

One week later a censor named Fan also memorialized the need to open a bureau to protect returning overseas Chinese at Amoy.[18] The throne expressed a desire to assure protection and imperial instructions were handed down ordering the selection of local gentry members to manage such an office and help eliminate extortion.[19] Not long thereafter, the Kwangtung governor proposed the establishment of a similar operation in Canton which also received imperial sanction.[20] The plan did not, however, prove very satisfactory.

Within just a few years it became obvious that the new system only created more abuses and that the corrupt officials who were exploiting overseas Chinese as they returned to their home districts were in league with the so-called gentry protectors. A number of memorials,

special reports and edicts followed in an attempt to insure enforcement of the imperial will.[21] Finally in early 1903 as the throne was beginning to recognize anew the potential reservoir of Chinese capital and technical skills in Southeast Asia, the empress dowager again went on record and ordered an end to official corruption and the protection of overseas Chinese merchants:

There are many of the various Nanyang ports which have Chinese merchants who have gone abroad to trade. They are experienced in both Chinese and foreign situations and particularly understand the proper way the ruler, country, individual and family are all tied together. Although they reside overseas they have never forgotten their original land. Their sense of loyalty and love for this court is deep and highly commendable. I have repeatedly ordered that when these overseas Chinese merchants return to their native places, the coastal provinces which have foreign residents should devise means of protection. Now that we are strengthening the numerous affairs of state administration and investigating commerce, proper management of all these things will depend on obtaining the right men. We must, moreover, sympathize with the merchants' situation and give special attention to their protection. The provincial governors must assume all the responsibility and issue stern orders to local officials for the effective protection of the person, family and property of overseas Chinese merchants and others in the various ports who return to China because of business matters. They shall immediately draw up satisfactory rules and regulations and clearly memorialize their management. If there are customs officers, attendants, local clerks and disloyal village subjects who still find excuse for extortion they will be severely punished. No leniency will be given. Let the coastal governors, the commercial commissioners and the ministers dispatched abroad see to it that all clearly understand and that the court's noble intentions are proclaimed.[22]

This was the state of affairs when Chang Pi-shih appeared in Peking for his first imperial audience in the spring of 1903. According to the Nanyang Chinese press, the empress asked Chang whether or not Chinese in Southeast Asia were willing to return to China to manage commerce, mining and other such matters and he responded favorably but stressed that they had theretofore been afraid to return because of the absence of official protection.[23] His long memorial also dealt with this thorny problem. Praising the throne for its recent positive steps in this area, he wrote that he could see no reason to fear that the overseas Chinese merchants would not 'carry their babies and come home' if officials acted according to the law.[24]

In a characteristic manner, however, Chang warned the Ch'ing ruler that there was much more involved in attracting overseas Chinese merchants than simply removing the element of bureaucratic squeeze and illegal extortion. Chang reported that he had heard private conversations to the effect that none of the commercial laws passed in recent years with regard to loans, interest, stock issuance, taxes on

gentry and the wealthy had been enforced precisely as promised. It may have been necessary for officials to adapt rules to special difficulties but the people could not help but express the common saying, 'order in the morning changed in the evening'.[25]

If merchants were ever to be attracted in numbers, positive steps would be required to remove their traditional suspicions. Chang candidly advised the empress dowager that the Chinese government had not kept its word to merchants in the past and that even one hundred moves in the right direction now might still not be enough to turn the tide. At the risk of offending the all-powerful ruler, he frankly confessed that he feared that the various imperial edicts ordering protection of overseas Chinese merchants would still prove inadequate. To recruit the merchants from distant lands it would be necessary to prove good faith and also to improve the commercial climate in China so as to compete with the advantages of trading abroad. The overall success of any effort hinged, he believed, on the implementation of two general sets of proposals.

In the first place, Chinese doing business in Western-ruled territories had the advantage of limited liability incorporation. Everyone knew exactly who furnished the capital and partners were protected from a number of deceitful practices. The protective measures Chang really had in mind for returning overseas Chinese were far more extensive and progressive than those the throne had already expressed interest in, for he proposed that the Nanyang merchants should be permitted to maintain their foreign incorporation when they returned home. Such a policy would benefit both China and the merchants, he argued. Needed capital could thus be attracted while merchants would be far less likely to fear bureaucratic interference in the internal workings of their company. Once merchant trust was won, of course, the overseas businessmen could be persuaded to register their firms in China and to drop their reliance on foreign protection.

In essence, what Chang was arguing was that overseas Chinese merchants like himself who had incorporated under Dutch or British colonial administrations should be encouraged to bring their money and skills home while temporarily maintaining their legal base of operation and fundamental source of capital wealth in Nanyang. In short, he was asking the throne to extend the same rights it granted foreign powers and their commercial agents to the overseas Chinese including, no doubt, Chang Pi-shih himself.

Secondly, steps would have to be taken to protect the overseas corporate characters when their holders returned to China. Special offices needed to be set up to register these merchants and to hear their complaints.[26]

There was also the question of status. It was only proper that returning overseas entrepreneurs be exempted from the traditional forms of official humiliation. They should not be forced to kneel down before magistrates nor subjected to long waits and ill-treatment. The most interesting section of Chang's proposals to raise the status of returning Nanyang businessmen, however, was his suggestion that the throne should follow the example of the Straits and Dutch governments and award honorary titles and positions. Giving the examples of *kapitein, majoor* and justice of the peace, he appealed to the empress dowager to bestow similar honors whenever merchants gathered the capital and formed corporations engaging in commerce in China. Not only would such status improve their position in lawsuits, but it would surely help persuade them to return home.

If the Ch'ing government could only publicize its new intentions and get the overseas Chinese to trust it, these merchants would use their great financial force and managerial expertise to strengthen the nation. With typical self-confidence and an optimistic faith in the ability of the overseas Chinese entrepreneur, Chang promised the empress dowager that commercial affairs would prosper so that China would even surpass London's lead.[27] It is clear throughout his memorials, however, that the modernization of China, be it in the area of mines, agriculture, railroads, business or whatever, could not take place without the complete cooperation of the merchant and official groups.

It was here in the realm of merchant–official relations that Chang's long memorial reflected the most significant break with traditional practice. Chang was quite outspoken on this matter and also advised the Chinese ruler that the reason why commercial affairs prospered in foreign countries while floundering in China was because foreign officials took steps to protect merchant interests and the Chinese did not. All the talk in the world would not make Chinese commerce prosper. There could be no progress without a positive policy and ample manpower to protect merchant interests and Chang was forthright in stating his opinion that China was still lethargic in these crucial areas.

Chang strongly endorsed the steps then being taken to set up the new Board of Trade and supported the early activities of Tai Chen, Yuan Shih-k'ai and Wu T'ing-fang to enact the beginnings of a Chinese system of commercial law. Once the premises of commercial law were put into operation, the protection of merchants could begin in earnest. But even before the Board of Trade opened its books, Chang cautioned the throne that the new commercial office would require considerable expansion to be effective. Observing that foreign countries generally attempted to separate criminal and civil legal proc-

edures and that Western nations also set up special agencies and officers to collect taxes, assess customs duties and oversee business matters, he argued that local Chinese magistrates could not possibly handle commercial affairs on top of their otherwise heavy administrative burden. He consequently petitioned the throne to commission a parallel system of commercial officials to divide the protection and supervision of commerce from the traditional bureaucracy.

The overseas Chinese memorialist asked for additional officials at five different bureaucratic levels. He wished to expand the size of the proposed Board of Trade, add a number of special imperial commissioners for commercial matters, set up a system of commercial judges, assign a new sub-prefect in every prefecture to supervise commerce and to name a number of special trade inspectors. As others had proposed, he urged that the new Board of Trade should be set up along the same organizational lines as the Ministry of Foreign Affairs to insure control of commercial matters at the national level. He further suggested that it should be divided into six divisions: (1) Department of Mining Resources; (2) Department of Communications; (3) Department of Agriculture and Water Conservation; (4) Department of Industry; (5) Department of the Mint; and (6) Accounting Department.

Special commercial commissioners should be assigned to every two or three provinces and stationed in the treaty ports to take charge of commercial affairs. Under these commissioners, the throne would appoint special commercial judges, at least one official at a rank higher than taotai and as many assistants as necessary.[28] Everyone's duties would be well defined and officials would be closely watched to see to it that no individual exceeded his authority.[29]

According to Chang's memorial, there appears to have been considerable debate about the make up of the Board of Trade. Some officials had felt that there was no need for special commercial commissioners while others believed that commissioners would be more than adequate and that there was really no need to establish the ministerial office. Chang argued that both ingredients were necessary to help coordinate national and local matters, but he went further to stress the need for an elaborate network of local commercial officers as well.

Aware of the frequent criticism that the bureaucracy was so inherently corrupt that the addition of more officials would simply add more corruption, Chang argued that all the traditional bureaucratic abuses stemmed from one fundamental source: the great gap between the people and officials. He was extremely critical of the arrogance of government servants, particularly as their feeling of superiority affected their contacts with merchants, but he also attacked the gulf

between higher and lower officials. 'How could the human body survive', Chang asked, 'if the circulation of blood was incomplete and there was no interchange between upper and lower body parts?' To reunite the Chinese body he therefore appealed for the abolition of all the old bureaucratic ceremonies and forms including fancy dress, protocol kneelings, presents and bribes so that the people could go to the proper officials and openly present their business.[30]

Because of the legendary corruption at the local level, Chang observed, the people 'fear it as if it were a tiger'. With its scandalous history, the bureaucracy had to put on a new face. If China really wanted to develop commerce, it would have to begin by creating a new breed of officials who would gain full merchant confidence. He consequently suggested that his proposed extension of the bureaucracy to handle commercial matters should be tried in several provinces. At first the imperial commissioner in charge could pay the expenses out of his own purse for surely, once things got organized, merchants would gladly pay taxes to fund the instruments of their own protection.[31]

On the occasions that he was called to audience, Chang Pi-shih discussed a variety of problems with the Ch'ing ruler but the conversation generally returned to the theme of attracting merchants to make China flourish. According to the Nanyang Chinese press, the Empress Dowager Tz'u-hsi asked Chang to explain why there seemed to be so many rebels in southeast China. He replied that it was because of the great poverty and the difficulty of life there. Chang was convinced, however, that regional industrialization would ease unemployment and help dissolve the numerous bandit bands. He memorialized in 1903 that Chinese went overseas in the first place in search of work. If China wanted to keep her people at home and eliminate banditry and rebellion as well, more and more jobs would have to be created and to Chang this inevitably meant official sponsorship of agriculture, commerce and industry.[32]

Because Fukien and Kwangtung were the home provinces of the great majority of overseas Chinese, Chang proposed that his scheme for the modernization of Chinese commerce should begin on a trial basis there. Nanyang Chinese would, of course, be much more likely to invest in the development of their native districts and the mandarin–capitalist promoter therefore advocated the selection of the most strategic spots for the construction of railroad lines, the opening of mines and other industries in which potential overseas investors and managers might take part. Furthermore, Chang desired to establish a model administrative structure for the protection of all Chinese merchants. He consequently requested that he should be sent to Canton to open a special bureau to oversee the management of industrial

projects. Corruption-free modern-style enterprises could then be an incentive for other Chinese merchants to join in the imperial plan to make commerce flourish. He was confident that if there was official protection and a vigorous and successful example, overseas Chinese would eagerly pave the way.[33]

With his usual self-confidence and more than a touch of provincial chauvinism, Chang wrote: 'We must recruit Chinese merchants in foreign ports to maintain commercial affairs. In order to make commerce flourish, we must begin in Fukien, Kwangtung, and other provinces.'[34] The campaigns to attract local and overseas Chinese merchants and their capital in the two southern coastal provinces would soon be fused under his personal guidance.

It is not known for certain if the Ch'ing leadership shared Chang's optimistic faith that overseas Chinese investments could more or less replace foreign capital but the Board of Trade, nevertheless, gave his proposals its full endorsement. In November 1904, the throne also gave its blessings and appointed Chang an Imperial Commissioner Investigating Commerce in Foreign Ports and concurrently Superintendent of Agriculture, Industry, Railroads and Mining in Fukien and Kwangtung provinces.[35]

Whether or not the overseas Chinese were the critical ingredient in the modernization of China, Chang Pi-shih was certainly the perfect man for the experiment. He was probably the widest known overseas Chinese personality in Nanyang and he had gained his fame both as a capitalist and as a Chinese consular official. His personal web of contacts had served earlier fund-raising efforts well and he had long been identified with the effort to commercialize the China mainland. Chang was, of course, also a mandarin. As a vice-president of the Board of Trade he was a significant part of the policy-making bureaucracy and his word carried the weight of a man with access to the empress dowager herself. But, most importantly, Chang was first and foremost a businessman and quite possibly the highest-placed spokesman for merchant interests.

Yet, if Chang were the major overseas Chinese merchant figure, he was also extremely well known in South China. He had been one of the inspirational personalities behind the decision to construct the Canton–Hankow railroad. Before the end of the decade he would invest his own funds in a cloth-weaving factory at Fatshan, a glass works in Waichow, a cattle ranch on the Luichow Peninsula and a salt works in Fukien province. He had begun several mines and opened trading firms in both Canton and Hong Kong. And, as might be expected, he held extensive property particularly in his native region.[36] These activities coupled with his successful winery would have given Chang

considerable prestige and wealth in merchant circles even without his Nanyang empire and position at court. Even before he received imperial permission to superintend development, he had been asked to become the president of the Kwangtung Commercial Association when the prototype chamber of commerce was set up toward the end of 1903. Several years later he would also assume the directorship of the powerful Canton Chinese Chamber of Commerce.[37]

From the bureaucracy's point of view, the most appealing factor in any of Chang's proposals was the fact that the Nanyang mandarin was so independently wealthy that he could finance his program very much on his own. With only a modest subsidy promised by the Board of Trade, Chang petitioned for immediate permission to establish his headquarters in Canton.[38] After consulting with Yuan Shih-k'ai in Tientsin about some unknown matter, he reportedly headed south to make preparations to open his 'Office for the General Management of Agriculture, Industry, Railroads and Mining' (*Nung-kung-lu-k'uang tsung-pan chü*) outside of Canton's Ching-hai gate.[39]

6

The search for overseas Chinese talent and wealth

THE CANTON BUREAU

Upon arriving in Canton, Chang Pi-shih discovered that the merchants there were still hesitant to contribute to any officially sponsored project even when protection of commercial interests was its sincerely stated objective. The supervision of all the important agricultural, industrial, commercial and mining developments in Fukien and Kwangtung provinces was a strenuous bureaucratic responsibility to begin with and Chang's primary assignment, the stimulation and funding of new enterprises, would prove even more difficult for the 65-year-old overseas Chinese entrepreneur. Initial expenditures were expected to run to several millions and, in virtually every case, he was forced to put forward the crucial capital himself. In addition to the construction of the general office, Chang advanced the funds for several model schemes. As will be discussed in some depth in Chapter 7, Chang immediately set out to build a new railroad from Canton to Amoy to link the two provinces in his charge and to encourage development all along the right of way.[1]

After establishing his headquarters and investigating the general commercial situation, Chang Pi-shih set out to devise means to protect local and returning overseas merchants. He opened his operation by ordering the following proclamation posted throughout his jurisdiction:

> Whereas I have been appointed to the Board of Trade as a Commissioner to investigate commercial affairs in foreign ports and Superintendent of the Propriety of Agriculture, Industry, Railroads and Mining for Fukien and Kwangtung, I have already established a general office outside the Ching-hai gate of Canton city to coordinate merchant desires with the prosperity of general affairs. There will be no shirking from responsibility by anyone concerned. I have personally received Imperial instructions that those Chinese merchants who have gone abroad to trade and who have not forgotten their native land and who, furthermore, look to her Imperial majesty for the favor of protection and great leniency will not be neglected.

Observing that returning Chinese were still being subjected to

frequent blackmail and fraud by dishonest officials, local bullies and other such people to the extent that some individuals had been said to have lost their entire fortunes, Chang continued:

> Now this official, in accord with the rules and regulations of the Board of Trade, has set up a reception room in his general office and selected officials who will cordially hold reception every day except Sunday from 10:00 am to 12:00 noon and from 2:00 pm to 4:00 pm for all those who can come to meet with them. Complaints will be carefully listened to whether they are made in person or written out as a petition. For the sake of convenience, ceremonial etiquette and standard phrases will not be adhered to.[2]

From accounts in the Nanyang Chinese press, Chang was unquestionably sincere in what had to be the most serious government attempt to protect returning Chinese up to that time. He set out to meet with the merchants on far more equal terms than they had ever enjoyed before. In his proclamation, Chang promised that whenever returning Chinese encountered trouble they would be welcome at his Canton office where they could file an official complaint. He pledged that petitions would be fairly judged and appeals swiftly dealt with so that the old practices could be rapidly swept away.[3] As Huang Tsun-hsien had attempted ten years earlier, Chang also decided to arrange the issue of special passports for overseas Chinese merchants. He was, however, well aware of the fate of his predecessor in Singapore and underscored the fact that the proposed letters of introduction and protection were definitely not to be issued by consular officials abroad. Instead, and in order to close the gap between officials and merchants, Chang decided that the merchant leadership of the various Nanyang communities would provide the necessary documents on their own authority thereby bypassing diplomatic entanglements and bringing the most influential commercial elders into direct contact with the new Canton bureau.[4]

The Board of Trade had been under considerable pressure from overseas Chinese merchants for some time and the Canton bureau received the utmost in cooperation. In early 1904, merchants from Penang, Singapore, Manila and elsewhere in Southeast Asia wrote a joint petition to protest the shortcomings of the previous efforts at official protection.[5] Chang's project could only be viewed by Peking in a favorable light for it is certain that the throne now shared his belief that protection and attraction were two sides of the same coin. The Board of Trade consequently dispatched several officials to assist Chang including Shih Pao-chang, a department director at the Board with previous experience in Nanyang.[6]

In May 1905, just as the program in Canton began in earnest, another imperial decree was handed down which not only stressed the

desire to see further steps at protection but also encouraged the growth of commerce.

A decree in reply to a memorial of the Shangpu, Ministry of Commerce, stating that such important Western commercial enterprises as railways, mining, agriculture and handicrafts are being looked upon with indifference by many viceroys and governors in the provinces so that crafty and evil-minded merchants and traders are encouraged to defy the rules regulating these Western commercial enterprises issued by the Shangpu, to the detriment of honest merchants. Then, again, decrees have been repeatedly issued commanding the high provincial authorities to protect all Chinese who have returned to their homes from a stay abroad and to give strict injunctions to subordinate officers to prevent evil-minded and dishonest members of the gentry, rowdies and desperadoes from oppressing and exploiting the returned emigrants.[7]

THE CHINESE CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

In addition to the government agencies directly responsible for enforcing the policies of the Board of Trade, there was another institution charged with stimulating commerce and protecting merchant interests in the last years of the Ch'ing reign which also occupied a critical place in the campaign to attract overseas Chinese support. This was the Chinese chamber of commerce. Although guilds have had a long history in China and there were a few attempts to organize merchant associations to compete with foreign commercial groups in the treaty ports in the nineteenth century, the Chinese chamber of commerce was a relatively modern development which can be seen as a direct outgrowth of the drive for commercial modernization.

The prototype was opened in 1902 in Shanghai at the urging of Sheng Hsuan-huai who used his official position and his leverage with the Imperial Bank of China to attract a number of merchants and compradors. Sheng firmly believed that Chinese commercial development would be greatly enhanced by the creation of Chinese commercial associations patterned after those of the Western powers which had come to dominate business along the China coast. His policy was certainly not a complete break from the Chinese tradition since his original intention was to utilize the new commercial bodies as a mechanism for administrative and political control. Even the most autonomous association was expected to provide at least a vital link with merchant sentiments and to help enforce standards of merchant conduct.[8]

The Canton Chinese Chamber of Commerce, established with the active leadership of Chang Pi-shih, gained an early reputation as a radical organization particularly during the anti-American boycott of

1905–6. Shortly after the organization's founding, the correspondent for the *North China Herald* praised it for the revolutionary spirit it displayed by challenging the traditional superiority of the mandarin class. According to this source, the Cantonese merchants demanded the abolition of humiliating formalities at the yamen including the need to wear special robes and compose highly stylized petitions. It was also decided that the chairman should have the right to call on the viceroy himself at any time. The writer concluded that 'nothing less than a revolution in etiquette is contemplated'. The concluding comment was, no doubt, warranted but the reporter also observed that the officials had nothing at all to do with it. This, of course, was an oversight since Chang had discussed similar plans with the empress dowager two years earlier and had just proclaimed a comparable set of procedures for his own office to the merchants of Fukien and Kwangtung.[9]

Despite imperial promises and Chang Pi-shih's own determination, it was still extremely difficult to convince overseas Chinese merchants to invest large sums of money in their homeland. The idea of special passes and privileges may have appealed to some, but the fear of mandarin squeeze remained deeply ingrained in the minds of the majority. In a three-pronged attack on the community of Chinese merchants with roots in south coastal China, the Board of Trade appointed Wang Ch'ing-mu, a junior councilor and senior secretary of that ministry, as a special commissioner in the fall of 1904. Wang was ordered to investigate the general commercial situation in Fukien, Kwangtung and also Nanyang, to encourage the establishment of Chinese chambers of commerce and to arrange the proper protection of merchants.[10]

He was delayed for some six months in Shanghai where he and Yang Shih-ch'i, a fast-rising bureaucrat who would also become involved in overseas Chinese affairs, assisted Sheng Hsuan-huai's work on the planning of expenditures in the area of railroads and mining. Finally Wang worked his way south and filed his report toward the end of 1905.

Wang wrote that he had visited Amoy, Changchow, Swatow, Canton and other places in the two provinces where he had studied the commercial situation and proclaimed imperial intentions to protect overseas Chinese merchants who would return to these, their home regions, as well as the empress dowager's support for merchant associations. He observed that Amoy was remarkably well suited as a seaport for the export of local produce but that there were no official-managed factories and only one merchant-managed endeavor which was just beginning. It was his opinion that the natural place to

start was to amass capital in someway so that all could benefit and he consequently endorsed a plan, then in the works, to establish a merchant-financed bank in the city.

The original promoter of the Fukien Commercial Bank (*Fu-chien shang-yeh yin-hang*) was Lin Wei-yuan, a government official in Formosa before the Sino-Japanese War, who returned to take an active hand in merchant matters in Amoy. A former member of the Court of the Imperial Stud, Lin was highly honored but died before his many plans could be completely fulfilled. His son Lin Erh-chia followed in his father's footsteps, however, and had opened banks in Amoy, Hong Kong, Tientsin and Shanghai by 1908.[11]

Wang discussed the difficulties faced by the Chinese who had gone abroad from the Changchow–Amoy area in the past but expressed confidence that newly established chambers of commerce would take up the slack and help protect returning merchants. He found Canton to be far more developed and advanced than Amoy, particularly in manufacturing which he took to be critical to commercial prosperity. A technical school had been established and a number of new factories opened. Wang appears to have visited many of these concerns and tried to familiarize himself with future industrial plans. It is quite possible that Wang Ch'ing-mu met with Chang Pi-shih because protocol would have demanded it. He does make special reference to Chang's various appointments but was particularly impressed with plans for the Canton–Amoy railroad. The best known of all the overseas Chinese projects, the Swatow–Chaochow railroad, was already under construction. Plans were being discussed to extend the line further inland and Wang could predict nothing but future prosperity for the port of Swatow.

A Chinese chamber of commerce had, of course, already been established at Canton and merchants had been persuaded to open a branch at Swatow. Wang anticipated that this organization would also bear responsibility for the protection of merchant interests. His report stressed the great need to recruit more wealthy merchants to establish factories and to help alleviate poverty. He encouraged the creation of associations of merchants in common cause so that businessmen would come to recognize the practicality of joining forces to start needed enterprises. Once news of the steps being taken to protect merchants reached Nanyang, the overseas Chinese could be expected to rejoice.[12]

Wang had hoped to bring this good news himself as he had, in fact, been designated, by the Board of Trade, an official investigating commercial conditions in Southeast Asia many months earlier. The Nanyang press published reports of his coming in September 1905 but

Wang apparently made it only as far as Hong Kong before he was recalled.[13] He cannot have been terribly disappointed for his new assignment brought a higher rank and involvement in the Board of Trade's efforts to open additional commercial banks.[14] Because of his ability and knowledge of railroads, he was named to oversee (*tsung-li*) work on the Kiangsu railroad early the next year.[15] At any rate, Chang Pi-shih was already in Nanyang talking up his own efforts to protect returning merchants and pressing for the creation of Chinese commercial associations on foreign soil.

At 3 p.m. on 5 December 1905, Chang Pi-shih met with his old friends, the leading merchants of Penang, at the Chinese Commercial Association (*Pin-lang hua-jen shang-wu chü*). His short but moving plea in favor of overseas Chinese nationalism has been preserved by a local Chinese newspaper:[16]

I have, on this occasion, been ordered to investigate commerce in foreign ports. Immediately upon arriving in Penang, I heard how Mr Lim, assisted by the Hokkien and Cantonese merchant communities, established a Chinese Commercial Association in this port in the spring of last year . . . You have invited Shih Ch'u-ch'ing [Pao-chang] and me to take part and conduct this meeting. We have carefully gone over your rules and regulations and they are all perfectly satisfactory. It appears that your sincere effort to protect commercial rights is most commendable. I must note, however, that the Board of Trade has proposed regulations [sanctioned by the throne on January 11 of the previous year][17] to the effect that if there is a publicly established commercial association – either a *shang-yeh kung-so* or a *shang-wu kung-hui* – it is, for the sake of uniformity, to change its name to a chamber of commerce (*shang-hui*). A chairman and a vice-chairman are to be selected by the membership. The Penang Commercial Association might just as well change its name to the Penang Chinese Chamber of Commerce so there can be a united China–overseas (*Chung-wai*) voice and mutual relations. In the ports of Southeast Asia we Chinese who are in commerce are extremely numerous. Let's take Penang here as a typical example. A number of years ago, things were very prosperous but in recent years business has not been as before. If we analyze the reasons for this we will surely find that the commercial situation has been disorganized. Everyone of us has had his own perspective in mind. The situation has deteriorated daily. Have we not come to recognize that Hokkiens and Cantonese are both people of the great Ch'ing China and, moreover, that those at a distance who have gone to foreign cities have brotherly feelings. How can this persist so that foreigners laugh at our internal divisions and we are exploited by others. Now that you have established a Chamber of Commerce, I profoundly hope that we will all join together for the common interest so that the commercial situation will gradually become more harmonious and business knowledge will be slowly opened up so that we can look into our enterprises and protect our rights. Then, in the future we will see prosperity and this meeting will long be remembered.

A few days later Chang moved on to Singapore where he was met at the pier by the merchant elders of that port.[18] The need for some kind

of multi-dialect merchants' association had been admitted for some years in Singapore. Pioneering steps in this direction had been taken in the 1890s but regional rivalries were still strong and the project had to be abandoned.[19] Individual regions and language groups had, of course, maintained their own self-help organizations which frequently dealt with commercial matters but in most instances these remained rival lodges.

After meeting with the consul-general and other interested parties, Chang Pi-shih called together the leadership of the fragmented merchant groups. In language similar to what he used in Penang, he urged the Fukien, Swatow, Cantonese, Hakka and Hainanese merchants to band together for their own benefit. The preliminary arguments took little time and when Chang offered to donate 3,000 Straits dollars to the cause, everyone quickly voiced his approval. In the next several months, rules were drawn up to satisfy the realities of Chinatown. It was decided that Hokkien and Cantonese gentlemen would alternate as president and vice-president. Of the ten administrative assistants, four were designated as permanently from Fukien background while the remaining six were expected to represent the various subsections of Kwangtung. The organization was founded on 15 March 1906 and, with the exception of the war years, has flourished ever since.[20]

Yang Ts'uan-wen, the longest-serving member, made the following observation in 1964:

> In the twilight of Ch'ing Kuang-hsu's reign when the nation was weak and its people impoverished, it came to be acknowledged that the country could not be saved without industrialization and, for this reason, the Board of Agriculture, Industry and Commerce was specially established. It was ordered that the said Board's books should show a profit and that it investigate means for setting up chambers of commerce. It was further memorialized that Chang Pi-shih . . . should become Trade Commissioner for the South Seas to go to every port in Nanyang to press for the establishment of chambers of commerce and to plan affiliations with the overseas Chinese to advance commerce.[21]

Although Song Ong Siang characteristically attempted to deny it, the Singapore Chinese Chamber of Commerce was designed as one more accomplishment in the late Ch'ing attempt to rally merchant support. An anonymous letter to the editor of the *Straits Times* in December 1906 dropped the not-so-subtle hint, 'could the records of this institution be overhauled, many strange and startling negotiations and intrigues with the Chinese government at Peking would be brought to light'.[22] The record was, however, readily available to the readers of the local Chinese press.

The original proposal for the organization, a document on which the founding officers affixed their signatures, began with the phrase: 'Your

servant Chang Pi-shih, ordered to investigate commerce in the Southern seas, accompanied by Shih Ch'u-ch'ing who has been stationed at this port summoned together the Fukien and Cantonese merchants at the T'ung Chi Hospital to open deliberations.'[23] Although it was necessary to receive the approval of the British authorities, the assembled merchants eagerly sought the approval of the Board of Trade in Peking.

Their petition made appropriate reference to the fact that inaugural President Goh Siew Tin was a probationary sub-prefect in Kwangtung and that the vice-president had achieved honorary position as a second-class secretary in the Board of Punishments. These gentlemen-merchants wrote that they were establishing a chamber of commerce 'to make commerce flourish'. They took care to mention the imperial edicts of recent years which expressed a desire to protect overseas merchants and specifically requested to be treated on the same basis as those chambers of commerce already on the mainland. Obviously pleased, the Board of Trade memorialized its approval to the throne on 24 June 1906. It noted the importance of Singapore in Southeast Asia, the earlier decision to establish chambers of commerce and the various promises to protect overseas Chinese merchants. Most important, however, the Board of Trade emphasized the fact that the establishment of the Singapore Chinese Chamber of Commerce could be the breakthrough needed to attract overseas capital for the management of China's agriculture, industry, railroads and mining. Singapore's new merchant fraternity consequently received its official seal, as did the Penang Chamber of Commerce on another day.[24]

Chang Pi-shih would not, of course, have had such a willing audience in Penang and Singapore if the establishment of a community-wide commercial organization had not been in the interests of the local population. As he noted in his Penang speech, the area was suffering from hard times. The situation in Penang was particularly difficult because the Dutch had diverted much of the Sumatra trade away from the British-ruled port. The formation of chambers of commerce did not bring about immediate prosperity and the recession spread to Singapore as well. The subsequent years of 1908 and 1909 saw a worsening of conditions as the trade depression reached into the European business community.[25] It was certainly a time for cooperation.

There had been a need for an unofficial Chinese town hall, a place where leaders could congregate and where important social functions might be held. An impartial community-wide organization was needed to administer charity, promote Mandarin-language education and to arbitrate disputes between dialect groups. Then, the colonial authorities also desired a single spokesman for Chinese interests and one body

that they could count on to announce the latest business statutes and, just maybe, help a little in enforcement. The Chinese consulate had previously provided the above services but both the British and the more revolutionary Chinese were happy to see the influence of the consul-general gradually diminished.

Although the Chinese chambers of commerce in Penang, Singapore and, as will be discussed at length, those later established in the Netherlands Indies were clearly intended as havens for Ch'ing agents, the courtship was never entirely one way. As noted in Chapter 3, the Straits Chinese had begun to express a new interest in their homeland more than a decade before. Paradoxically led by representatives of the most Anglicized side of Singapore life, a new awareness of China's traditional culture, and, of course, her weakness and vulnerability in the modern age were brought to life. Many overseas Chinese shared Chang Pi-shih's fear that foreigners would laugh at them if the old suspicions were not replaced by a new sense of national identity and purpose. These early yearnings for a national cause had come to a boil as Chang arrived in Nanyang to shape approved commercial associations.

In the spring of 1905, news of a Shanghai and Canton boycott of American goods to protest that country's stringent exclusion laws reached the Straits Settlements. Chinese merchants in Singapore and Penang received cables from their counterparts in China and also San Francisco urging them to join forces in the growing anti-American movement.[26] On 20 June, Lim Boon Keng and over 200 persons gathered at the Tan Tock Seng Hospital to decide the proper course of action. It was proposed that 'the Chinese traders in Singapore stop all trading in American goods'. The motion was passed unanimously and the assembled merchants immediately cabled their support to Peking.[27] The Chinese Commercial Association already existing in Penang passed its own resolution: 'That the Chinese Chamber of Commerce of Shanghai, the Board of Commerce of Peking, and the Waiwupu of Peking be informed by the Chinese consul by wire that the Penang Chinese agree to support the Shanghai guilds to boycott American trade.'[28]

David Wilbur, the American consul in Singapore, wired his Washington superiors that it was too early to know the full impact of events. He could still see no serious results in July and August even after merchants in Perak and Selangor joined in the movement.[29] The boycott had, however, continued to pick up steam. Chinese merchants at Bangkok and Manila were reported to be raising funds to assist the effort and many Chinese chambers of commerce on the China mainland had also rallied to support continuation of the anti-American movement.[30]

It was clear to the merchant leadership by September that voluntary compliance would not be enough. Penang was one of the first places

where more drastic measures were applied in order to enforce the trade ban. Wilbur managed to get his hands on a circular passed out in that city in which the Penang Commercial Association membership announced its willingness to pay the following penalties if they directly or indirectly traded in any American product.

1st offence	$500 fine
2nd offence	$1,000 fine
3rd offence	$2,000 fine

The signatories of the notice pledged to continue the boycott until the Shanghai Chinese Chamber of Commerce declared the removal or cessation of the ban.[31] Similar fines were reportedly imposed in Bangkok[32] and Singapore.

Within a month, Wilbur was forced to admit that there had been a 'decidedly serious turn of affairs in Singapore'. He reported that business in American goods was definitely being affected and that European competitors had been quietly encouraging the boycott. On 14 November, he desperately advised the secretary of state that 'Every firm here handling American goods reports trade at a standstill with the Chinese.'[33]

Upon investigation Wilbur found that Chinese firms in Penang had been dropped from the Chinese Commercial Association because they refused to discontinue the American trade. He soon saw methods become even more open and general when shops observing the ban posted notices that they no longer handled goods of American origin. The governor promised him that the police would investigate if there was evidence of coercion but Wilbur remained convinced of British complicity. A new Chinese daily devoted to news of the boycott appeared on 1 December and conditions deteriorated even more. The Straits Steamship Company refused to carry Standard Oil shipments and Chinese laborers even refused to show up to work on American ships drydocked for repairs. Chinese even kept off Singapore's new electric trams thinking that the enterprise had been financed by Americans.

One American ship, the *Acme*, had been badly battered on the rocks in a storm and was in dock for extensive renovation estimated at over $150,000 when the Cantonese workmen announced their strike. Since the work stoppage directly affected a British concern, the colonial government immediately stepped in. It threatened to deport the leaders back to China and kept a group of Sikh policemen in readiness. The threats worked and there was no more trouble. When British interests were not harmed, however, Wilbur found it hard to get the governor's cooperation.[34] It became increasingly difficult to dispose of

American products anywhere along the Malay Peninsula. The boycott seemed to be strongest in areas with a large concentration of Cantonese, but conditions remained largely unchanged until June 1906 when, one year after the boycott had begun, Wilbur was able to report a 'general improvement at all places'.[35]

It is clear that Chang Pi-shih and his aide from the Board of Trade, Shih Pao-chang, appeared in the Straits Settlements at an extremely opportune time. The area was suffering from a general trade slump compounded by a voluntary, and in some cases forced, boycott of American goods. Chinese chambers of commerce in China had taken the lead in the anti-American drive and it was only natural for the merchants in Nanyang to affiliate with them.

In early 1907, Ch'ien Hsun, the Chinese minister-designate to Holland, visited Batavia and met with Chinese leaders. He found that they had already made plans to establish their own Chinese chamber of commerce patterned on the one in Singapore. They had selected an overseas taotai wearing the peacock feather named Li Hsing-lien and a brevet Fukien district magistrate as president and vice-president. In April or May, Li and his associates formally petitioned the newly organized Ministry of Agriculture, Industry and Commerce for official recognition.[36]

As had been the case in Penang and Singapore, conditions favorable to some kind of commercial cooperation already existed. Individual dialect or regional mutual-aid associations had concerned themselves with commercial problems for some time but common opposition to the detested taxation, zoning and pass systems helped bridge the gap between Hokkien and Cantonese. The Confucian revival movement born in Singapore in the late 1890s quickly spread to Java where in 1900 the Chinese of Batavia established their own society for the promotion of Confucian ideals. As in Singapore, the leadership was from the more Westernized element of the society, dedicated to a pursuit of profit, not office, and no doubt embittered by the Dutch propensity to view them as virtually uncivilized. Confucian manners simply would not take root in the foreign environment where a knowledge of ancient ceremonies and classical texts provided no real answer to European discrimination and the problems of competition at the beginning of the technological age.

The move to glorify the famous Chinese sage was more noteworthy as the first attempt at a pan-Chinese association in the Netherlands Indies which might end the great fragmentation in the community. The effort at solidarity has never been a total success but one of the spin-offs of even this early attempt was cooperation in the field of education. The Tiong Hoa Hwe Koan (*Chung-hua hui-kuan*), the

association initially created to promote the rebirth of traditional morality, consequently sponsored the opening of the first truly modern Chinese school in the archipelago just one short year after its founding. Although primary emphasis was naturally upon the teaching of the Mandarin dialect, the curriculum was soon expanded to include English and Western mathematics. Shortly thereafter the organization, nominally dedicated to the virtues of Sinicization, opened a second modern school, imported textbooks from Japan and introduced English as the language of instruction.

Because of the almost magical properties ascribed to Mandarin Chinese as the dialect of officials and also as the coming national tongue (*kuo-yü*), Chinese-language schools naturally received the largest following. With the help of Singapore's Lim Boon Keng, the first *kuo-yü* instructor was hired and additional teachers were imported at a rapidly increasing rate. As Tiong Hoa Hwe Koan branches began in other cities, more schools opened and finally in the summer of 1906, twenty different bodies united in a General Chinese Association (*Chung-hua tsung-hui*). Its basic goal appears to have been the coordination and standardization of school programs. The Chinese of Java decided to ask the Canton viceroy to send someone out to inspect the progress of their educational endeavor and the request was soon met.[37]

Chinese chambers of commerce consequently grew in a land ready for even greater cooperation. Chinese in the Netherlands Indies, again following the examples of Singapore and Batavia, established Chinese chambers of commerce in their cities and sought Peking's seal of approval. In the middle of 1907, the Board of Agriculture, Industry and Commerce was reportedly pleased enough with progress in Nanyang to advocate even greater enlargement of the scope and membership of overseas commercial associations. It began to make plans to send a special representative to Nanyang to complete Wang Ch'ing-mu's aborted mission.[38]

In the remainder of 1907 and in the following years, dozens of communities under Dutch rule sent their petitions through the Chinese embassy in Holland.[39] A chamber of commerce was also opened in Bangkok[40] and the Manila Chinese reorganized a commercial association they had founded in late 1904 to conform with imperial specifications.[41] Chinese in Perak and Selangor sent their petitions through the Singapore consul-general as did a few in neighboring Dutch territory.[42] Representatives from the Shanghai Chamber of Commerce were present when the foundation stone was dedicated in Surabaya in November 1907,[43] but Medan's headman, Chang Yü-nan, had enough status in the eyes of the Board of Agriculture, Industry

and Commerce to forward the petition naming his brother, honorary taotai Chang Hung-nan, the Deli area's first president directly to Peking himself.[44]

At an early date it was decided that, in order to stimulate interest in commerce and to raise the status of merchants, the leadership of the new chambers of commerce in China and overseas would be given equality in their exchanges with local officials at the district or county level.[45] In the overseas Chinese case, and quite possibly on the mainland as well by this time, this was only giving slightly more formal recognition to ranks purchased some years earlier. A survey of the memorials written to approve the petitions of overseas merchants indicates that Chinese not only in Nanyang, but in Japan and North America as well, selected leaders for their new chambers of commerce who already held honorary Ch'ing ranks.

By 1908, the policy makers in Peking had good reason to be optimistic about the campaign to recruit merchant support through chambers of commerce. No doubt with a push from officialdom, the Shanghai organization had been host to a conference of mainland and overseas Chinese to help draft China's new commercial law toward the end of 1907. The Singapore Chinese Chamber of Commerce responded to the call and sent Dr Lim Boon Keng together with a prominent local merchant as delegates.[46] In all, several hundred individuals from around China and the world turned up.[47]

It was clear from the outset that the Ch'ing government expected overseas Chinese chambers of commerce to serve as bases of operations for the raising of subscriptions and the sale of stock. The Singapore Chinese Chamber of Commerce frequently acted as an agent for both merchant- and official-managed companies in China. In 1906, for example, it represented the promoters of a Chinese book company[48] and the merchant-managed Kiangsu Railroad Company.[49] Several years later, it attempted to sell the stock of two newly proposed steamship lines.[50]

In early 1906, an expectant taotai named Hsu Jui, apparently affiliated with the Shanghai Chinese Chamber of Commerce, asked the Board of Agriculture, Industry and Commerce to send him to Nanyang to investigate commerce. Hsu was willing to pay all his own expenses and left on his mission with official blessings at the end of the year. The real purpose of the venture was to try to unite overseas Chinese merchants to organize insurance companies, banks and steamship lines. He hoped to open at least one main bank in China with branches in the major Southeast Asian ports. He arrived in Manila in the first part of 1907 and then visited Singapore and Penang in following months. According to his report back to Peking, he successfully sold

shares amounting to $200,000 in the Philippines, $700,000 worth in Singapore and between $500,000 and a full million in shares at Penang. At each of these locations he enlisted the aid of the local chamber of commerce. It was admitted, however, that the process would be long drawn out and he, therefore, extended his visit to include the principal cities of the Malay States. He also proposed to go to Java but it is not known if he reached that objective. In all, the *Lat Pau* nevertheless reported that Hsu was able to raise well over $2,000,000 for projects still only on paper. His mission completed, Hsu returned to China in the summer of 1907.[51]

This would not, however, be the last that Singapore would hear of Hsu Jui. Just a few months after his departure, the Singapore Chinese Chamber of Commerce received a letter from its counterpart in Shanghai advising it that Hsu's banking scheme was underway and that it was putting up capital worth $2,000,000 and asked further cooperation. Singapore replied that it had raised about $1,000,000 and would leave the managerial details to Hsu who could continue to act as its agent in China.[52] At about the same time, although it is impossible to ascertain if the promoters were the same, the details of a newly proposed bank were also published in the *Lat Pau*. Demonstrative of the new found self-esteem and also the overconfidence of the new generation of Chinese capitalists, the unknown promoters announced their intention to unite Chinese and overseas-Chinese merchants in a grandiose institution they would have named the Bank of China (*Chung-kuo yin-hang*).

Attempting to find capital of 10,000,000 gold dollars, the entrepreneurs hoped to sell shares in the ports of Nanyang. They painted a picture of great prosperity. Once the main office had been opened at Shanghai, branches could be established not only in Singapore and Southeast Asia but in England, America, France, Japan and Russia. To give credibility to the enterprise, they also promised to ask respected and, one might add, wealthy gentlemen to join the initial board of directors. Foo Choo Choon, Loke Yew, Goh Siew Tin, Oei Tiong Ham and individuals from the Philippines, Siam, Hong Kong and as far away as the Americas were all named as prospective backers.[53]

Records of the Philippine Chinese General Chamber of Commerce in Manila reveal that in early 1909 that organization also helped the Shanghai Chamber of Commerce sell $400,000 worth of shares in a *Chung-kuo yin-hang* (not to be confused with the Bank of China which was the post-revolutionary successor to the Hu Pu Bank and the Ta Ch'ing Bank of imperial years). In 1910, another representative of the proposed bank again appeared in the Philippine Islands and in Singapore.[54]

On 14 July 1908, the Singapore Chinese Chamber of Commerce was asked to select members to accompany a representative from the central

organization in Shanghai who was then touring Nanyang to raise capital for commercial banks (*Hua-shang yin-hang*). It consequently named Lim Boon Keng and Lin Chu-chai who had been in Shanghai themselves only a few months before.[55] The group traveled to Java where they apparently met with some success and received promises for several million dollars in Surabaya.[56] According to the *Straits Times*, not always reliable in such matters, the representatives met with the Chinese chamber of commerce in Batavia and decided to work together to try to open a Chinese bank for the Netherlands Indies.[57]

A DECADE OF SPECIAL MISSIONS

The sale of bank stock had, of course, been one of the earliest means of soliciting overseas Chinese capital support and, apparently, one of the most successful if judged from the persistence of the effort. Sheng Hsuan-huai had recruited Chang Pi-shih for his pioneering Chinese Imperial Bank in 1897. A few years after that, a branch office was opened in Singapore to tap local funds directly.[58] In the spring of 1903, Lu Ta-ying was dispatched to investigate the commercial situation in the Straits with an eye to organizing a merchant bank to finance Chinese modernization. At Penang he obtained the support of the influential Chang Yü-nan, his brother Chang Hung-nan, Hsieh Yung-kuang and another Penang capitalist who placed a notice in the *Penang Sin Poe* to announce the hope that such a project might be started. Later joined by Hsieh's son-in-law, Leong Fee, then Penang's new Chinese vice-consul, the group pledged to recruit other merchants to begin the trial management of a new National Bank (*Kuo-chia yin-hang*) which they optimistically predicted would establish branches in Tientsin, Shanghai, Hong Kong and in all other important cities of China.[59]

Although Chinese national banks were eventually set up, it is extremely difficult to trace the role of the Nanyang capitalists in this one particular project although the record clearly shows that Chang was given the full support of the Peking government. Netherlands Indies *Majoor* Chang Yü-nan, like Chang Pi-shih, rose up through the honorary Ch'ing ranks by virtue of contributions to various endeavors. In the space of a few years he provided relief funds and sponsored education in South China including some 80,000 taels for a Canton school. He was consequently rewarded with brevet honor as a fourth-rank metropolitan official.[60] His big break came in the fall of 1903 when he too was called to Peking for an audience before the empress dowager. The Chinese ruler reportedly expressed considerable interest in his Nanyang career. The conversation included a discussion of the

problems of attracting overseas Chinese merchants, Chang's brief tenure as Penang vice-consul and the recruitment of Chinese workers for Deli in the port of Swatow.[61] By the time of his death in 1911, Chang Yü-nan would have attained further stature and would be buried back in China as an honorary metropolitan official of the second rank.[62]

At the time of his interview, Chang had already been searching for property in Canton to set up a factory to manufacture foreign soaps and candles and imperial favor now cleared the way for far more ambitious undertakings. While at the capital Chang discussed plans to build a railroad with the Board of Trade. He also requested formal appointment as an imperial representative so that he might return to Southeast Asia in order to sell shares in the proposed national bank and in his railroad. The throne completely concurred and Dutch-honored Chang Yü-nan joined the growing list of overseas Chinese capitalists in Ch'ing service.[63]

Railroads seemed to have a special attraction for the overseas Chinese. At the turn of the century, the iron horse was, indeed, the very symbol of the industrial age brought to Asia. Chinese modernizers had long advocated the construction of railroads as a crucial step toward self-strengthening. Many coolies had worked on the great American, Canadian and South African railways and shorter lines had been built in colonial Southeast Asia. Peasants in South China may have still feared the disruptive introduction of Western technology, but more worldly Chinese at home and abroad understood the significance of railroads not only as an improved means of transportation but as a sign of wealth and power. There was no better way to demonstrate success overseas than to help construct China's new railroads. Even peddlers and laborers in Nanyang sought to own one share in the railway that would bring prosperity to their native village.

Chang Pi-shih was, of course, in on the management of railroads in South China right from the start in 1896. He had attempted to sell shares in the Canton–Hankow railroad in Singapore that very year and again in 1898 and presumably also mentioned the matter whenever he visited Nanyang for personal business purposes at other times. In August 1905, Viceroy Ts'en and Chang Chih-tung sent him back to Nanyang to raise 3,000,000 taels for the same railroad. The throne endorsed the plan as a sound idea and a good way to raise money without resorting to loans that would eventually have to be paid off.[64] It therefore seems beyond question that Chang would have pressed the point later that year when he helped organize Chinese chambers of commerce in Penang and Singapore. In fact, his visit appears to have inaugurated a major campaign in Southeast Asia to help raise funds to

finance the railroad, the rights for which China had just bought back from the original American contractors.

Merchants throughout the area were said to have purchased shares in the Canton–Hankow railroad at this time and offices were opened in at least Penang and Singapore.[65] Not merely working through commercial bodies, the Canton General Chamber of Commerce even cabled Penang's Nan Hwa Hospital for additional assistance in February 1906. It may then have been more than just coincidence when Chang Pi-shih and Hsieh Yung-kuang, two men closely connected with commercial developments in Kwangtung, donated $5,000 each to the hospital's building fund a few months later.[66]

In May 1904, the Waiwupu memorialized that it planned to raise 8 or 9 million taels from Chinese and Nanyang merchants in order to establish a Hunan railroad company, but it is not known if an agent was actually sent south.[67] In 1906, Chang Yü-nan was said to have been called to Kweilin to discuss problems financing a railroad in Kwangsi province but it is also unclear whether or not he mixed official business with his own railroad problems at that time.[68] Chang Pi-shih also attempted to raise money for other railroad projects in his jurisdiction including a railroad from Canton to Macao and the Canton–Amoy line.[69] An overseas Chinese from the United States sold shares for another Kwangtung line in 1908[70] while Nanyang residents tried to begin subscriptions for a connecting railroad on their own the following year.[71] The most controversial of all the railroad officials was Ch'en Pao-ch'en who visited Southeast Asia in 1906 to sell shares in a Fukien railroad enterprise. His trip was, however, so intimately connected with the development of railroad nationalism in South China that it will be treated separately in the following chapter.

Ch'ing modernizers also hoped to create a similar overseas Chinese interest in steamships. The Board of Posts and Communications reportedly decided to send a Li Kuo-lien to sell shares in a proposed Kwangtung navigation company in early 1907.[72] The *Straits Times* customarily warned its Chinese readers about investing in China and editorially advised that this was just another 'confidence trick'. Straits Chinese had to steer clear of 'wildcat schemes in South China'.[73] It is not known if this advice was taken or if, indeed, Mr Li ever arrived in Singapore. The following year, however, plans were still being made to start purely Chinese merchant lines with overseas Chinese backing. One of these, the Sino-Siamese Mail Steamship Company, actually sold stock in Southeast Asia.[74] Again the degree of success enjoyed by this enterprise is not noted although the *Straits Times* did report that a well-known resident of Canton collected 4,000,000 local dollars in 1908 to promote navigation and other industries in Kwangtung.[75] Another

Chinese official visited the Netherlands Indies at about the same time in search of support for both shipping and banking interests.[76]

In the spring and summer of 1908 the Chinese government began a concerted campaign to persuade the Nanyang Chinese to subscribe funds for the construction of a fleet for their own protection. The idea was a very old one and seems to have met with little success although interest was kept alive by the frequent appearance of one or two Chinese warships in Southeast Asian waters almost annually. There were also unconfirmed rumors which were not unbelievable that Medan's headman had given the Chinese government $100,000 toward a new man-of-war.[77]

Chinese officials had far more luck in the other conventional approach to the overseas Chinese, the appeal for charitable subscriptions. As in commercial areas, Chinese chambers of commerce proved particularly valuable. Countless local and provincial appeals were sent to Southeast Asia and the response appears to have always been generous, particularly if the home district was involved. There were, however, a number of well-publicized campaigns that might be mentioned. In the spring of 1907, large sums of money were raised throughout Southeast Asia for famine relief. 1908 was a year for disastrous floods and both the Singapore and Manila Chinese chambers of commerce responded to aid requests from modern hospitals and commercial bodies in China. Spring was, of course, the flood season and new campaigns began in 1909, 1910 and 1911 and, now, the Chinese Red Cross also led the appeal.[78]

The entire effort to stimulate overseas Chinese interest in their homeland not only by the Ch'ing government but by the rival political movements headed by K'ang and Sun was helped immeasurably by increased personal contact and improved communication. The introduction of news wire service brought details of the latest events in China to Singapore in only a few hours. The more conservative Nanyang Chinese newspapers paid particular attention to commercial developments in China while a growing number of reformist publications provided an ongoing fountain of anti-Manchu criticism. The Board of Agriculture, Industry and Commerce publication, the *Shang-wu kuan-pao* (Commercial Gazette), circulated widely in 1907 and devoted a considerable proportion of its space to news about Chinese chambers of commerce and Nanyang trade. While Peking's knowledge of the size and potential of the overseas Chinese communities in Southeast Asia had been quite limited at the time of Wang Yung-ho or even Hsueh Fu-ch'eng, it accumulated rapidly after 1905.

Part of China's new concern was intelligence; the Manchu government needed up-to-date reports on the activities of rebel organizers in

Nanyang and its officials there were certainly expected to keep an eye on disloyal subjects. But consular officials in Manila, Singapore and Penang also prepared detailed reports on the occupations and trade of overseas Chinese and this information was commercial not political.[79] Chang Pi-shih and Chang Yü-nan, in particular, provided the overseas Chinese with a voice in the capital. In 1907, the Board of Trade asked the Singapore Chinese Chamber of Commerce to investigate commerce in the region and it would not be unreasonable to assume that similar requests were made as other cities organized their merchants along lines approved in Peking.[80]

In the fall of 1907, the Board of Agriculture, Industry and Commerce proposed to set up a trade agency in every port to coordinate trade between Chinese merchants in China and abroad.[81] Chambers of commerce were also expected to help coordinate Sino-Southeast Asian contacts, particularly where there was no consulate. In November 1906, Singapore began to issue letters of introduction for merchants returning to do business in China as Chang Pi-shih had suggested a year earlier. In mid-summer 1908, the Singapore Chinese Chamber of Commerce in the forefront of the overseas Chinese nationalist movement proposed that all the commercial organizations in the ports of Nanyang should unite into one body. By August this move was incorporated into a larger effort sponsored in Shanghai to create an all-embracing assembly representing Chinese merchants everywhere but real progress in this direction was not made until after 1912.[82]

The serious nature of the late Ch'ing drive for economic modernization and also the lengths to which it felt required to go to attract merchant participation was apparent in 1907 when the Board of Agriculture, Industry and Commerce offered to make any capitalist who would begin a new enterprise valued at $20,000,000 (or *yuan*) or more a first-class official adviser to the ministry (*t'ou-teng ku-wen kuan*). It likewise promised lesser posts depending on how much capital was actually invested. A new business begun with as little as $200,000 entitled a merchant to approach the Board as a fifth-class adviser (*wu-teng i-yuan*).[83]

The Board then, however, proposed that any merchant who started a major enterprise would also be recommended for a hereditary noble rank. The formula used for the awards was complicated and contained special incentives for hiring a given number of workers, but in general the schedule for imperial rewards was as follows:

20,000,000 *yuan*	First Class Viscount (*i-teng tzu-chüeh*)
18,000,000 *yuan*	Second Class Viscount
16,000,000 *yuan*	Third Class Viscount

14,000,000 *yuan*	First Class Baron (*i-teng nan-chüeh*)
12,000,000 *yuan*	Second Class Baron
10,000,000 *yuan*	Third Class Baron

Enterprises begun with capital of less than $10,000,000 could still earn mandarin recognition:

7,000,000 *yuan*	Third Rank Official (*san-p'in ch'ing*)
5,000,000 *yuan*	Fourth Rank Official
3,000,000 *yuan*	Fifth Rank Official
1,000,000 *yuan*	Brevet Fourth Rank Official

An additional $1,000,000 would give any official above the privilege of wearing a peacock feather. Individuals capitalizing industries valued at less than the $1,000,000 figure were still considered for special honor.[84]

The year 1907 also marked the beginning of the most intensive phase of the Ch'ing courtship of overseas Chinese merchants. Because of the spectacular progress that was being made organizing overseas chambers of commerce, the Board of Agriculture, Industry and Commerce decided that it was appropriate to send some high official to observe their operation and to encourage their leadership through the bestowal of special awards. He was also empowered to recommend noble status and high rank, as provided by the above standards, for any merchant who raised the necessary capital to initiate some new enterprise back in China. The official orders provided that he should reiterate imperial promises that overseas Chinese would receive proper protection on their return.[85]

The individual selected for this important mission was Yang Shih-ch'i, a junior vice-president of the Board. Yang had worked with Wang Ch'ing-mu before and rapidly risen to a position of responsibility.[86] The revolutionary press in Nanyang would strongly argue that Yang was sent to spy on them,[87] but it appears more reasonable to accept the equally hostile *Pinang Gazette* assessment that his trip was motivated by 'the quest for money'.[88]

The importance the Chinese government placed on Yang's mission was underscored when the Pei-yang Admiral provided two of his fleet's finest warships to convey the party from the Board of Agriculture, Industry and Commerce. The *Hai-ch'i* at 4,300 tons and the *Hai-jung* at 2,900 tons had both been constructed in European shipyards and carried combined crews of nearly seven hundred men.[89] Yang, accompanied by representatives of Chinese railroad and navigation interests,

left Shanghai in October.[90] After a brief stop in Hong Kong, the Chinese ships steamed to Manila where the officials were cordially greeted by both American and Chinese leaders. On this visit, Yang also helped the Chinese merchants reorganize their commercial association as a chamber of commerce registered in Peking.[91] From the Philippines, the *Hai-ch'i* and *Hai-jung* traveled to Saigon and then called on Bangkok.[92]

At about 10.30 a.m. on 5 December the Chinese cruisers arrived in Singapore. No one expected arrival at this hour and it was only the firing of British guns in salute that brought the consul-general and chamber of commerce leaders to the pier in time. This slip-up must not, however, be taken as an indication of a cool reception. After he had called on the governor, Yang was entertained at the Singapore Chinese Chamber of Commerce and toured the island city by motor car. The streets and shops of Chinatown were adorned with dragon flags to honor the visitor. On 8 December, Yang and his party reciprocated and were host to a visiting merchant delegation on board ship. Dr Lim Boon Keng, who had just returned from Shanghai himself, accepted an appointment as physician and English-language secretary to the visiting dignitary and joined the mission when it sailed for Batavia.[93]

Lim's participation must have come as a bitter blow to the anti-Manchu faction in the Straits, particularly since the eminent doctor had been a founding member of Sun's T'ung Meng Hui in Singapore. Those of a revolutionary inclination had done everything they could to discredit Yang Shih-ch'i. Long before he actually had an opportunity to visit Saigon, the *Straits Times* had been told that officers off the ships were passing out nationalistic pamphlets in order to stir up Chinese there.[94] After he had passed through Singapore, anti-Manchu sources planted another item to the effect that Yang had already wired Peking that his mission was a failure because the lack of a constitutional government made it too risky to invest money in China.[95] It took an article in the respected and certainly progressive *Straits Chinese Magazine* to keep the record straight. Lim, as a co-editor of the publication, and a first-hand observer, must have been responsible in some way when the anonymous voice of Historicus was heard in the pages of the English-language magazine:

For some months before these cruisers visited the Straits, the European press both in Java and in the Straits made unfriendly references to the mission on which the ships were sent. In the first place, the Admiral of the Peiyang squadron ordered the ships to cruise in the Malay Archipelago. We can see no valid reason for saying unkind things simply because the Admiral desires his men to have actual knowledge of the island-bespattered seas of the Archipe-

lago. In the second place, H. E. Yang was commanded by the Empress Dowager and the Emperor of China to visit localities inhabited by Chinese, and to ascertain from leading men the true conditions under which they live, with the object of making real improvements in the internal state of China as well as of encouraging the trade between China and her neighbours. It is the intention of the Chinese Government to obtain for the Chinese abroad all reasonable concessions as to fair treatment, which diplomacy and good understanding existing between China and the Powers could obtain. This, we understand, is the only objective of the mission on which the High Commissioner was sent.[96]

It was, in fact, the growing feeling of overseas nationalism which provoked Western suspicion but also went far to bind the wounds in the Chinese body politic that generated a fairly warm welcome for the imperial fleet, regardless of its true motives, wherever it went. The Chinese in Java had special reason to be impressed by the arrival of even two Chinese warships. Because the Peking government had not been permitted to establish consulates in the islands, the Chinese in the Netherlands Indies felt isolated, neglected and in need of special attention. Earlier in 1907, as has been noted, another high Chinese official, Ch'ien Hsun, paid Batavia a visit. Although Ch'ien did take time to peddle stock in a Kwangtung railroad[97] and met with merchants, he was primarily a career diplomat. The major aim of his visit, as detailed in a long memorial forwarded to the throne by the Foreign Ministry, was to investigate the conditions under which Chinese were living. Dutch officials were notably cool in their reception, and Ch'ien returned the hostility. His report clearly demonstrated a belief that overseas Chinese suffered under their Dutch masters. He therefore urged the Chinese he met on a whirlwind tour of Java to press both Peking and Holland until consulates were opened to look after their interests. Ch'ien was not hypocritical: he repeated his conviction in his own communications with China.[98]

The Chinese on Java displayed dragon flags and showed considerable interest in Ch'ien's visit. Their response was understandably even greater when Yang Shih-ch'i arrived nearly a full year later with the pride of the Chinese navy. According to a correspondent for the *Straits Times* 'the quay at Tanjong Priok seemed to be alive with Chinese'.[99] There were also throngs of curious individuals along the beaches and at the harbor entrance. The harbor was even filled with small boats. Nearly all the Chinese houses in Batavia were said to have been decorated while the streets were crowded with onlookers. Yang motored from the pier into Batavia where he and Lim Boon Keng stayed in the private home of one of the founders of the Chinese modern school.[100]

Historicus observed: 'The arrangements made by the Chinese of Batavia were so complete, so full and so thoughtful that were the

Emperor of China himself coming, they could not have received His Majesty in a more enthusiastic fashion.'[101] Sources differ, however, as to the reception given by the Dutch authorities. The Dutch press and the *Straits Times* reported the utter lack of official courtesy but Historicus claimed that a formal reception party headed by the Governor-General of Netherlands India, General Van Heutz, came on board and that the government there assigned its assistant secretary of Chinese affairs to accompany the Chinese.[102]

From Batavia, the cruisers proceeded to Semarang where they were greeted by the *Majoor* Oei Tiong Ham and other Dutch-appointed headmen. The merchants of the city also provided lavish entertainment for their honored guest. Yang apparently arrived in a great storm but the weather cleared immediately, greatly adding to the aura of the Ch'ing representative. The Yang party visited a number of other spots in Java including Surabaya. The Chinese mandarin had some trouble communicating with the island's Chinese residents, most of whom spoke Malay or a South China dialect, and Lim Boon Keng was especially helpful as an interpreter. In Java, the vice-president of the Board of Agriculture, Industry and Commerce visited a number of Chinese schools and reportedly gave 1,000 guilders for Chinese education in Batavia.[103]

After a short stop at Bangka Island off Sumatra, the Chinese inspector was warmly received at Penang and Ipoh. Yang's host in Ipoh was Foo Choo Choon, and, with his help, the visitor was fairly successful at recruiting Chinese merchant capital. In the meantime, however, Yang Shih-ch'i was recalled to China and he was in such a rush that he did not bother to come ashore when his ships stopped briefly in Singapore to take on coal and water. Members of the Chinese chamber of commerce nevertheless visited on board to join their own Lim Boon Keng in a farewell dinner for Yang Shih-ch'i.[104]

It is hard to appraise Yang's visit to Nanyang. It seems certain that he failed to induce great numbers of overseas businessmen to return to China but he did recruit some important men. He is known to have memorialized to give a leader of the Penang Chinese Chamber of Commerce the rank of taotai. He also processed fourth-rank mandarin status for a mining capitalist named Goh Choo Chye. According to the rough rules established by his ministry, Goh may have invested as much as $5,000,000 but the standards were probably very flexible. Yang's undeniably great accomplishment, however, was the recruitment of Foo Choo Choon who was rewarded for creating commerce with the trappings of a brevet mandarin of the third rank.[105] Foo and Yang collaborated in a truly fantastic scheme to develop Hainan Island but the details will be discussed in due course.

On his return to China, Yang Shih-ch'i prepared an in-depth report on his mission which increased Peking's knowledge of the overseas Chinese in Nanyang. He was especially careful to note the locations where Chinese chambers of commerce or schools had taken root and also the major business concerns of the inhabitants.[106] More importantly, however, Yang strongly recommended that the Chinese fleet should make an annual appearance in Nanyang waters, a suggestion that may well have had something to do with the renewed interest in raising naval subscriptions in the ports of Southeast Asia.[107]

Although several commercial agents visited Nanyang in 1908 including Chang Pi-shih,[108] the Board of Agriculture, Industry and Commerce did not procure the use of warships again until 1909. There were many rumors about who the commissioner might be. For a while it was thought that the eldest grandson of the famous Li Hung-chang might make the trip. The name of Yang Shih-ch'i was also proposed.[109] The official ultimately selected to make the voyage, however, was Wang Ta-chen, a secretary of the Peking board.

Wang arrived with the *Hai-ch'i* and *Hai-jung* in Singapore on 8 April 1909. The guns at Fort Canning fired in salute while the visitor was met by members of the Chinese chamber of commerce who reportedly wore their long mandarin gowns. In Singapore, Wang made the chamber of commerce his headquarters but also called on Government House and the Chinese consulate. He met privately with several businessmen and invited many more to a party on board his flagship. Chinese schoolchildren were also taken out to the warships and hundreds took the opportunity to see the pride of the Chinese fleet close at hand.[110] From Singapore, the *Hai-ch'i* and *Hai-jung* proceeded to Batavia where they again attracted a large crowd of onlookers.[111]

The political environment in Nanyang had, however, begun to change since Yang Shih-ch'i had brought out the dragon flags in early 1908. Wang was still the guest of the chambers of commerce at Batavia, Semarang, Surabaya and the other places he stopped but he found it more difficult to convince his audience that China was undergoing political and economic modernization. The purpose of Wang's trip also appears to have been more than just commercial and the Nanyang Chinese no doubt sensed this. In March 1909 the *Lat Pau* and *Penang Sin Poe* observed that Wang had been sent to pacify (*fu-wei*) the overseas Chinese.[112] The term used was noteworthy in both English and Chinese in that it revealed Peking's own recognition that the Nanyang Chinese were already all stirred up.

By 1911, when the last known commercial representative of the Ch'ing government, Chao Ts'ung-fan, a departmental director for the Board of Agriculture, Industry and Commerce, reached Nanyang, it

was virtually impossible to persuade the Chinese community that he was not a Manchu spy. The Chinese chambers of commerce in Singapore and Java were polite but there is no evidence that his mission served to pacify the Chinese abroad or to bring any new investments.[113]

The overseas Chinese had not, of course, always brushed Ch'ing commercial overtures aside. There was a time when leading merchants pressed for closer relations with the Chinese empire. Even many of the revolutionary elements in the Netherlands Indies continued to demand consular protection their politics notwithstanding. At the high-water mark of the Ch'ing campaign for overseas Chinese support, from late 1904 to 1909, the Chinese chamber of commerce was the center of attention. The Singapore Chinese Chamber of Commerce entertained a great many dignitaries as they passed through the port on their way to the courts of Europe. When Tso Ping-lung was reassigned to the important consul-general post in the fall of 1907, the leading merchants were all there in formal clothing to welcome him and to see his predecessor off. Chamber of commerce representatives came from the surrounding territory and Chinese officers from the neighboring Dutch islands also made an appearance. Schoolchildren were at the pier and there was a definite holiday spirit.[114]

THE CH'ING STAKE IN OVERSEAS EDUCATION

As far back as 1867, the Ch'ing government had recognized that the overseas Chinese might prove useful for reasons other than their wealth. Ting Jih-ch'ang even then urged that Chinese who had learned special skills abroad should be sought out and brought home. There were later attempts to establish consulate schools in Cuba and San Francisco for this purpose. In 1898, when the movement to reform China was gaining momentum, Lew Yuk Lin, temporarily taking Chang Pi-shih's place while his superior was in China, spoke with reporters from the fledgling *Straits Chinese Magazine*. In fluent English Lew stated:

> It is my earnest hope that the well-educated and promising young men among the Straits Chinese will take this matter of going to China into careful consideration. If they wish to be successful in life, let them begin to study Chinese and look upon the Chinese Empire as their future field of operations. But more than this, I would urge such men also as are ready to promote the regeneration of their native land, to proceed thither for this is China's hour of need.[115]

If Lew's call did not immediately arouse Straits Chinese and inspire them to pack up and return to their native land, the great upsurge in

overseas Chinese nationalism in the early part of this century began to bring the desired effect. The overseas Chinese nationalist spirit was probably most keenly articulated in the field of education. From 1900 onward, Chinese modern schools appeared by the dozen and it did not take long for Peking, reawakened to the potential of Chinese abroad, to attempt to take advantage of the situation. It was not surprising that the mandarin–capitalists in Nanyang, as leading figures in the community, would also take the lead in this phase of the campaign as well.

In March 1904, after some false starts, the Hokkien and Cantonese merchants in Penang launched the first Mandarin-language school in the Straits Settlements or Malay States. The personalities who dominated the founding committee were Chang Pi-shih, Hsieh Yung-kuang, Foo Choo Choon, Chang Hung-nan and Leong Fee, each of whom contributed $5,000.[116] Chang Pi-shih left for Java on official business soon after initial arrangements were made but he returned at the end of June to meet with the school's directors. When the discussions were over, Chang told them that he would immediately go to Peking to make additional arrangements so that they might produce 'a unique overseas achievement' and perfect 'a single kind of Nanyang personality'.[117]

Since Chang did go to the Chinese capital for an audience with the empress dowager, it seems almost certain that he advised the Chinese ruler of his plans for the Penang school in person. The Board of Trade also forwarded to the throne Chang Pi-shih's request for an imperial tablet for the school as well as a selection of books and thus preserved details of his remarkable plan. Chang Pi-shih wrote:

> The strength of a nation is dependent on human talent and human talent is brought out in schools. I have frequently read the clear Imperial mandate to make commercial matters flourish. The first step taken was the creation of the Peking University. The Board of Trade also established commercial schools as examples which would be heard of everywhere and generate a great response. I have come to understand that schools are enough to change a person's heart and transform his nature, but the key to this change and transformation rests with overseas Chinese merchants.[118]

Chang went on to describe how bright and versatile the young people of Penang were who had learned a profession in one of the Western schools there. They had, however, lived abroad so long that they did not know the Chinese language. Even though they had little understanding of such things as native place and filial piety, he believed that they did not lack inner goodness but had simply been molded by foreign customs. For this reason, Chang and the others had taken it upon themselves to establish a Chinese school (*Chung-hua hsueh-hsiao*) to offer an education in things intrinsically Chinese,

beginning with characters and the Mandarin language. Afterwards, they would gradually introduce general education courses. It made no difference whether students were already graduates of a Western course of study or not for it was hoped that all the students enrolled would have an opportunity to emulate the very best in each other.

At first Chang's arguments might appear extremely reactionary, the last-ditch attempt of a conservative parent to mend the ways of his children which he failed to comprehend. It must be remembered, however, that Chang Pi-shih was also a modernizer who had financed the Board of Trade's early schools and who would contribute very substantially to the totally Western program of Hong Kong University. The Penang venture can only be understood as an effort to combine Chinese and Western learning. Although the Penang Chinese School quickly established a fine reputation as a secondary school, which it still maintains to this day, the founders did not originally conceive of the institution as a project of strictly local importance. Chang Pi-shih consequently informed the Board of Trade that when the proposed three-year course of study was completed, the school would select those students who had attained the highest standards in both Chinese and Western subjects for a new career in China.

> The students . . . will be sent to the Board of Trade's commercial schools for a detailed examination. Those who make the grade will be specially awarded the *chin-shih* or *chü-jen* degree and employed according to their talents. From now on there will be a way for advancement and for them to make a name for themselves.[119]

The Board of Trade was not notably enthusiastic about Chang's proposal. Rules for Peking University and the various commercial schools did, indeed, include a provision that graduates who did well on their exams might be awarded the *chin-shih* and *chü-jen* degrees respectively. Existing schools had provided enough qualified degree holders and, although these were the last years of the examination system when much of the distinction of a classical degree was gone because of the imposition of Western subject-matter, the Board of Trade memorialists were still reluctant to flood the market with overseas Chinese. There was, however, the troublesome precedent presented by returned students from the West. It had already been established by imperial edict that returning students could be examined and awarded Chinese degrees before being assigned to government service. If Chang's new Penang school did, indeed, introduce a three-year specialized education, the Board of Trade affirmed that it would be willing to ask the commissioner of education to examine its graduates who might be granted a *chin-shih* or *chü-jen* in an exceptional case. No doubt the memorialists found it difficult to rule flatly

that a Chinese-run school was inferior to institutions administered by Westerners. It is also possible that the Board of Trade was reluctant to turn its back completely on Chang Pi-shih's request. The record will always remain unclear, however, for the traditional degrees were abolished before the Nanyang school graduated its first class.

The Board of Trade was, however, far more straightforward in responding to Chang's request for books and for a sign of imperial approval. Noting that similar requests from schools in both Cuba and San Francisco had been honored in the past, it fully endorsed this element of the school proposal. The throne also responded favorably.[120] With this formality out of the way, Penang's vice-consul, Leong Fee, who was one of the school's earliest backers, duly reported their accomplishments to the Office of Education in Canton (*Liang-Kuang hsueh-wu chü*).[121] The school had, however, already run into difficulties. The greatest problem was the lack of qualified Mandarin teachers. Leong therefore specifically asked the Canton authorities to send an official by the name of Liu Shih-chi who had been recommended to them as a man who could help open a teacher-training school.[122]

In the months after the Penang school opened, other Chinese schools were started in the area including Singapore's first modern school also promoted by Chang Pi-shih.[123] In August 1905, Chang returned to Nanyang as commercial commissioner but he did not neglect his earlier responsibility. Upon reaching Penang, he took direction of the ceremony which dedicated the inscribed tablet which he brought with him from Peking. He also gave the school an additional $50,000 plus the promise of an annual gift of $1,200 more.[124]

The Chinese on Java had also asked the Canton Office of Education to send someone to advise their schools. Finally in March 1906, Governor-General Ts'en sent Liu Shih-chi to Southeast Asia to inspect the rapidly expanding number of modern schools. Liu visited Penang, Singapore and Java before returning to China. He bestowed ranks on individuals who were active contributors to overseas Chinese education and attempted to get the schools in the Netherlands Indies to cooperate with one another and to standardize their programs. Liu was apparently pleased with what he saw and shortly after he had returned to Canton, the viceroy there informed the throne that twenty-seven Chinese schools had already been established on Java alone.[125]

In the fall of 1906, another school inspector, Wang Feng-hsiang, passed through Singapore on his way to Java. The *Straits Times* attacked the 'sinister motives' of his mission since 'in educational matters, China has nothing to teach us'. The critical editorial observed: 'There is something eminently ludicrous in fossilized Chinese manda-

rins visiting these enterprising parts for the purpose of directing our system of education.' The editors concluded that the real purpose of the visit was probably to attract promising Chinese back to China.[126]

From the evidence, it would appear that the *Straits Times* assessment was remarkably accurate. After he left Singapore Wang stayed in Java until after the revolution of 1911, advising the Chinese schools there, but also selecting overseas pupils for further study in China. In 1907 the powerful viceroy at Nanking, Tuan Fang, memorialized that the school inspector in Java had sent twenty-one students to China to study at the *Chi-nan hsueh-t'ang* school which he had just established.[127] The overseas Chinese students were in the charge of Dr Lim Boon Keng a short time while they were in Singapore. Eighteen had already cut off their *queues* and were wearing European dress.[128]

Liu Shih-chi and Wang Feng-hsiang were not the only Chinese officials involved in overseas Chinese education. The Singapore consul-general took an active interest and assisted touring school inspectors.[129] Penang Vice-Consul Leong Fee was a director of the school in his city. The role of Chang Pi-shih in both Penang and Singapore is heavily documented but there is also evidence suggesting that Chang traveled to Java in the first part of 1908 to deliver a scroll with the imperial autograph to a new girls' school there.[130] Chang's assistant from the Board of Trade, Shih Pao-chang, stayed on in Singapore to advise the overseas Chinese on commercial matters and part of his responsibilities included helping the Penang Chinese School solicit money for its building fund.[131]

Visiting dignitaries from the Board of Agriculture, Industry and Commerce took full advantage of the overseas Chinese merchant interest in fostering education. Yang Shih-ch'i visited Chinese schools in Singapore and made a nominal contribution to at least one of them.[132] Yang also toured schools in the Netherlands Indies and urged merchant leaders to try to consolidate both their commercial and their educational endeavors under the leadership of one organization guided from Peking.[133] Wang Ta-chen, who brought schoolchildren out in droves in Singapore, also visited educational facilities in Java.[134] By demonstrating an interest in education, visiting Ch'ing agents had an opportunity to meet with some of the most influential Chinese merchants in Southeast Asia.

THE RECRUITMENT OF FOO CHOO CHOON

Unquestionably the greatest coup for the late Ch'ing campaign to attract overseas support was 'tin king' Foo Choo Choon. Although he had taken an active role in the establishment of Penang's Chinese

school and achieved the honorary ranks of taotai and commissioner of salt revenue back in China by virtue of his charitable contributions, Foo does not appear to have been actively sought after by the Chinese government until after 1905. The first important reference to Foo by a high Chinese official came in early 1906 when Viceroy Ts'en announced that the overseas capitalist had generously sent him $10,000 to help pay the national debt. Ts'en praised Foo's great patriotism and proclaimed the start of a great drive to collect similar contributions from wealthy Chinese merchants in New York, Singapore, Batavia and elsewhere, but circumstantial evidence suggests that the donation was motivated by more than mere altruism.[135]

On 13 October, passing through Singapore on his way back to China, Foo told reporters from the *Straits Times* that he was returning home for three months to visit his 83-year-old grandmother. Reports that soon came out of China indicated, however, that there was far more than filial piety at stake. When he arrived in Canton he was met by ranking representatives of the viceroy and housed in quarters near the yamen. The following afternoon he called on Viceroy Ts'en and presented the official with a scroll containing the names of sixty prominent Straits merchants. Although there is evidence that Foo was a large shareholder in the Canton–Hankow railroad and that he consulted with the viceroy at the Canton Chamber of Commerce about this matter, the major reason for his visit to Canton appears to have been to investigate the possibilities for land development. It was reported that the viceroy even provided a gunboat and soldier escort to accompany Foo on his search for locations where he might begin new mining operations.[136]

By the end of the year, Foo had received the rights to a mining site some miles east of Canton and had begun to survey Hainan Island.[137] He then visited Fukien where he began to make plans to organize yet another mining company. Like the other truly great overseas Chinese entrepreneurs, Foo Choo Choon never thought on a small scale. Once the decision was made to invest in Chinese mining, he boldly launched a half-dozen projects, some of which were hundreds of miles apart. He did not think of abandoning his Nanyang interests or other responsibilities and his financial empire took on a decidedly international look.

When Foo returned to Southeast Asia in 1907, he and several other Perak mining capitalists who had also been induced to visit China in the previous year, toured chambers of commerce to try to stimulate even more overseas interest in China's mineral resources. Addressing a Singapore merchant audience in July, Foo related how Peking had taken steps to develop enterprises and protect merchants and suggested that it was time for all patriotic Chinese abroad to lend a hand.

He revealed how in the past few months he had visited Hainan and received instructions from Viceroy Ts'en to organize an overseas Chinese-backed company to begin the development of the island. He hoped that his audience of miners and businessmen would support this ambitious new venture to develop China.[138] Nationalism was not the only appeal. The profit that might be returned to the investor, particularly in the discovery of precious metals, was obvious to everyone in the hall, but the audience also knew that it took a great capital investment to open a new mine and that far from every attempt would prove financially successful.

Besides providing capital and technical knowledge, the overseas Chinese entrepreneurs, perhaps even more importantly, gave China an example which helped spur greater interest in the self-development of valuable mineral resources. This was particularly true of Foo Choo Choon's extensive involvement in his native Fukien.

In the spring of 1908, Foo together with Goh Choo Chye of Penang asked the Board of Agriculture, Industry and Commerce for permission to open a large mining operation in Fukien's Chuan-chow prefecture. The region had attracted foreign interest in the past, but the promise of Chinese development brought the authorities to support the overseas Chinese businessmen. Foo and Goh pledged to find the necessary capital to open coal, iron and lead mines in the Fukien mountains.[139]

For some time local merchants and commercial officials had been disturbed about the lack of Chinese mining enterprises to exploit the resources in the coastal mountains of Fukien. Without Chinese capitalists, development and profits had been left almost entirely to foreigners. Finally in May 1908, the Board of Agriculture, Industry and Commerce (with the approval of the president of the Board of Posts and Communications, the vice-president of the Board of Rites and the supporting signatures of the most influential gentry figures in the province) formally appointed Foo Choo Choon to the newly created post of director of mining for Fukien (*Ch'üan-sheng k'uang-wu tsung-li*).[140]

It seems certain that Foo was expected to attract additional overseas Chinese mining capital and personnel. There is, however, no indication that the authorities viewed the position as merely honorary, another attempt to turn empty bureaucratic position into additional imperial revenue, for the record shows that Foo took definite steps to organize the local gentry and merchants to recapture mining rights. In so doing, however, Foo demonstrated the same remarkable talent his friend and superior, mandarin–capitalist Chang Pi-shih, had also displayed when he was able to combine the traditional roles of

merchant-manager and official-supervisor. When viewed in this context, Foo Choo Choon's activities on Hainan Island also stand out and provide one more example of the special position of the overseas Chinese entrepreneur.

Although Foo's involvement with Viceroy Ts'en in a plan to develop Hainan mining had been known since late 1906, the size of his concession and the scope of the undertaking was not fully appreciated until the spring of 1908. Aside from the Canton viceroy, the key personality responsible for recruiting the overseas capitalist appears to have been Yang Shih-ch'i, the widely traveled vice-president of the Board of Agriculture, Industry and Commerce. Foo had been Yang's host in Nanyang and it was Yang who recommended brevet honor as a metropolitan official of the third rank for the overseas Chinese capitalist.[141] According to several reports in the *Straits Times*, Yang also proposed Foo as a suitable choice as Chinese ambassador to Siam. The English-language newspaper eventually advised its readers that, because Foo was such an 'unostentatious' individual, all he had asked for was some mining concession on Hainan.[142] As it turned out, however, Foo's concession embraced nearly 6,000 square miles of territory and virtually every aspect of modernization. Since Foo was a naturalized British subject, it was probably wise of him to have bypassed the diplomatic post if it was actually offered.

As memorialized to the throne by Yang Shih-ch'i, Foo's plan for Hainan island, a comparatively backward region of China, must rank among the more ambitious schemes proposed in the late Ch'ing attempt at modernization. Foo asked for permission to take charge of the complete development of Hainan island. He promised to raise funds and devise means to open banks, build roads, expand agriculture, develop mineral industries, raise livestock, emphasize fishing, establish a steamship line, grow forests, make the traditional salt monopoly flourish and open ports. Yang called Foo to Peking to discuss this bold proposal and learned that, with the backing of the Canton viceroy, Foo had already raised $1,000,000 and begun the Overseas Chinese Development Company (*Ch'iao-hsing tsung-kung-ssu*) to open mines, raise livestock and start credit bureaus. Another $1,000,000 had been put together to enable a second syndicate run by Foo, the Overseas Chinese Prosperity Company (*Ch'iao-feng kung-ssu*) to gain control of the salt monopoly.[143]

Although Foo seems to have been able to find neither time nor money to pursue the development of every aspect of his plan, he is known to have attempted to bring modern banking facilities to the island.[144] Since Foo was first and foremost a miner, the mining concession was the most noteworthy endeavor. Not only did his

Overseas Chinese Development Company receive lucrative mining rights, but the overseas capitalist behind the project also received imperial appointment as the superintendent of mining for Hainan (*Tu-pan Ch'iung-yai k'en-k'uang shih-i*).[145] Again, Foo Choo Choon was able to set his own terms for cooperation with the Ch'ing government which clearly included personal entry into the traditional instruments of bureaucratic control.

With long experience in mineral exploration and extraction, other Nanyang mining capitalists were obvious targets for Ch'ing recruiters. Chang Pi-shih had easily obtained the backing of Sheng Hsuan-huai in several early mining schemes of his own and stressed the potential in this area when he addressed the empress dowager. Thus, in 1906, Sheng naturally passed on the information that Leong Fee, then vice-consul at Penang and long connected with Foo and Chang in various enterprises, was ready to begin tin-mining operations in Kwangtung.[146] Consequently, an interconnected Southeast Asian business empire of long standing continued its monopolistic expansion into South China.

Aside from the many instances when Chang Pi-shih, operating as a Canton-based mandarin, or his close Nanyang associates directly participated in a new enterprise, it is hard to establish a direct relationship between Chang's grand strategy and individual investment. Granted that the mandarin–capitalists gained great personal advantage from their association with the Ch'ing authorities, their example did catalyze local action. It is not unreasonable to suggest that a large number of the commercial and industrial ventures started in South China in the years when Chang was serving as the chief commercial officer for the two provinces benefited from his patronage and encouragement. When he was elected president of the Canton General Chamber of Commerce in March 1907, the Board of Agriculture, Industry and Commerce again observed the critical place Canton occupied for both domestic and foreign trade and stressed that Chang Pi-shih was, indeed, the perfect man for this responsible position between the government and business community.[147]

Later in 1907, Chang's Canton bureau processed the petition of local merchants who were attempting to organize an association for steamship trade with the Kwangtung interior.[148] As it will take all of Chapter 7 to document, Chang and the Nanyang Chinese provided the cutting edge in a campaign to regain railroad rights which would have important national consequence. But by far Chang's greatest contribution had been the initial recruitment of Southeast Asian capitalists. His proposals to attract overseas-Chinese wealth and experience back to their home districts had proven successful enough to prompt officials in

other provinces, not as directly involved with the traditional problems of the sojourners, to establish rules for their protection and, ultimately, recruitment.[149]

Certainly not all of Chang's projects were successful. The *Shang-wu kuan-pao* (*The Commercial Gazette*), the official publication of the commercialization movement, gave wide exposure to one episode that ended with tragic results. In 1906, a syndicate of merchants in Kuala Lumpur had been recruited to establish a new business back in their native China. They had selected some of their number to return to initiate matters and Chang Pi-shih had helped arrange protection but half way to Hong Kong the ship caught fire and sank with great loss of life. The project's future, therefore, seemed bleak but, undaunted, the Nanyang merchants selected another manager and began to reorganize the company. With the help of the Singapore consul-general and the Kwangtung governor, the group petitioned the Board of Agriculture, Industry and Commerce to request some form of special recognition for their drowned colleagues. The officials in Peking were quite receptive to the idea and, in a manner which clearly reflected the spirited courtship of the overseas Chinese, concluded that because the court had repeatedly gone on record to encourage Chinese merchants to return to China, the individuals who had drowned were, in actuality, on official government business. It was, therefore, possible to issue posthumous honors illustrating just how far those in charge of the campaign to modernize China would now go to demonstrate good faith to the Nanyang Chinese.[150]

By 1908, almost every issue of *Shang-wu kuan-pao* as well as the important Ch'ing mouthpiece, *Cheng-chih kuan-pao* (*The Government Gazette*) and the non-political *Tung-fang tsa-chih* ('Eastern Miscell-any') makes reference to the growing overseas-Chinese stake in the development of China. By then, it was too late to save the Manchu regime.

7

South China's railroad offensive 1904–8

In 1878, having observed the wealth and power of the West first hand, Hsueh Fu-ch'eng observed: 'I think if the system of railway trains is not used, China can never be rich and strong.'[1] China's early attempts at railroad building were rather discouraging. When Sheng Hsuan-huai took over the management of the proposed Peking–Hankow line in 1896, however, hopes were raised that China might use railroads to help counter foreign aggression. The ways in which Sheng attempted to rally merchant support, organized modern banking and turned to Chang Pi-shih have already been outlined. Chang clearly shared Sheng's overly optimistic belief that China was ready to finance her own railroads. He undoubtedly shared Sheng's disappointment when self-reliance failed and Peking was forced to rely on a syndicate from Belgium for the construction of the Peking–Hankow route and to call in American capital for the Canton–Hankow line he supervised.

The ensuing half a dozen years were characterized by a battle among the Western powers for the right to finance, construct, and, in most cases, control new Chinese railroads.[2] In his 1903 memorial, Chang Pi-shih acknowledged that China was probably not yet ready on her own to embark on trunk lines that stretched hundreds of miles. He therefore suggested that Chinese merchants could be recruited to begin work on short feeder lines through their own districts.[3] In the winter of the year, even before Chang had assumed his duties at Canton, several merchants proposed to construct a railroad from Swatow to Chaochow the district capital some twenty-five miles inland. The Chaochow railroad was a noteworthy project because it was the very first completely merchant-managed and totally Chinese-financed railroad constructed in China. Even more importantly, it was a near-perfect example of the type of enterprise Chang envisioned for future overseas Chinese entrepreneurs.

THE CHAOCHOW RAILROAD

It should be no surprise that a railroad which reflected so much of what

Chang Pi-shih preached would also bear his stamp. The man given formal credit for establishing the Chaochow Railroad Company was Chang's own agent in the Straits, his cousin the *majoor* of the Chinese in Dutch Sumatra and former vice-consul at Penang, Chang Yü-nan. Already in partnership with another Penang businessman, Hsieh Yung-kuang, Chang had put together a capital of one million taels. The Board of Trade forwarded their petition with its own strong endorsement to the throne noting that with expenses running high on the American-financed Canton–Hankow railroad, there would be a number of advantages in having a private railroad built. Not the least of these was that the project might well set the precedent for wealthy Chinese at home and abroad to purchase shares in railroads, industry and mining, an objective which the memorialists argued was right in line with the empire's recent interest in modernization and the potential of overseas Chinese participation. The Board of Trade consequently requested an imperial order directing the governor-general and the governor concerned to clear the way for the start of the railroad. The Grand Council also supported the petition and the empress dowager handed down a favorable verdict on 12 December 1903.[4]

Although it is possible that the Chaochow Railroad Company was only a front for Chang Pi-shih, Chang Yü-nan was a credible enough spokesman for the idea of overseas Chinese investment in China to earn his fame. The fact that his Southeast Asian activities were often subordinated to the interests of Chang Pi-shih's vast commercial empire must, nevertheless, be noted. Hsieh Yung-kuang had, of course, also had a long history of Nanyang cooperation with Chang Pi-shih and the circumstantial evidence pointing to the latter's dominant hand is strengthened by reports circulating in late 1903 that Hsieh was to be named Chang's assistant as vice-president of the newly created Kwangtung Commercial Association.[5] Hsieh and the Chang cousins would openly join forces to establish Penang's Chinese school and to found the Deli Bank in 1907. As long as Chang Pi-shih held his commercial superintendency, he would enjoy a pervasive influence on all railroad developments within his domain.

The original capital for the Chaochow railroad soon proved inadequate and the two Nanyang entrepreneurs had to look elsewhere for support. A Hong Kong millionaire named Wu matched the $500,000 interests held by both Chang and Hsieh. Lin Li-sheng, one of Formosa's leading merchants, invested another $300,000 while a man named Chang, reputedly from Siam, added $200,000 more.[6] Lin, better known as Lim La-sang, was born in Fukien in 1868 and reportedly educated in Hong Kong. He was one of the largest tea merchants in Formosa and involved in Hong Kong and Amoy commercial and banking circles.[7] In

time, Chang and Hsieh would come to regret his inclusion, but having now put up $2,000,000, the new group of shareholders met in April 1904 and selected Chang Yü-nan as managing director-general. Hsieh, Wu and Lin were named managers. The group selected a Japanese named Sato as chief engineer and awarded the construction contract to a Japanese syndicate.[8]

Early reports indicated that the Japanese were working well. Surveying was started, offices were set up, land was purchased and the local gentry for the most part satisfied. There were occasional protests when the proposed route threatened tombs or ancestral homes but Chang followed a practice of accommodation and simply changed the route, whenever it was possible, to meet local complaints. As might be expected, people pulled up surveyors' stakes and a few workmen were roughed up by local bullies. The preliminary work was, however, all completed by August 1905. With surveying finished, blueprints were made for stations, materials were assembled and actual construction commenced in September. Although expenses quickly ran higher than anticipated, no doubt in part because of Chang's willingness to make detours to satisfy local sentiments and also because of difficulty matching Japanese crews to non-Japanese machinery, everyone expected completion to take only one year.[9]

In just a few months, however, it was apparent to even the most optimistic reporters that the railroad was in trouble and that work had slowed down. The local inhabitants who had merely annoyed the surveyors now took a far more militant stand criticizing the choice of route at every turn. They complained that the company had taken inadequate flood-prevention precautions and, of course, relations with the foreign Japanese inevitably soured. The mixture proved explosive. It took only the sudden murder of two Japanese workmen and an immediate Japanese demand for compensation to create an international incident and make the question of Japanese involvement one of the crucial nationalist issues of the day.

Reports on the outbreak of difficulties along the Chaochow line, including one comprehensive study by Wang Ch'ing-mu sent by the Board of Trade to investigate the commercial situation, all blamed the superstitious faith in the power of geomancy held by local villagers as the root-cause of problems. Real trouble broke out when railroad crews moved one hundred or more graves in one county to make way for the railway. Opposition became open and strong, while vandalism and violence increased. The fact that the railroad company could not always bend to suit local inhabitants was evident from the fact that costs were soaring and the initial capital had to be expanded to $3,000,000. Company arguments were not persuasive, however, particularly since

the offending engineers and workmen were foreigners. Thus, anti-foreign sentiments inevitably colored the reaction.[10]

Near-riot conditions existed after the shootings and the viceroy was forced to dispatch troops to put down the disturbance. He also sent an official named Wen to Swatow to try to work out a settlement. With the murder of the Japanese nationals, the Japanese consul at Amoy approached Wen and Chang and presented several demands. Besides punishment of the killers, the Japanese government demanded that compensation be paid for the deaths and for damage done to Japanese property during the riot. The consul also demanded that the Chinese would have to devise adequate means to protect Japanese in the future.

Within ten days, Wen arrested fourteen villagers who had opposed the railroad and demoted local magistrates who had been ineffectual. Chang Yü-nan at first claimed that the murdered Japanese were independent merchants who had no legal relationship with the railroad. He apparently dropped this line and acknowledged that the contract with the construction syndicate contained a clause requiring payment of $5,000 if a workman were killed. Chang appeared willing to pay compensation at this rate and Wen returned to Canton believing that the matter was resolved. The appearance of the Japanese consul in the negotiations should have been enough in itself to indicate that the Japanese would not settle so cheaply.

Chang Yü-nan strongly contested the Japanese demands. He argued that since the Chaochow Railroad Company was a private merchant-managed concern that had a contract with a Japanese company, the consul had no reason to interfere. The Japanese were implying that they were the supervising and managing agents and that Chang's Chinese company was only in their employ. Since the contract between the two companies limited compensation, $10,000 was all he was willing to pay. It was a matter between businessmen, not an issue in international relations. The Board of Trade quickly recognized, however, that further negotiations would get nowhere for the issue was really a question of power politics. When the Japanese consul warned that soldiers would be used to protect workmen, the Board of Trade ordered Chang to pay an indemnity of $210,000. Fortunately for the Chinese, the Russo-Japanese War was still on and Swatow had been declared neutral territory. The Japanese therefore accepted compensation and dropped the matter.[11]

In his attempt to maintain the independence of China's first merchant-managed railroad, Chang Yü-nan found himself in an almost impossible position between the Japanese construction team and local sentiment and, on a larger scale, between Japanese imperialism and

emerging feelings of Chinese nationalism. To yield to one set of demands only served to infuriate the other side. Local inhabitants, some of whom may have fought the choice of route all along, became incensed over the payment of compensation. Some individual members of the gentry demanded that Chang be removed and the rights to the railroad taken away. There was much talk that the Chaochow railroad would soon become a second Canton–Hankow line totally dominated by foreigners.[12] The most damaging charge of all, however, was that Lin Li-sheng's shares were really held by the Japanese.

News of the issue broke when Chinese students from Kwangtung who were at school in Japan made the charge in a letter directly addressed to Chang. The besieged overseas Chinese capitalist firmly denied the charge but, the circumstantial evidence being what it was, the students were far from satisfied. Once they read in Tokyo newspapers that the Japanese government had begun to speak as though the Chaochow railroad was part of its sphere of influence, the enraged students were certain that the Japanese controlled the Formosan merchant's shares. They immediately wrote the Board of Trade demanding that Chang buy out Lin's shares. If he refused they would help raise the money themselves. It seemed obvious to the students that Chang and Lin had made a secret agreement to call in Japanese protection. Bitterly denouncing Chang Yü-nan, the Chinese students petitioned the Board of Trade to investigate the way the railroad was being pulled into Japanese hands.[13]

Local gentry soon joined in the protest and, perhaps in response to the pressure, Chang Yü-nan returned to Nanyang as soon as arrangements were made to pay the indemnity.[14] Feelings were still high, however, when Wang Ch'ing-mu arrived on his inspection tour. While at Swatow, Wang examined the company books and its charter and also looked into local complaints. The rules and regulations of the Chaochow Railroad Company had, right from the beginning, stressed that the line was to be financed solely by capital raised from Chinese merchants. Foreigners were not to be permitted to hold shares or to loan money. The other provisions, nevertheless, realistically noted that Chinese were unfamiliar with engineering and machinery and that foreigners might be employed in these areas. Chinese students were, however, to be sent to Formosa to study how to operate a railway. On their return, they would gradually replace all foreign employees. A non-Chinese company could also be hired to undertake the actual construction, but the rules clearly stated that management was to be reserved exclusively for Chinese. Once all construction work was completed the administration could retain Japanese engineers or technicians but solely at the company's pleasure.

Wang did discover that Lin was listed in company records as a Fukienese. There was no reference to Taiwan connections and he was apparently satisfied that the Japanese were not involved. Wang also investigated the route. He concluded that the choice was the only suitable one and that the railroad had taken adequate precautions for flood control. The engineers had done their utmost to satisfy local conditions, according to the visiting representative of the Board of Trade who criticized gentry obstruction.[15] Protest continued, however, although the Japanese never threatened the independence of the undertaking again. Eventually the Chinese government ordered Lin's shares purchased in order to protect rights to the railroad. In 1908, Chang Hung-nan of Medan took over these shares in his brother's company.[16]

In November 1906, the Chaochow Railroad began operation. Only about 24 miles long and of standard gauge, the railway had taken two full years to construct. With rolling-stock, locomotives and other necessary equipment, total costs were widely believed to have exceeded $3,000,000. There were six stations in all. The same number of trains traveled the distance daily, three on the northward run and three on the trip back to Swatow. A band from the German cruiser *Jaguar* was reported to have played in the very first train, giving a strange twist to the line's basic anti-imperialist theme. As if to show the West that Chinese merchants could finance and administer a railroad of their own, albeit an extremely short one, Chang Yü-nan also invited consular officials from the foreign powers to the opening ceremonies.[17]

Western observers were never optimistic about the railroad. Keen competition from cheaper steamer service kept revenue too low to permit payment of dividends. This was not, however, strictly the result of poor planning. In 1908, work began to extend the line to Yee Kai (*I-ch'i*) on the bank of the Han River where it would join Chang Pi-shih's proposed Canton–Amoy railroad. It would have been possible to transport goods by rail to and from the far corners of the great Eurasian continent. But the cross-Kwangtung railroad was never constructed, making the Chaochow railroad a branch without a trunk, an orphan railroad going nowhere. Surveys were later made to extend the route independently on to Canton but not a mile of rail was laid. In mid-June 1939, the Chinese resistance army, desiring to deny transportation facilities to the advancing Japanese army, destroyed Chang Yü-nan's railroad. It was certainly bitter irony that the merchant-managed railroad which had survived an earlier Japanese intrigue was destroyed in a futile attempt to delay Japanese aggression some thirty-four years later.[18]

In personal terms, however, the financially unsuccessful venture brought considerable prestige for Chang Yü-nan in Peking. In March 1907, the Board of Agriculture, Industry and Commerce rewarded him

for the money he had invested and the efforts he had made on behalf of Chinese modernization. As the Board was to offer other overseas entrepreneurs, Chang was named a second-class adviser (*erh-teng i-yuan*). On 21 March, the throne honored the mandarin–capitalist from Nanyang as a third-rank metropolitan official.[19] In historical perspective, the Chaochow railroad was relatively successful for its conception and completion marked the true beginning of the next era in economic development. In the years after 1904, other Chinese merchants began their own railroads, and tried to wrest control of other lines from the foreign powers. But the years immediately ahead would also see a growing conflict of interests between the weakening central government and the provinces that would help bring on the Revolution of 1911.

THE CANTON–HANKOW RAILROAD

In South China, these new trends and the influence of the Chaochow line were most clearly seen in the Canton–Hankow railroad. Sheng Hsuan-huai had invited the American China Development Company to finance and construct this line in 1898. The original loan was to be 20,000,000 gold dollars, but the sum was doubled by a supplementary agreement two years later. Loan terms were for fifty years but earlier redemption was permitted. A few years after the Americans took over the project, Belgian interests gained a controlling number of shares which caused great alarm in Peking because Sheng had assiduously followed a policy of dividing railroad rights among different foreign powers. Now it appeared that the strategic north–south route would be totally within the grasp of one Western nation. In the spring of 1904, the Chinese government strongly protested and refused to recognize Belgian control. Through the efforts of the famous financier J. P. Morgan, a majority of shares again came under American control but fear of foreign control and a growing nationalist spirit was, however, enough to swing opinion against the American syndicate. There followed a great gentry and merchant outcry in South China demanding complete cancellation of the concession. At the very center of the storm stood Chang Pi-shih.[20]

On 11 October 1904 the Kwangtung Commercial Association held a meeting to discuss the Belgian takeover of Canton–Hankow railway shares. The group sent cables of protest to the viceroy and Peking to demonstrate its conviction that recent developments were in clear contradiction to article 17 of the original railroad agreement with the Americans which had, in fact, stipulated that no other country or national was to own stock in the American company. The compara-

tively new Canton commercial body thereby selected Teng Hsiao-ch'ih and Chang Pi-shih to go north with the protest where, together with representatives of the Shanghai Chamber of Commerce, they would meet Sheng Hsuan-huai to press for the complete restoration of railroad rights to China.[21]

Sheng Hsuan-huai and his patron Chang Chih-tung agreed and after tedious negotiations the Chinese government paid a total of 6,750,000 gold dollars to take over the troubled railroad. Although two surveys had been made, only a mere 50 miles at the Canton end had been completed including a 32 mile branch through Fatshan to Samshui built by the Americans for Chang Pi-shih. As the rights were being recovered, the merchant and gentry leaders from Kwangtung, Hunan and Hupei provinces enthusiastically proposed that they could raise funds to finish the long uncompleted stretch to Hankow themselves with some help from the ports of Nanyang. Merchants in the three provinces were then ordered to form companies to undertake construction in their respective provinces.[22]

One high Chinese official is credited with remarking that 'those who advocate redemption do not have the money and those who have the money do not concern themselves with it'.[23] Finding financial support for the railroad was far more difficult than many of the proponents of restoration had hoped. In September 1905, Chang Chih-tung managed to secure a loan from the British to keep work going. Having discovered that Kwangtung's share of pending expenses on the railroad would amount to 3,000,000 taels, Viceroy Ts'en immediately called in Chang Pi-shih. As noted in the previous chapter, Chang Chih-tung memorialized his approval and Chang Pi-shih was commissioned to raise the needed money in Southeast Asia.[24]

In early March 1906, Chang Pi-shih returned to Canton to report directly to Viceroy Ts'en. It was disclosed that the two talked about whether or not the province could rely on merchant shares in the Canton–Hankow railroad. Chang was adamant and on 12 March 1906 Ts'en turned the management and financing of the Kwangtung section over to Chang's Canton Chinese Chamber of Commerce. One of the major obstacles at the time of this transfer of responsibility was reportedly the question of who should pay the £4,178 sterling interest due on the British loan. Chang Pi-shih simply paid the debt himself and resolved the matter.[25]

Some seven or eight months later, the shareholders of the Kwangtung section requested the provincial government and the Board of Trade to name Chang, so long associated with the line and now superintendent of agriculture, industry, railroads and mining in Canton, as the new director (*tsung-pan*) of their portion of the railroad.

Although this no doubt indicated the faith the merchant community had in Chang, the episode is probably more significant as a sign of growing dissatisfaction with the line's management.[26]

Dissension continued to rock the railroad in the following months. Only a few miles had been completed in the year and a half since China regained rights to the line and many shareholders clearly wanted more progress for their money. Eventually in 1907, Peking named Wu T'ing-fang and Chang Pi-shih the manager and assistant manager of the entire Canton–Hankow railroad in an attempt to restore public confidence. Wu, who had negotiated the original agreement with the Americans, became ill and never assumed the post. Although he must have had a large personal stake in the railroad by this time, Chang Pi-shih appears to have gradually removed himself from the Canton–Hankow railway in subsequent years. Aside from finance, perhaps the greatest difficulty the railroad faced was securing the cooperation of the three provincial railway organizations. Finally in 1908, after a succession of managerial personnel, the aging mandarin Chang Chih-tung assumed the directorship of the troubled project.[27]

THE CANTON–AMOY RAILROAD

In the thirty-first year of the Kuang-hsu reign, probably toward the end of 1904 or in the very early part of 1905, the newly appointed superintendent of agriculture, industry, railroads and mining for Kwangtung and Fukien provinces met with Viceroy Ts'en in Canton to discuss plans for his new and extremely ambitious railway scheme. The route planned was to run from the eastern gate of Canton to Whampoa and from there northeastward through Huichow and Chaochow to the Fukien border and onward to the shore opposite Amoy.[28]

Like so many of Chang Pi-shih's dreams for the modernization of China, the Canton–Amoy railroad (*Kuang-Hsia t'ieh-lu*) never really advanced far beyond the drawing board. The soundness of the proposal to link the two coastal provinces by rail and the obvious benefits to the inhabitants nevertheless fired the imagination of many local merchants and helped stimulate a deeper native awareness of the importance of railroads while playing a significant part in arousing South China to a fever of pre-nationalistic feelings over the issue of local merchant control of the region's vital new arteries of rail.

The first short stretch of the proposed roadbed from Canton city to Whampoa became an international issue as it was said to encroach upon first American and then British railroad interests in China. Chang's role in the little-told history of this abortive railroad and the connecting lines it was expected to feed and support provides numer-

ous insights into the potential and failings of the emerging business class in the late Ch'ing period as well as a fascinating narrative of overseas Chinese involvement in a brief flurry of railroad construction along the South China coast.

Perhaps the most daring of all Chang's proposals was his plan to open a new Chinese-controlled trade port at Whampoa connected to Canton and the rest of China by rail. Besides recommending that a suitable railroad station should be built at the Whampoa stop, Chang went on to argue that the water in the harbor had to be deepened to allow the passage of vessels to and from Hong Kong and, furthermore, that Whampoa should possess the full facilities to handle a direct ocean-going trade. Once wharfs, warehouses and customs-offices had been constructed, he hoped that the importance of foreign Hong Kong as a collection and transport center might be diminished.

Although the right to build the proposed line from Canton to Amoy through Whampoa was not formally approved until the fall of 1905, it was clear from fund-raising activities and the selection of a surveying team much earlier in the year that Chang was enjoying his customary latitude with virtually automatic backing from the Board of Trade and the local viceroy.[29] The decisive factors which were eventually forwarded to the throne included Chang's assurance that there were abundant overseas Chinese merchants who would eagerly support the development of their native places in Kwangtung and neighboring Fukien, and also his willingness to invest as much as 20,000 taels of his own to get the section to Whampoa under construction.

Chang's request for permission to begin work, as processed by the Board of Trade, was especially noteworthy because of the inclusion of a 21-point petition stressing the strategic and economic value of the opening of Whampoa. Chang also promised to find the estimated 800,000 taels needed for the ten-mile distance to Whampoa from Chinese merchants and to back the issuance of eight thousand 100-tael shares himself if necessary. With his additional pledge to uncover the resources needed for the eventual extension of the line to Amoy, the Board of Trade's memorial was understandably without reservation and Chang received full imperial sanction.[30]

The editor of a Hong Kong Chinese newspaper marveled at Chang's intentions and observed approvingly: 'Railroads are closely connected with treaty ports. By this movement H. E. Chang may be said to have caught hold of the very clue.'[31] The other residents of the British crown colony would not be so charitable for the Chinese multi-millionaire from Nanyang had grasped full well the meaning of the old imperialist dream of linking Hong Kong and London by rail. A line then under discussion between Kowloon and Canton would be the ultimate link in

a transportation network largely under foreign control. If England's design to build and largely dictate terms on the strategic Canton–Kowloon section could be thwarted and Whampoa developed according to plans, Chang promised that the greater Canton area, when connected to Amoy and Swatow by comparatively swift rail service, would become the most important transportation center along the South China coast undoubtedly at the expense of Hong Kong.

Interestingly enough, however, it was the Americans who first objected to the Whampoa railroad. As early as March 1905, the American ambassador argued before the Boards of Trade and Foreign Affairs that the agreement for the construction of the railroad from Canton to Hankow granted the American concern the right to extend the route on to the coast via Whampoa. The Americans argued that they had already drawn up plans for the project some five years earlier and that Chang's actions were in clear contradiction of the treaty and should be stopped. The Board of Trade was not impressed and saw no reason why Chinese merchants could not manage a railroad by themselves as they saw fit provided that no other foreign power participated. The Board in charge of the always tricky international situation was less sure of itself but the timely Chinese purchase of the Canton–Hankow railroad rights from the Americans, a course in which Chang Pi-shih had a hand as well, promptly disposed of this case against the program to develop Whampoa.[32]

Since the American complications had been resolved, Chang and Viceroy Ts'en repeatedly urged that work on the Canton–Whampoa railway should be pushed on, beginning with surveying and the purchase of land in the spring and summer of 1906. British interests, keeping abreast with developments in Kwangtung, formally filed a protest in Peking on 12 May and renewed pressure on the Board of Foreign Affairs in July, August and September maintaining on each occasion that the proposed railroad stood in opposition to the draft agreements made for the Canton–Kowloon undertaking, particularly a clause that said there could be no competing line. The British government demanded no less than a complete stop to Chang Pi-shih's activities. The Chinese government's immediate response was that since Kwangtung was such a densely populated place, one short line would not be the slightest hindrance to the Kowloon route. Pressed by the British, the Chinese Foreign Ministry went on and denied that the entire Canton–Amoy railroad could possibly be considered in competition, but showed its concern by forwarding the matter to the Board of Trade for consideration. When Viceroy Ts'en received that Board's urgent telegram, he replied very frankly and

with amazement arguing that since the Whampoa line had already been started it should not be sacrificed to the latecomer.[33]

The Canton governor, supported by the merchants of the Canton Chinese Chamber of Commerce, consistently opposed the British interpretation of the 'no competing line' clause through the balance of the year. Feelings against the Kowloon railroad came to a head in December when the Canton opposition exchanged a number of telegrams with the Board of Foreign Affairs and also the new Ministry of Posts and Communications. On the first of the month, leading merchants in the province condemned the Canton–Kowloon railroad agreement as a violation of Chinese sovereignty because of its potential obstruction of provincial railways and the restrictive and unfavorable conditions of the loan provisions. They argued that surrender on the Canton–Amoy project would set a far-reaching precedent that could not help but be to the detriment of lines undertaken by other provincial authorities in the future. The governor-general, however, revealed the opponents' trump card two days later when he wired Peking that the merchants of Kwangtung were prepared to raise the funds themselves and eliminate the basic need to seek British backing. The Foreign Ministry immediately replied that the rights to local Chinese projects would be guaranteed regardless of the fate of the loan agreement. Prematurely sensing victory, the Kwangtung anti-Kowloon railroad forces wired back ten days later their strong feeling that the proposed Kowloon line was harmful to national interests and the 'very pulse of life' in their province. Their opposition was firm: 'The loan for constructing the railroad must not under any circumstances be put into effect.' As long as the Kwangtung merchants were numerous and wealthy, they would struggle to keep the management of railroads out of foreign hands.

The British concession, buttressed by earlier treaties, was not, however, to be denied. The international relations experts in Peking no doubt recognized the futility of Canton's position. All the new governor-general, Chou, speaking presumably for the merchants, could do by January 1907 was to point out the advantages of a project financed and managed solely by Chinese and beg the Foreign Ministry to go slow in concluding the treaty in the hope that time would somehow favor the cause of autonomy.[34]

With the approval of the loan agreement virtually certain, the *South China Morning Post* of 5 January 1907 assumed that Chang's concession for the Whampoa route had actually been withdrawn and sarcastically observed that Mr Chang 'having spent time and money on the project and having gained the concession from Viceroy Shum does not believe in taking his defeat lying down'. The paper went on

to state that Chang had gone straight to Peking to try to sell his rights or get a refund.[35]

While it is not known for sure if Chang actually took his case to Peking, some interesting negotiations in his favor nevertheless took place during the early months of the new year. In negotiating the final treaty for the Canton–Kowloon railroad's construction, the Chinese government steadfastly kept its earlier promise to defend the rights for the construction of provincial railroads. The records of the Foreign Ministry clearly show that the Chinese representatives secured British recognition that the Canton–Amoy line was a separate and distinct enterprise autonomously managed within the province with its own prior rights apart from any concession granted the joint Sino-British company laying tracks to the English-ruled colony.[36]

It is difficult to ascertain for sure why the Kowloon railroad negotiations resulted as they did. In terms of international law, Great Britain had held rights to take part in the construction of a railroad from her possessions to Canton since 1898. The final railroad agreement on 7 March 1907 did, however, attempt to assuage some of the uneasiness of Chinese merchants. Administration of the railroad was to be vested in the hands of a Chinese managing-director appointed by the viceroy. The British were expected to furnish the chief accountant and chief engineer. The loan provisions were fair although Chinese merchants would obviously have preferred to raise the required amount on their own without need to turn to a Western power or to pay interest.[37]

There is one action in particular that may have affected the outcome. On 16 October 1906, when local passions were raised, Viceroy Ts'en, presumably acting in conjunction with Chang Pi-shih, cabled the Ministry of Foreign Affairs a remarkably simple compromise proposal to present to the British representatives. Since the Chinese-financed line to Whampoa had already begun surveying, why not begin the Canton–Kowloon railroad at Whampoa and utilize the first section of the projected railroad to Amoy?[38] If it was Chang's intention to call Britain's bluff, he could not have used a more successful ploy. To accept the proposal meant to aid the development of a competitive port at Whampoa and to reject the generous offer of the Chinese and to opt for the construction of an alternative route bypassing that port city, as the British representatives eventually did, was tacit recognition of the right of Chang's railroad to exist. How could anyone consider the Whampoa and Kowloon railroads competitive if they shared the same tracks? If British interests, for their own private reasons, preferred a separate routing, how could they logically begrudge competition of their own making?

Unfortunately, Chang Pi-shih and the Canton merchants were never able to translate their quasi-diplomatic victory over British interests into

corresponding miles of ties and track. Through the months of protest, the British had managed to block all work on the Chinese-backed railroad. Probably neither Chang nor his prospective investors were willing to sink large sums of money into the plan until the legal and international questions were finally resolved and it is quite clear that Peking needed to find a compromise solution. As a result, work on the Canton terminus of the project was suspended at the outset of the debate in the fall of 1906. Because of provincial rivalry, Fukien merchants demanded control of the section of the Canton–Amoy railroad that passed through their land, and, as will be discussed, Chang was forced to surrender all but a supervisory role in that province.

In mid-1907, interest in the project was revived again with railroad rights guaranteed by a clause in an international agreement. Chang asked the Ministry of Posts and Communications as well as his own Board of Agriculture, Industry and Commerce for permission to change the proposal for his railroad to enable it to utilize nearly half of the Canton–Kowloon right of way before turning east toward Chang Yü-nan's Chaochow line. The Chinese government approved this change but left the final authorization for a branch into Whampoa up in the air.[39]

After this time, however, Chang, who was the acknowledged moving spirit behind the project, never took the same interest in the route to Chaochow and Amoy. Work was never resumed on the railroad although there were rumors of impending activity in late 1907 and again in 1909.[40] The reasons for this inactivity defy simple analysis. Because South China's railroads were never expected to stand by themselves but were conceived as links in a grand transportation network, troubles on one project inevitably spilled over to undermine investor confidence on another. Domestic and international events played a role too as did bureaucratic inertia and the changing political sentiments of the overseas Chinese and local merchant supporters. Back in December 1906, when the project was at a standstill due to British protest, the *North China Herald* made its own assessment.

> A project was carried far, on paper, for a purely Chinese line from Canton to Whampoa and Amoy. But it got no farther than paper, and I doubt it getting any farther – for the reason which thwarts all financial combinations in China, viz., that Chinese capitalists will not trust their money in any enterprise which officials can control.[41]

This judgement was probably premature in 1906 when Kwangtung was alive with railroad nationalism but delay cost Chang his momentum, and the merchant support he had hoped for never materialized.

The plan to develop Whampoa enjoyed a longer life. In mid-1908 Chang Pi-shih was finally commissioned to open a new port at that location and he revived his desire to build a short connecting railroad.[42] In 1911,

Medan's Chang Hung-nan, whose beginnings as a capitalist can be traced to Chang Pi-shih, took charge of the venture. On 30 August he was the guest of honor at the Canton Chinese Chamber of Commerce where he attempted to gather merchant support for the development of banks, factories and the new port facilities. The Chinese revolution was, however, only a few months away and when the Ch'ing dynasty died, the mandate for Whampoa was temporarily removed.[43] The area was eventually opened and a port railroad was constructed under a Republican administration in the 1930s but, by then, it was far too late to fulfill Chang Pi-shih's dream of creating a second Hong Kong.[44]

THE FUKIEN RAILROAD

It is a great irony that the only section of Chang Pi-shih's Canton–Amoy railroad to be constructed was a short stretch at the Amoy terminus which was finished in 1911. Because of the provincial rivalry of the time, Fukien merchants wanted control of their own railroads and the name of Chang Pi-shih has almost been forgotten as Fukien Chinese remember the glorious failure that was the Fukien railroad.

The origins of the Fukien railroad scheme are somewhat obscure. What is known for certain is that the plan was intimately related to the scramble for foreign concessions. In 1902 there was a great influx of French business interests which, in connivance with certain members of the local gentry, obtained the mining rights for three or four prefectures from the governor. For obvious reasons the French looked favorably upon the construction of a railroad through their holdings and approached a well-known Amoy merchant named Ch'en who was said to have considerable contacts with Nanyang Chinese and arranged for him to set up a front organization to obtain the rights to construct a railroad. Although the project was registered in a Chinese name, the plans and capital of $20,000,000 were provided by the French. The proposal called for three trunk lines into Hsing-hsu, the town opposite the island of Amoy. One line would run north to Foochow and onward to link up with the railroads of Chekiang province. A second line was to run to Changchow and then southward into Kwangtung. The third line, passing through Changchow, was to head westward to connect the coast with Kiangsi.

On 24 October 1904, however, the charade was exposed by the publication of an anonymous warning which identified the French involvement and urged a campaign to block the project and recall the concession. Fukien students in Japan, Shanghai and also in Foochow were quick to demonstrate their dissatisfaction and cables were dispatched to native Fukienese in high places in the capital who in turn

forwarded the petitions to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the Board of Trade.[45] One of the Fukien native sons suddenly thrust in the middle of railroad matters by the protesters was Ch'en Pao-ch'en. A traditional scholar of considerable fame, Ch'en had served the Manchu government in a number of high positions including educational commissioner for Kiangsi province and registrar of the state archives as a sub-chancellor of the Grand Secretariat. He was not, however, the least experienced in either economics or railroad management.[46]

In early 1905, having forced the French out of the railroad business, the Fukien merchants asked Ch'en Pao-ch'en to re-register the proposed railroad in his own name in order to lend his reputation to the restoration of the project. As superintendent of agriculture, industry, commerce and mining for Fukien as well as Kwangtung, Chang Pi-shih played an active role in getting the project underway again. Company plans were just being outlined when Ch'en and Chang met together in Hong Kong in January 1905 to discuss, among other things, the feasibility of raising funds from Amoy-area Chinese residing in Nanyang.[47] Considerable headway appears to have been made at this meeting and, after an attempt to secure the financial backing of another Formosan millionaire named Lin, the infant Chinese railroad company approached the Board of Trade for the necessary concession in March 1905.

The petitioners, led by some of the province's more influential mandarins, confirmed their intention to link Fukien with her three neighboring provinces and their absolute confidence that overseas Chinese could be moved to provide the necessary capital. The Board of Trade concurred in all the arguments and pointed out the great impact the project would have on transportation in general and also on the development of regional resources.[48]

No matter what part Chang's inspiration and advice may have played in launching the Fukien Railroad Company, the growing sentiment for Fukien control of Fukien railroads inevitably clashed with Chang's own plan to build a line through a corner of the province to Amoy. At issue were fundamental questions of finance and management with the merchants to the north increasingly reluctant to invite the participation of their brothers from the south in Kwangtung.[49] As a temporary compromise an agreement was reached in favor of joint Cantonese and Fukienese management of the Canton–Amoy railroad then being held up by international developments but this arrangement soon proved unsatisfactory. In late April 1906, just as Chang was beginning to survey the Whampoa section, Ch'en Pao-ch'en, together with a delegation of Fukien merchants, arrived in Canton. The crucial meetings were held at the Canton Chinese Chamber of Commerce and it was

decided that the respective merchants would undertake the financing and management of the section of line within their own provincial boundaries. Chang Pi-shih would retain responsibility for the larger segment and Ch'en would assume full responsibility for the much shorter section which was now to be incorporated into the grand Fukien railroad scheme.[50]

The *Penang Sin Poe* observed editorially in the spring of 1905 that Ch'en and his railroad would face many problems. It argued that Fukienese were not all the same in background or outlook. Could the inhabitants of one county or their brothers overseas be counted on if the railroad did not directly affect their native place? More importantly, even though Ch'en was very famous around Amoy, he was entirely without personal contacts among the Chinese residents of Southeast Asia and might well find it difficult to raise overseas financial support.[51]

The minds behind the railroad were not, however, unaware of these obstacles. The *Lat Pau* has preserved a remarkable statement of the case being made for the railroad. First appearing as an editorial in the *Fukien Daily* (*Fu-chien jih-pao*) this reprinted essay 'On the Propriety of the Fukien Railroad Being the First Instance of the Breakdown of Prefectural Boundaries' is a near-perfect example of an unconscious blending of China's old provincial rivalries with the emerging spirit of nationalism. The writer, lamenting the lack of progress then being made on the line, argued that the Fukien railroad should not be considered as only a county affair or a provincial matter but had to be viewed as a project designed to benefit all of China. He took the Chaochow railroad as an example and wrote that this line was not merely of interest to one prefecture, but was important to everyone. Of the somewhat misguided opinion that all of the Cantonese in Southeast Asia had rallied behind their railroad, he argued that the Fukien railroad would not survive if it was supported only by the inhabitants of a few counties through which it passed. Lest the Cantonese laugh at them, all the people of Fukien at home and abroad would have to back their own railroad. The author nevertheless concluded with the nationalistic belief that: 'We who love China also love Fukien. We who would love the self-management of the Fukien railroad also love the speedy completion of self-managed railroads not just for the benefit of Fukien but for all of China.'[52]

Publication of this moving plea by a Singapore newspaper can be interpreted as the signal announcing the start of a concerted effort to summon forth the essential overseas Chinese capital the railroad's fathers had counted so much upon. This drive would be capped with a personal mission by director-general Ch'en toward the end of 1906, but

the big news at the beginning was the endorsement received from Foo Choo Choon. His reported investment of $200,000 was extolled by the *Fukien Daily* editorialist as a model of patriotism and no doubt seems to have been that special boost needed to launch the project.[53]

In the last three months of the year, the Fukien Railroad Company published its rules and regulations and repeatedly placed advertisements in the Nanyang papers to prepare the way for the visit of Ch'en Pao-ch'en.[54] Evidently wary of the fact that their agent was an unknown in Southeast Asia, the Fukien authorities sought to take advantage of Ch'en's previous experience in the field of education and secured his official appointment in Peking as a traveling school inspector.[55] With this introduction to the merchant community, the railroad manager arrived in Singapore on 26 November and set up his headquarters at the Chinese chamber of commerce.[56]

On the last day of the month, the Hokkien merchants were called to a meeting and several days later Ch'en also met with merchant members of the Cantonese Mutual Assistance Association at the same location. To the assembled Cantonese, Ch'en stressed that 'within the four seas we are all brothers' but that foreigners could still denigrate China's lack of public identity because of the failure of the twenty-one provinces to unite and generate a true national spirit. Pushing the ideal of a common destiny, Ch'en further argued that the residents of the same port or, indeed, the partners of a business needed friendship and mutual assistance if they were to prosper. If there were suspicions and the undermining of common interests only poverty and weakness could result. His words were particularly bold and timely for, just two weeks before his arrival, the Singapore Chinese community had been rocked to the foundation by the outbreak of rioting between Hokkiens and Teochews. It had taken the appearance of the consul-general in his official robes and the intervention of the powerful chamber of commerce to calm the situation.[57]

Ch'en did not, however, hesitate to make special notice of the fact that the hard feelings between laborers from Fukien and Swatow were common knowledge. What he longed to see was the friendship of the merchants and gentry from the two adjoining regions. He took care to point out to the Cantonese audience that Hokkien merchants abroad bought shares in Cantonese railroads and that Chang Pi-shih supervised the railroads and mines in Fukien as well as in his native Kwangtung. Because the Fukien railroad was strategic and would serve to tie South China together, money invested toward its eventual completion would never be solely for the benefit of Fukienese but would assist Cantonese railroads too.[58]

Ch'en's visit to the Singapore Cantonese group was undoubtedly influenced by the practical need to attract as much overseas Chinese

support as possible. His views are particularly significant, however, because they clearly reflect the emerging spirit of merchant nationalism. The trend had been manifest in Southeast Asia as businessmen of different backgrounds pooled their resources to begin mandarin-language schools and to organize commercial associations. Cooperation of long-separated groups became, in a way, a symbol of Chinese nationalism to the Chinese abroad. Railroads were especially appealing because it was possible to help one's native place while simultaneously adding to the prosperity of the whole of China. Even the smallest stake in a railroad in another district or province was a means of proving one's progressive outlook. But only the most wealthy could afford to buy stock in a railroad that did not pass through the home village. The majority of Nanyang stockholders continued to write home to boast that they were part owners of the new railroad that would bring prosperity to brothers and cousins in their native place.

Before Ch'en arrived in Southeast Asia, the editors of the *Penang Sin Poe* attempted to put the Fukien railroad in proper perspective:

> At that time when the rights to the Canton–Hankow railroad were being monopolized by foreigners the court was anxious for the various provinces to heed the warning and to recruit Chinese for railroad management. Chang Chen-hsun [Pi-shih] from Chaochow who was then the commissioner of railroads and mining for Fukien and Kwangtung made plans to regain [lost] rights. Fukienese who also understood the harm in foreign planning of railroads encouraged merchants in Nanyang from the Amoy region to furnish capital to begin a company headed by Amoy's own metropolitan official Ch'en Pao-ch'en.[59]

For an intellectual, in the traditional scholastic sense, Ch'en took to his new responsibilities with great enthusiasm and displayed a remarkable understanding of China's economic backwardness. After the revolution of 1911, Ch'en would serve as private tutor to the deposed youthful emperor[60] but in late 1906 he wrote a long classical essay outlining the need for the new railroad and the problems ahead. This essay, which was published in installments in the Singapore and Penang newspapers, is a candid and perceptive statement of the plight of late Ch'ing modernization from a most unlikely conservative source.[61] Ch'en Pao-ch'en concluded that the continued poverty and misery amidst natural riches in Fukien was due to the absence of capitalists. Like Chang Pi-shih, Ch'en wrote that Chinese agriculture, industry and commerce would never flourish without the input of capital. The Fukien railroad was to be another critical example which would point the way and set the standard for new ventures that would eventually ease unemployment and set China right, but Fukien, too, needed overseas Chinese capital.[62]

The Chinese of Singapore appear to have given Ch'en a warm welcome. Over one hundred important merchants turned out to honor

him at one chamber of commerce banquet. The *Straits Times* was, however, openly hostile for, in one of those ironies of history, it confused Ch'en with Chang Pi-shih. The timing for Ch'en's Straits campaign for his Fukien railroad could not have been worse or aroused more suspicion. On 14 November the *Straits Times* had caught wind of Chang's intention to extend the Canton–Hankow line to Whampoa and the possible harm to Hong Kong then in the making. When the paper discovered two weeks later that a high Chinese official would be visiting the city to sell shares in railroads, it immediately raised the alarm that this mandarin might be the same man responsible for the Whampoa affair. The editors warned:

> The Chinese of the Straits Settlements who owe their success in life to the free and generous conditions under which they live, under the British flag, will surely hesitate before giving financial support to a Chinese official who endeavored to cripple the development of a neighboring British colony.[63]

As was frequently the case, the English-language press had been confused by the great number of romanization alternatives available for Chinese names. It took an anonymous letter to the editor to advise the paper of the fact that Cheung Pat Sze was none other than the Teo Tiaw Sait (Thio Thiau Siat) who had founded the Chinese chamber of commerce, served as consul-general and managed the nearby revenue farms. It was obvious that Chan Pao Shan (as the paper called Ch'en) must be a different official. But, even with the error corrected, the *Straits Times* was not about to ease up much on its strong opposition to the visit. The years 1906 through 1908 were difficult ones for the colony and the paper discouraged any flow of capital to China whenever possible. Upon learning that Ch'en had sold 100,000 shares at $5 each in his brief stay, the newspaper decried the draining of this large amount and criticized the investment. This time it implied with accuracy that Ch'en was somehow linked with the notorious Chang Pi-shih, but that they were only raising funds in different areas.[64]

From Singapore, Ch'en Pao-ch'en traveled to Penang and then to Java. The reception in Penang was equally warm although there is no estimate of the funds raised there. His campaign in the Netherlands Indies seems to have had much less success but it is extremely difficult to assess his share-selling mission to Nanyang.[65] In the first place, it is necessary to know the goal he had in mind when he set out. From his writing and speeches in Southeast Asia it appears certain that Ch'en hoped to create interest in the entire Fukien railroad system but in late 1906 the only place where funds raised could be immediately put to use was on the much shorter section of the Amoy to Canton line as far as the provincial border. This project required a comparatively modest invest-

ment. One writer who has commented briefly on the railroad contends that Ch'en set out to raise $3,000,000 but actually sold only two-thirds that amount.[66]

This would seem to be a reasonable assessment given the dismal economic climate in the area and the possible pressure the British and Dutch were able to bring on Chinese merchants dependent on trade of colonial origins but the sources do not always make clear whether their figures refer to Mexican or Straits dollars. Another authority credits the Fukien Railroad Company with an original capital of 6,000,000 Mexican dollars from five-dollar shares but notes that only the first dollar had been collected from overseas shareholders by 1915.[67] Still another source agrees with this total but argues that the shares were half paid up.[68] Finally, no less an authority than Sheng Hsuan-huai states that Ch'en was able to raise $1,700,000 while he was in Nanyang.[69] Ch'en may well have fallen short of his expectations but his trip to Southeast Asia was certainly not a complete failure.

In July 1907, construction was begun on the first leg of the railroad from the bank opposite Amoy to Changchow, a distance of roughly thirty miles, with capital largely raised in Nanyang. The *Straits Times* had always warned the overseas Chinese not to invest in projects over which they exercised no personal control. In this case, however, Foo Choo Choon accepted a position as assistant manager and, as had also happened when Chang Pi-shih or Chang Yü-nan participated, Nanyang Chinese probably did feel more comfortable than they would have felt dealing directly with unknown Chinese officials. The line ran into financial difficulties and was forced to borrow $500,000 in additional funds from the Bank of Communications in 1909. The problem stirred reports that Ch'en would again visit Nanyang but a second fund-raising tour never took place. In January 1911, the Changchow–Amoy railroad opened to traffic – a second Chinese railroad to virtually nowhere. Unlike the Chaochow route, however, it was eventually connected to the heartland of China.[70]

THE HSIN-NING RAILROAD

Although nationalism and even the profit-motive played a part, it was filial piety, provincialism and the search for status that really motivated the majority of overseas Chinese who invested in South China's new railroads. It was largely because successful Chinese in Nanyang wanted first and foremost to be identified as having helped bring the railroad to their own home district that they did not always give careful thought to the economic soundness of the investment. For this reason, several of

the lines discussed in these pages suffered from the competition of cheaper if slower forms of transportation. When neighboring districts failed to display the same enthusiasm, construction simply stopped and the earlier dream that rails would someday link the old homestead with Peking and even Paris was never realized. One such line, conceived by overseas Chinese entrepreneurs, was the proposed railroad from the Toi San region in the Pearl River delta south of Canton northward to the section of the Canton–Hankow railroad already constructed by American contractors.

Like the Chaochow railroad, the Hsin-ning to Canton railroad did not join the vast network of Chinese railroads for it was left cut off, very much a source of local pride and also local disappointment. The railroad was, nevertheless, an important milestone in Chinese economic history. While the Chaochow line was credited as being the first railroad completely managed and financed by Chinese merchants, the Hsin-ning railroad was the very first railroad completely financed, managed and constructed by the Chinese.

In 1905, an overseas Chinese named Ch'en I-hsi together with merchants and gentry members from Hsin-ning county organized the Hsin-yang Railroad Company. Ch'en had been born and raised in Nanyang but attended college in the United States where he specialized in railroad engineering. A majority of the population from his native area in South China had gone abroad and there was an especially large community in San Francisco. Ch'en was able to sell shares in his railroad to Chinese in the American West and he returned to China with approximately 1,500,000 taels in capital. Local merchants and Chinese in Hong Kong and Singapore put up an additional $2,000,000. With the endorsement of the Board of Trade's touring Wang Ch'ing-mu, the authorities in Peking awarded Ch'en formal rights to construct his railroad in February 1906.

The charter was patterned on the merchant-managed Chaochow Railroad Company but while Chang Yü-nan had been forced to turn to Japanese expertise, Ch'en supervised the technical aspect of construction himself. Because of its location in the Pearl River delta area, the railroad route posed a considerable engineering challenge and a great number of bridges were required. With Ch'en acting as both the general manager and the chief engineer, work on the line began at its southern end in mid-1906. Short sections were completed in 1908, 1911 and 1913 but the railroad's total length of approximately 70 miles still fell far short of its goal of joining the main line at Fatshan.[71] In the last years of the dynasty, the Board of Agriculture, Industry and Commerce nevertheless honored Ch'en I-hsi as an advisor of the fourth rank.[72]

THE CANTON–MACAO RAILROAD

In the autumn of 1904, Sheng Hsuan-huai gave formal approval to an agreement establishing a joint Sino-Portuguese concession for the construction of a railroad from the colony of Macao to Canton city. The two governments were not to become involved and the line was reserved for merchant management. Half the shares were to be subscribed by the Portuguese and the equal balance taken by Chinese businessmen.[73] The railroad's leading promoter appears to have been a Cantonese Lin Te-yuan who was named the Chinese director. Lin promptly raised merchant capital of approximately $4,000,000 and was ready to begin work. He consequently requested that his Portuguese counterpart should do the same, but the reply was slow and Lin died before the foreign merchant reacted.

It soon became obvious that the Portuguese were procrastinating either because of an inability to raise the money or because of a desire to frustrate the Chinese initiative in order to gain complete control themselves. When the foreign merchants finally replied they proposed that the responsibility for construction should be divided with the Chinese building the long section from Canton to the border and the Portuguese completing just the short segment within their own territory. The surviving Chinese shareholders were enthusiastic and, caught up in the spirit of railroad nationalism, they were determined that this great opportunity for self-management would not be lost. Aside from the practical problems of finding the additional capital needed and engineering talent, one major obstacle stood in their way and that was the existing treaty with Portugal. It was absolutely essential that the Portuguese interest in the Chinese section be annulled so that new rules could clearly state that the line on Chinese soil would now be exclusively Chinese.

The new directorship of the Chinese portion, including Lin's brother, Lin Ping-hua, met with Chang Pi-shih in the summer of 1907. The group decided to attack from two directions. They met with Portuguese merchants and officials in Macao and reached a tentative agreement only to be held up by the home government in Lisbon. Chang Pi-shih also investigated the situation and, again certain that Chinese merchants could manage and finance a railroad by themselves, he forwarded their petition to the Ministry of Posts and Communications in July. The following month, other shareholders led by a T'ang Shao-yeh wrote to the Board of Foreign Affairs to urge cancellation of the treaty on the grounds that the foreign partners had not acted within a three-year time-limit stipulated and had therefore broken the original agreement.[74]

By November the Chinese merchants were so confident that Chang Pi-shih memorialized a draft charter for a solely Chinese-managed

railroad. The rules and regulations proposed, not surprisingly, indicated that Chang would serve as superintendent of the project. The newly organized company, which could have no formal status until the existing Sino-Portuguese agreement had been cancelled, nevertheless informed Peking that it would raise $15,000,000 to finance the undertaking.[75] It would, however, take over a year-and-a-half of bureaucratic red tape and diplomatic exchange to cancel the earlier agreement.

The reasons for this costly and frustrating delay are difficult to pinpoint. Although the Chinese and Portuguese merchants involved reached an early settlement themselves, the Portuguese government appeared extremely reluctant to give up its concession. Lisbon changed ambassadors in the middle of the negotiations and it often took a matter of months for the Chinese authorities to receive a reply. The Portuguese government frequently advised the Chinese to consult further with the merchants and authorities in Macao and, of course, the parties in the colony inevitably referred the matter back to Peking and Lisbon. Chang Pi-shih supervised most of the negotiations in Macao and, upon reaching a private agreement there, memorialized an expanded set of rules and regulations for a self-managed railroad in October 1908. The Portuguese ambassador continued to stall and there seemed a possibility that Portugal would never give its final approval.[76]

In August and September 1909, Chang Pi-shih, who had taken such an active part in demanding annulment of the Portuguese concession, also led the effort to maintain interest in the Chinese line. He contacted all the shareholders, who now included Chang Hung-nan from Medan, and proposed a fund-raising trip to Nanyang to find an additional $1,000,000. Chang Pi-shih invested a similar amount himself to try to spur investment.[77] The Portuguese government, however, continued to refuse final approval. The last international obstacle was just about to be cleared away when the Chinese Revolution interrupted the negotiations in late 1911.[78]

8

The overseas Chinese and economic change

Nanyang capitalists were in a special position to assist China's early modernization. Their wealth and business experience obviously prompted high officials to respond favorably to Chang Pi-shih's initiatives toward the business class abroad, but the overseas Chinese had another more subtle appeal. As Westernized Chinese, men with practical knowledge of foreign ways who still desired to identify with elements of the traditional civilization, returning merchants came as close as anyone to maintaining that precarious balance between Western techniques and Chinese principles long sought by Chang Chih-tung and the self-strengtheners.

In many ways, the Nanyang capitalists were foreigners. They served alien masters, followed Western laws and developed a taste for certain aspects of a non-Chinese style of life. The nationalist awakening as experienced in the Chinese communities of Southeast Asia, however, helped revive interest in traditional moral teachings even as Confucius came under attack from native sons sent to study abroad. As Confucian-capitalists and gentlemen-merchants, the overseas Chinese may well have seemed to combine the best of both worlds. They brought capital and Western ideas but, unlike foreigners, they spoke Chinese, quoted the classics and were willing to operate within the traditional system even as they endeavored to elevate their own social position. Furthermore, they were not openly backed by gunboats.

The existence of an independent base of wealth and power beyond the control of the Chinese government also set the Nanyang capitalists off from the rest of the merchant community and permitted these individuals much of the freedom usually granted foreign business interests. The throne needed their talent, initiative and capital not only to begin new enterprises but to pave the way for local merchants who continued to have little faith in government sponsorship. It was willing to pay the leading overseas Chinese figures almost any price in terms of prestige, tax advantages and monopoly rights.

For Chang and most of his principal recruits, however, brevet honor

and even foreign status were no longer enough; they wanted full equality with officials and the right to represent their own projects directly to the government. Clearly, then, the remarkable thing about the mandarin–capitalists from Nanyang was their ability to exploit the traditional system. But they also took full advantage of their alien origins. Almost to a man, the big investors insisted on maintaining their permanent residences and the base of their affluence in Southeast Asia. It can, in fact, be argued that in certain regards – as was the case with treaty-port compradors – the entire process was barely distinguishable from imperialism. Indeed, Chang once attempted to convince the empress dowager that overseas Chinese entrepreneurship could replace Western enterprise in China.

One of the characteristic features of the successful overseas entrepreneur, such as Chang Pi-shih, was an ambivalence toward imperialism. While clearly opposing unequal treaties and Western intervention in China, they could never quite forget the opportunities that European expansion into Asia had given them. Their primary identification was therefore with an international commercial arena beyond China. They thus merged a strong sense of nationalism with a realization of what the outside world had to offer. In the process, they ultimately demanded that their country produce a business elite with the same power and stature as its Western counterpart.

Many scholars contend that modernizing societies produce generations of half-breeds, unsure of their identity. The overseas Chinese entrepreneurs did not face so simple a fate. That they may well have felt inadequate in the eyes of the West and superior to the native Chinese merchant group is a foregone conclusion. In a paradoxical way, however, traditional status at home actually provided recognition abroad. Many English-language newspaper references prefaced their names with the initials 'H.E.' for 'His Excellency' or added European titles. It must be remembered that Western men of commerce and industry as late as the turn of the century were also struggling for social acceptance. Chinese entrepreneurs, overseas and in the homeland, experienced a similarly awkward *nouveau riche* position sometimes further tainted by intimacy with imperialists. Old aristocrats of both the European and the Chinese variety looked down upon new wealth. Respectability required a specific life-style, philanthropy and classical education. It was precisely because the overseas Chinese were desirous of recognition in different cultural settings at the same time that they moved so freely between the two. Under such circumstances, they naturally derived a common denominator, a multinational definition of the 'gentleman'. Some of his attributes were borrowed from Chinese tradition while others more closely fitted the West. In the

end, returning entrepreneurs began to argue that their value-system, with all its cosmopolitan overtones, was not antithetical to national interests. Furthermore, it was argued, triumph at commerce, if dignified with the proper veneer, was to become a prerequisite of power and status. As with all equations, the reverse was significant: because they wore mandarin gowns, gentlemen-merchants also deserved foreign respect. In the final analysis, however, they were part of a historical movement greater than China.

THE TREATY-PORT CONNECTION

The history of imperialism has frequently been told and reinterpreted but, in short, the years of Western expansion exposed Africa and Asia to the best and worst features of European civilization and, in the natural course of events, brought out the strengths and weaknesses of the societies touched. An age of industrial discovery and expansion at home stimulated the quest for overseas resources and markets; a blind faith in the superiority of technological society motivated a philanthropic, if perhaps ill-conceived, effort to remake the world in the image of the West. Occidental enterprise and charity, the drive for progress and its inevitable consequences were exported to the not-so-Western world.

Because of the commercial nature of the first Western thrust, the pioneer mediators between East and West were compradors. The arrival of foreign traders and the creation of secure and stable enclaves, independent from governmental interference, provided an unprecedented opportunity for Chinese merchants. Astride two cultures, the comprador-type developed cross-loyalties as did the Chinese in similar intermediary roles in Southeast Asia. Ch'ing honors, English education for children, Christian faith, an early commitment to the cause of reform and national revival despite a personal debt to aggressive imperialism were commonplace.[1] There were, of course, other similarities because 'John Comprador' was a fixture not only along the China coast but throughout Southeast Asia.[2] In perspective, Singapore, Penang and Deli shared much with littoral China – certainly more than with the interior. Business alone demanded ever-expanding contacts with the new China. But there also seem to have been cultural affinities as well. Clearly Nanyang Chinese felt at ease in the emerging urban commercial setting. Just as they moved from one modernizing area in Southeast Asia to another, expanding marriage, political and corporate ties, the more cosmopolitan among the overseas Chinese built bridges to the treaty ports. So much so, in fact, that the Shanghai

to Hong Kong corridor of modern, mobile and interchangeable men obviously extended into Nanyang.[3] Thus, already on a highway to cosmopolitanism, overseas Chinese involvement in late Ch'ing reform closely follows a pattern initially set by compradors.

Available literature on the comprador reinforces the connection. Although compradors originally played an economic role – at first as middlemen and then independently or under Ch'ing sponsorship – their social role as cultural intermediaries may have been even more important. Before long, leading figures, no doubt made more presentable by honorary degrees and titles, were taking on traditional elite activities. As Paul A. Cohen has pointed out, this penchant may well have limited the overall impact of the treaty-port cosmopolitans as modernizers. Despite a characteristic willingness to innovate, the interior imposed its own terms and became an open prison that let the modern men come and go as needed but, consequently, crippled the greater part of the reforming thrust.[4] Be this as it may, the attempt to combine official and merchant roles by the culture-shifting pioneers was, in itself, significant.

Exposed to growing Western influence yet not immune from the dominant values of China, many of the compradors did more than just emulate the old elite. They began to speak in terms of equivalence: to seek rationalization for modern success in traditional morality. A parallel course had been followed in the West and Southeast Asia. Even K'ang Yu-wei and the hinterland reformers had heard this siren's song.[5]

For the merchant, charity was a first step in self-justification. A pretense of public service even in a purchased gown was another. Some commitment to the survival of the nation was added until, gradually, an ideology for the gentry-merchant evolved.[6] The most famous spokesman for the emerging viewpoint was Cheng Kuan-ying (1842–1923) who was widely recognized as a scholar-comprador. In essays as early as 1862, and then throughout his life, Cheng retold the classics to present an essentially economic interpretation and confirm that commerce and industry were, indeed, fundamental to national strength. Recognition of the critical connection between wealth and power was shared by many contemporary literati who saw sense in economic development as a means of restoring national sovereignty. The difference was that Cheng intuited the role of the entrepreneur and the importance of societal change. If modern merchants were needed they were also important. In a competitive world, government not only encouraged commerce: it recognized moral virtue in the successful. Cheng was among the first to advocate a kind of commercial nationalism which, after equating national survival with wealth, went

on to provide a *raison d'être* for a bourgeoisie. But whether this new stratum of gentry-merchants could break free to form a new class committed to true social modernization was another story.

Properly speaking, the bourgeoisie was a comparatively late development, amalgamated from several elements. Older compradors, merchants, new bankers, the early industrialists and the overseas Chinese first joined together to form a loose layer belonging entirely to neither the traditional nor the emerging China. At first, their efforts were little more than an extension of the bureaucracy or the activities of foreign sponsors but, by the turn of the century, a clear wedge between state and Western enterprise was occupied by an increasingly progressive force resistant to both foreign encroachment and government manipulation. It can, of course, be argued that economic development made a new class inevitable, but the factor which gave the Chinese bourgeoisie its character was the force of nationalism.

Chinese nationalism was, however, a complex quality. Broad anti-foreign sentiments were balanced yet contradicted by a paradoxical desire to imitate aspects of Western or Japanese life. To some intellectuals impressed by Social Darwinism, national survival required modernization and competition even if these meant the complete destruction of traditional society. Others were less willing to sacrifice historical continuity but, nevertheless, accepted the dire need for reform. Eventually, the Manchu rulers became the most convenient target for national frustrations, providing a foreign scapegoat to blame for national divisiveness.

No group was more beset by the contradictions of the age or so bathed by the conflicting streams of nationalism than the bourgeoisie. It suffered from foreign competition but was committed to the continued importation of Western techniques and equipment. It answered the government's call for merchant associations and the recovery of railroad and mineral rights, but remained skeptical of official promises and cautious of bureaucratic control. Although sharing the throne's desire 'to make commerce flourish', militant elements gave support to the anti-dynastic movement. But despite their anxieties, the majority remained aloof from the debate.[7]

The reason may have been that there was a disharmony between the economic, social and political aspects of changing times. While collaboration between government and merchants had an uneasy history, and foreign competition raised a taunting spectre, a majority simply believed that the revival of China could be accomplished by non-political means. Or, put more precisely, status was more important than government. When the form and content of the state changed after 1912, the gentleman-merchant ideology lived on. Thus, potentially

revolutionary as a class, individuals were not in every way iconoclastic; they continued to look for a special relationship with the new political order. This was a direct legacy of the comprador-mandarin liaison.

MANDARIN CAPITALISM

The study of Chinese economic history has made great strides. It can no longer be argued that traditional China was completely anti-mercantile. Nor were many businesses ever under direct official control. Private initiative, capital formation, and the profit motive were important features of old China. Indeed, Chinese society may well have been freer from governmental intervention than England when the East India Company first arrived on the China coast. There is certainly no reason to suspect that all of Europe was any wealthier. Nor is there any indication that the aristocracy or landed gentry of the West took kindly to the merchant class. Yet China was different: the relationship between wealth and power restrained the entrepreneur. In the Western world, the dynamics of society were already changing.

Economics became king. Wealth was power. Or, more concretely, the ability to create and harness a nation-wide infrastructure so as to discover ever-new and frequently self-generating sources of capital came to condition the directives of state. Initially this was for the throne, then for the nation, and ultimately for the individual. Once exposed to necessity, China would try to follow a similar path; in the East, however, the process would be telescoped. On opposite sides of the globe, those in possession of new skills and fortunes gained a voice in the instruments of rule. *Laissez-faire*, never long at issue in the West, had even less appeal in China. Realists understood that the final goal was control over government: bureaucratic capitalism exchanged for a capitalist-favoring bureaucracy.

By the end of the nineteenth century, even earlier for more perceptive intellectuals, China's traditional elite agreed that there was an unavoidable connection between wealth and power. For some, this knowledge was used to enhance their personal position. For even the unhesitantly patriotic, the pioneer industries were political and not economic innovations. Blinded by the real foreign threat, late Ch'ing leaders did not understand the more subtle points – that national strength required ideological change and social revolution. Or, if they recognized the challenge now posed to their authority, they reacted with something other than modernizing instincts. This is not to imply that the departing Ch'ing elite was unaware of the need for institutional inventiveness. The truth is that the old order proved remarkably flexible. It did its best to integrate new elements and many of these

had social and economic implications. The issue which remains of present concern was the transformed relationship between the parvenu and power. The compromise resulted in mandarin–capitalism.

First, the tension between government and commerce produced official-supervision and merchant-management. Then, for a while, joint operations were attempted. In time, several bureaucrats became merchants to run businesses themselves. After 1900, private companies were encouraged. Some of these, the provincial railways for example, were politically aggressive. In the end, potential entrepreneurs were given appropriate titles and access to the administrative apparatus itself. Once this happened, the *ancien régime* was finished.

There was nothing unnatural about this process. The fact that the old elite held on as long as it did demonstrated the entrenched basis of the traditional status system. Its durability under considerable stress may have eased China's entry into the modern world. A new ideological mix did emerge. But it provided important links with the past which would survive right through the Republic. The new bourgeoisie not only borrowed from the compradors and the West, but also owed a special debt to the gentry-merchants. Mandarin–capitalism was not, however, without its limitations. Many scholars have pointed out the flaws. While the compromise arrangement did much to encourage necessary value change and may have granted breathing-room to a largely *passé* class, economically it was not a great success.[8]

The *kuan-tu shang-pan* firms, and their later variations, did not transform the economy. Perhaps this was because China was always at a great disadvantage. Capital and technical skills were in short supply, provincial and personal rivalries all too frequent, and foreign competition present. Moreover, self-strengthening surely provided a poor rationalization for fundamental change. The new, forward-looking men in the treaty ports and overseas offered the missing ingredients but they failed to provide an alternative. Many had considerable managerial ability and the inclination to risk fortunes in untried areas. They clearly qualified as entrepreneurs. Indeed, the country would not have progressed as far as or as fast without them. Yet China remained weak and underdeveloped. True, there was fundamental social injustice and also continued foreign encroachment. Nonetheless, capitalists turned bureaucrats might still have stood a chance had not uncertainty, instability and the rise of militarism closed the door. In the end, they perpetuated older liabilities.

Whatever success overseas Chinese entrepreneurs had at wedding bourgeois values to traditional bureaucratic principles tells much about the government–business relationship in China. Once select businessmen were able to gain official power, was the traditional system really

that inimical to their purpose? Intriguing as it may be to speculate about the rise of the so-called capitalist persuasion among the overseas Chinese in Southeast Asia, the early generations – like the comprador – got their start under some form of foreign sponsorship. The customary policy of awarding exclusive rights for a commodity or a vice was a continuation of Chinese practice. That headmen in the Netherlands Indies, for example, usually controlled the most profitable monopolies and businesses only helped confirm older expectations since merchant profit was still tied to official favor. Thus, while Chang Pi-shih and many of his Nanyang friends certainly represent a stage in the evolution of the capitalist mentality, they probably felt right at home in China where the existing tradition favored bureaucratic intervention. In a number of ways his arguments are also reminiscent of European policies toward their Chinese subjects in Southeast Asia. There, Chinese had been taught both the principles of free market competition and the advantages of monopoly. Hence, with coolie armies and government patronage, they contributed immeasurably toward the growth of export economies.

Although terms like 'reformer', 'modernizer' and 'entrepreneur' have been used interchangeably, it is not improper to reflect upon their significance. That Chang and those he attracted to China probably functioned as all three does not mean that their activities in these capacities were mutually reinforcing or always moved the country in the same direction. As an entrepreneur, Chang Pi-shih provided much-needed capital and initiative. By combining official and businessman roles he also helped surmount a major obstacle to modernization and surely assisted the rise of the bourgeoisie. But he also strengthened Ch'ing tendencies.

Before the arrival of mandarin–capitalists from Nanyang and their brothers from the treaty ports, the state had always meddled in commerce. It granted monopolies and patronized select merchants. Although able to enter the bureaucracy themselves, overseas figures still used governmental influence in a traditional manner. When merchants became officials, the door was opened to all of the old abuses of power. In subsequent years, bureaucratic alliance turned out to be as important as ever.

In historical perspective, Chang Pi-shih and his colleagues were transitional figures. They operated within the traditional system that favored bureaucratic capitalism and official supervision but, because of their tremendous wealth, they were able to combine official and managerial roles. By so doing they helped invert the old relationship and introduce a new class with considerable leadership potential. The fact that this increasingly cosmopolitan business community failed to

bring progress with humanity to China during the Republican period when finally granted access to the instruments of government remains a topic for serious study.

CONCLUSION

At the turn of the present century, the entire world observed the careers of a new breed of super-businessmen. John D. Rockefeller, J. P. Morgan, Andrew Carnegie, Vanderbilt and Astor, among the other great multi-millionaires of the day, inspired their fellow citizens and, no doubt, intimidated their foes. Powerful men who built great personal and corporate empires, made vast fortunes and shaped their nation's entry into the technological age, millionaire capitalists were themselves produced by the maturation of industrial know-how and a growing public demand for its products; in turn, they left a very special stamp on the landscape as well as on the course of modern history.

The more unsavory features of the accumulation of fantastic wealth, and there were many, were somewhat mitigated by the philanthropic character of the most noted fortune-builders and further tolerated by an ingrained popular faith that anyone else with the necessary gumption could join their ranks. Furthermore, individual success was equated with national strength and deemed essential for global competition. For better or worse, this spirit was shared by Chinese in Southeast Asia, and it began to make inroads in China.

In mid-1909, there were reports that a Cantonese merchant was making plans to manufacture airships with his own capital.[9] Regardless of the truth of the story, it is illustrative of the faith and imagination that selective businessmen were beginning to display while traditional China disintegrated about them. The first years of this century were, after all, a remarkable era when science and technology offered no end of wonders and the promise of a brighter day. In 1906, American engineers even spoke of the possibility of connecting Asia and North America by rail with a tunnel under the Bering Strait.[10] Chinese railroad builders suffered from a similar case of wishful thinking and were also restrained by a shortage of capital and technical skill.

From before the turn of the century, the great powers held large commercial, industrial and technological exhibitions to show off the fruits of progress and to give their citizens a glimpse of where civilization was headed. World fairs thus provided one window into the future. In the final analysis, the grand exposition, with its curiosity about other peoples and nations and its faith nonetheless that mechanical invention would soon make everyone much the same, was a place where imperialists met in thinly disguised competition. Yet, in the

summer of 1910 when the British had scheduled the 'Festival of Empire Exhibition' for London's famed Crystal Palace, the last Chinese dynasty, having just learned the power of nationalism, attempted an international exposition of its own.

There are often, of course, moments in history when movements converge and disparate paths meet. Everyone knows that the Chinese social and political order was ultimately transformed in the wake of the Western impact and that, along the way, the Ch'ing government lost its mandate. But the past is not that easily unraveled. While the old regime was moribund, it was not as hopelessly reactionary or myopic as its critics would have us believe. Many of the Western values which catalyzed anti-dynastic feelings also captivated high officials. They, too, came to believe that modern institutions and inventions joined with a unity of purpose could save the nation. By 1910, China's leadership was willing to stand before the foreign powers to be evaluated by their standards. Even conservatives acknowledged the need to be competitive and to protect national sovereignty. True, much of this self-strengthening impulse, reinforced by the nationalism of an incipient bourgeois class, was inherited by revolutionary factions and used against the Manchu government, but the mystique of a great exhibition and the concomitant recognition of the inevitability of progress was nevertheless universal.

Of course, the 'South Seas Exhibition' (*Nan-yang ch'üan-yeh hui*) held at Nanking never attained the scale or fame of the grandiose foreign efforts of the epoch. Yet, in its own way, the fair served as a landmark. It was the last great effort undertaken by the Manchu house to prove to the foreign powers and growing numbers of domestic critics that the traditional leadership was capable of modernizing the country. It was also the last public appearance of the mandarin–capitalists before the dynastic fall.[11]

Although the term 'Nanyang' in the fair's title did not refer exclusively to Southeast Asia, there is every indication that the event more than coincidentally involved the overseas Chinese. Its first patron was Tuan Fang (viceroy and concurrently commissioner of southern ports, the influential *Nan-yang ta-ch'en*) who helped start the Chi-nan model school, opened to attract able overseas Chinese students to give modernization a boost.[12] No doubt a world fair could also be counted on to tap overseas wealth, but Tuan's reasoning was more sophisticated. An international exhibition in Nanking might give China a chance to glimpse Western progress and gain a small taste of things to come. More importantly, it would turn endemic provincial rivalry into a national asset. 'In mutual competition there will be mutual improvement.'[13] While officials had initiated the fair, its success or failure, noted Tuan, really depended on men of commerce.[14] Years earlier, Cheng Kuan-

ying had argued that survival would, in the final analysis, rest in the nation's ability to wage 'commercial' rather than 'military' war. After much thought, and many experiences, the traditional elite agreed.

Yes, Chang Pi-shih was in on the fair. He chaired the Canton Chamber of Commerce drive to fund a Kwangtung exhibit right from the beginning. Other patriotic Nanyang Chinese helped open the Overseas Chinese Hall. There were, in fact, sizeable delegations from all over Southeast Asia. The first admission ticket reportedly went to a gentleman from Java who paid $10,000 for the honor. On at least two occasions, officials visited Nanyang to seek financial support for the effort. Lea Williams has identified one of these as a Wang I-wai who toured Indonesia in 1909. In all, $70,000 were raised, about ten per cent of the total needed for the common buildings and preparation of the grounds. In this context, it was probably more than fortuitous that Inspector-General Yang Shih-ch'i who opened the event in the name of the young emperor, had precipitated his own bureaucratic rise soliciting support from the Chinese abroad.[15]

Although the fair unquestionably stimulated a greater interest in commerce and industry and seems to have impressed many foreign observers, particularly a group of missionaries who took advantage of the large crowds, expositions of this sort are rarely financial successes. When the exhibition finally closed its gates in November 1910, there was one bright fiscal note. Chang Yü-nan contributed $100,000 to help balance the books. He then purchased the entire site for twice that sum in the hope of establishing a model industrial zone. Thus, in a sense, the Nanking exhibition had really become a Nanyang exhibition. The Board of Agriculture, Industry and Commerce, joined by the throne, was lavish with its praise and honors. Chang Yü-nan, headman at Medan, builder of the Chaochow railroad and long associated with Chang Pi-shih, was also named a special commissioner to the ports of Southeast Asia. His mission was to bring overseas Chinese enterprise to the heartland of China.[16]

Epilogue

Old faces in a new government

Chang Yü-nan died in the fall of 1911 before he had a chance to begin his own great mission to Nanyang.[1] By then, however, the end of the dynasty was so close at hand that the Ch'ing rulers would not again have an opportunity to exploit the foresight and wealth of overseas Chinese. The mandarin–capitalists from Southeast Asia together with the special representatives sent out by Peking had done much to help transform China's attitude toward those abroad. To the degree that they were successful, they set a pattern which was repeated in the early years of the Republic.

Before the new regime was more than a few months old, it had already dispatched its first special agent to pacify the overseas Chinese in Southeast Asia and to investigate the leanings of the commercial community.[2] After all, the most successful elements had been slow to support Sun Yat-sen's revolution. Hu Han-min, a close associate of Sun, once lamented that 'the big capitalists were against revolution, were afraid of revolution'. Loke Yew, often asked to contribute to the movement, would always respond: 'If you are sure you can succeed, then I will help you.' And then there was Oei Tiong Ham, surely the most influential man living in the Netherlands Indies, who knew all about the revolutionary cause and, according to Hu, dared not openly disapprove but who was also very reluctant to part with any money.[3]

In June 1912, an association of overseas Chinese based at Shanghai and backed by the new government and the reorganized Bank of China sent representatives to Southeast Asia. A month later, the Amoy Chamber of Commerce informed its Singapore counterpart that it, too, was dispatching an agent selling shares in a proposed commercial bank. By September, the local authorities in Fukien charged with industrialization issued their own appeal to Nanyang Chinese to return to China so as to undertake urgently needed new enterprises. In October, the newly organized Board of Industry and Commerce was promising protection for returning merchants and, following in the footsteps of Huang Tsun-hsien, making plans to issue special passes. The subse-

quent month, the Singapore Chinese Chamber of Commerce selected Lim Boon Keng to lead a delegation to Peking to attend a specially convened commercial conference sponsored by that same government board.[4]

Early the following year, the Republic began taking steps to control overseas Chinese education.[5] And at the end of November 1912, Sun Yat-sen, who had surrendered the presidency to Yuan Shih-k'ai but still served the government, personally appointed a representative to raise still more funds for the Bank of China. In the first half of the next year, overseas Chinese chambers of commerce were mobilized and brought into even closer cooperation with parent organizations in China.[6] By the close of the year, it had been decided to delegate a representative of the Republican government to investigate the commercial attributes of the long-courted Nanyang Chinese.[7] Soon, plans were made to hold a general meeting of all Chinese chambers of commerce on the mainland and abroad in order to rally support for Yuan Shih-k'ai's struggling regime. Hence when the All China Chamber of Commerce (*Ch'üan-kuo shang-hui*) held its inaugural meeting in Shanghai in March 1914, the overseas Chinese were well represented.[8]

But by now, familiar ground is being covered.[9] China's courtship of the Nanyang Chinese continued to develop under the Republic; and the sojourners aided their homeland. In 1917, the government attempted to register all Chinese abroad. And, over the next decade, high-level agencies were created to handle overseas Chinese affairs, including – for the second time – a bureau at Canton. All this was the late Ch'ing legacy. What, however, was the fate of the enterprising individuals?

Although Chang Yü-nan did not live to see the Republic, his son Chang Pu-ch'ing became Chinese consul for Sumatra in 1915. Little is known about Pu-ch'ing's career but he clearly followed in his father's footsteps. He helped manage the Chaochow railroad. He was well educated in both Chinese and Western studies and held the traditional licentiate, the lowest of the classical degrees. Well-traveled beyond doubt, one source has the younger Chang circling the globe on one of Manchu Prince Ch'un's tours. In the final years of the old dynasty, he frequently advised the government and ultimately earned brevet mandarin standing himself. After 1912, he accepted positions on the Board of Admiralty and served other ministries in a range of advisory roles. In Medan, he took over the Deli Bank and Chong Lee and Company while starting new brickworks, rubber plantations and agricultural estates. Finally, the old mandarin was decorated by the Republic of China, and, with the flourish that seemed to run in the family, wore medals presented by Western colonial governments.[10]

His uncle, Chang Hung-nan, had finally risen to the status of a metropolitan official of the third rank when the Chinese Revolution

stripped away the honor's significance. As noted in earlier chapters, Chang Hung-nan had taken charge of the development of Whampoa in the last months of the Ch'ing dynasty and also taken over the responsibilities of Medan *majoor* after the death of his brother Yü-nan. It took him little time, however, to shift his loyalties to the Republic and take up another position with private leverage if not real power in the government as an advisor to the Board of Industry and Commerce. Also, inducted into a Dutch imperial order, Chang Hung-nan accepted a Republican decoration in 1916, followed the next year by the Doctor of Laws degree from Hong Kong University. Thus he maintained his image as a gentleman-merchant.[11]

The man who deserves the most credit for attracting overseas capitalists into Ch'ing service, Chang Pi-shih, also moved with the fates of history and joined the Republic. He promptly became a special advisor to President Yuan Shih-k'ai and, gaining his ear as he had that of the empress dowager, he was formally appointed a first-class advisor to the government assigned the special task of developing inland ports. Of course, Chang retained the title of commissioner to Nanyang. Whether he still wore his old court robes is not known, but he soon added new medals to his chest and became the indispensable man in Yuan Shih-k'ai's drive for legitimacy and merchant support.[12]

It was Chang who was elected chairman of the All China Chamber of Commerce in 1914. This position earned him a seat in the Legislative Assembly (*Li-fa hui*). Ultimately, his wealth and general influence brought inclusion on the State Council (*Ts'an-cheng yuan*), the pro-Yuan rump parliament which took over legislative responsibilities so as to pave the way for an attempted restoration of the monarchy. Once again, Chang Pi-shih found himself on stage and at the imperial court. Any of these posts would have been enough for the ordinary septuagenarian, but Chang never lost interest in the business world. When Yuan Shih-k'ai decided to send a high-level industrial delegation to the United States in 1915 to seek American aid in the modernization of China, who but the 75-year-old capitalist could be selected to head the group? In the twilight of a fascinating life, Chang Pi-shih visited Wall Street.[13]

The delegation visited America for a total of fifty days and logged nearly 11,000 miles. The eyes of the entire nation were on the visiting Orientals but no individual attracted attention like Chang Pi-shih. The *New York Times*, on different occasions, called him 'China's Rockefeller', 'the J. P. Morgan of China' and 'the richest of Chinese financiers'. The fact that this and other newspapers could not decide whether the visitor was worth 100 or 200 million U.S. dollars may well have stirred even greater interest. When the delegation arrived in San

Francisco, Chang reportedly cashed a letter of credit worth $200,000 to use as spending-money. The reporters who followed the Chinese capitalist around New York City were likewise astounded to watch him spend several thousand dollars in a ten-minute shopping spree.[14]

Chang, who was accompanied by his English-speaking son, overwhelmed American observers. The younger entrepreneur told the press of a family glass factory at Hong Kong, the brick factory in Canton, their rubber interests in Southeast Asia including 35,000 acres on Sumatra, the Deli Bank, coconut, tea and coffee plantations. He also described for the newspapers the brandy and whisky then being produced at Chefoo and the new coconut-oil factories established in the Straits Settlements and Dutch colony.[15]

In the first ten days, the group was subjected to some eighty-five formal gatherings, quite a shock to a delegation accustomed to Chinese cuisine. On 27 May, the visitors reached Washington, D.C., where they were entertained by the secretary of state and other dignitaries.[16] It was not until Chang's party reached New York, however, that Americans realized the true force of his personality and the real purpose of his mission. On 3 June, Chang addressed a luncheon held in his honor at the Hotel Astor. Over 1,200 of the leading merchants and industrialists of New York were present. And, as always, Chang spoke – through his interpreter – an international commercial language that all present understood. He said that in order to develop better trade relations, it would be necessary to expand banking facilities and to begin new steamship lines.[17]

On Sunday morning, 6 June 1915, the front page of the *New York Times* revealed what the old man had been up to. At dinner the night before, it had been announced that Chang and Wall Street would form a Sino-American bank. Although the details have not been pursued, both Chinese and American sources agree that the new financial institution was to be backed by an initial capital of 10,000,000 Shanghai dollars, half raised by American industrialists and the other by the Chinese themselves.[18] It soon became apparent that the bank was linked to the transpacific steamship line. Thus, Chang pressed both matters with American capitalists in New York, Philadelphia and San Francisco.[19]

The *New York Times* was so impressed by Chang and his proposals that it devoted a feature story in its *Sunday Magazine* section of 6 June to the politically conservative capitalist's candid appraisal of the state of the Chinese nation. Wearing American shoes, enormous spectacles, a long traditional scholar's gown and a derby hat, the old mandarin provided a study in contrasts. His visit to the United States came just as the details of the Twenty-one Demands and Japanese exploitative

designs became common knowledge. As a Chinese official, Chang stressed two themes. China was at the mercy of Japan but, more importantly, the United States possessed a new and great opportunity to influence the course of events.

As his remarks were translated in the New York press, Chang summarized the nation's plight: 'We have much wealth, but we have little money'. To fight off Japan, he believed that the country needed productive industries; at this stage in history, this meant American capital. The master of Chinese capital, who had once hoped to staff the bureaucracy with individuals spawned in Nanyang, now asked Wall Street to train the next generation of young Chinese in the ways of the developed world. He urged the United States to come to the aid of China in the promotion of joint commercial and industrial endeavors. Clearly, there was no better way to promote peace and check the ambitions of Japan.[20]

History, of course, might well have proven so great an influx of American capital to have been just as debilitating to the economy and as exploitative as Japanese aggression, but, in 1915 at least, the Western business world had met its equal. When Chang returned to China, after peddling shares in the commercial centers of America, he personally advanced the $3,000,000 pledged as the Chinese portion needed to make his dream of a Sino-American bank a reality. Always the entrepreneur, he headed back to Nanyang in the spring of 1916 to raise still more capital. The years of American dominance in Asia had, however, not yet come. And Chang Pi-shih, as had Ch'ing China, died a natural death.

In September 1916, virtually the whole Chinese community of Batavia turned out to see the funeral procession. More than a thousand persons were in the line of march and the slow-moving mass of mourners reportedly took a good half-hour to pass by.[21] From Batavia, the coffin was shipped to Penang, Singapore and Hong Kong on its way back to China. English and Dutch authorities lowered their flags to half-mast. The president of China sent the governor of Kwangtung to pay his respects as the mandarin–capitalist was buried in the peasant village of his birth. Chang Pi-shih, a Chinese capitalist, became a national hero.[22] His chief eulogist in print was none other than Cheng Kuan-ying.

When the Chinese industrial delegation had been in New York City in June 1915, Chang had become fatigued one afternoon and stayed behind in his hotel room. On that day, his son had taken his place at the planned ceremony and, as the guest of Colonel Ruppert at the Polo Grounds, tossed out the first ball of a Yankee–Tiger game. That noon the son had attended yet another banquet and, on his father's behalf,

met John D. Rockefeller, Jr. As times change, the fate of nations belongs to younger generations. As Chang Pi-shih philosophically told an American reporter:

> We progress rapidly when we do progress. Seven years ago, even four years ago, all China wore long gowns like that which I, because I am a man too old to change, am also wearing. Now all of younger China wears American clothes. My son does.[23]

All historical figures blend the old and the new, for history itself is an ongoing stream and individuals change with the shifting current of events. Much has been written about China's response to the physical and intellectual incursions of the West in the past and present centuries. The collapse of Confucianism, dynastic decay, cultural change, revolution, evolution, industrialization and modernization have all been employed as simple phrases which describe complex happenings. More perceptive students of social science and the Middle Kingdom have, however, recognized that the social and political transformation of men – called history – is not without its twists and turns, its paradoxes and seeming incongruities. Without need to resort to Hegelian magic, it can still be said that the historian's lot is the study of paradoxes, those apparently contradictory confluences of events, peoples and ideas which seem to cancel each other out at first analysis but which do, in actual fact, exist and contribute to an ever-changing world.

'Transitional China' was naturally troubled and contradictory. Westernization had begun in the midst of a major 'Easternization' campaign, the T'ung-chih Restoration. Western techniques were learned while traditional scholars searched for a justification in the pages of their treasured teachers. Reformers wrote of Montesquieu and Adam Smith while using a classical literary language unintelligible to the vast majority. Political reforms remained on paper until very near the end of the dynastic reign. There were elements demanding change but the nation's first modernizers continued to wear their mandarin gowns, vestments of a traditional life-style and social outlook.

As one of China's first capitalists and last mandarins, Chang Pi-shih stood at a turning point in the history of his nation. A reformer longing for an older sense of security and calm, he marched forward but was not yet willing to burn his bridges behind him. Modern but traditional, revolutionary yet patriotic, conservative though willing to accept major changes wholesale, transitional people like Chang and his Nanyang associates are the social historian's greatest challenge because their stories summarize larger conflicts and their victories and failures condense to manageable length the history of peoples and nations.

Notes

Abbreviations

CCHWHTK – *Ch'ing-ch'ao hsu wen-hsien t'ung-k'ao*
CCKP – *Cheng-chih kuan-pao*
CWHKCC – Chang Chih-tung, *Chang Wen-hsiang-kung ch'üan-chi*
HFT:TL – *Hai-fang tang: T'ieh-lu*
IWSM – *Ch'ou-pan i-wu shih-mo*
KWT – *K'uang-wu tang*
LP – *Lat Pau*
NCH – *North China Herald*
PG – *Pinang Gazette and Straits Chronicle*
PSP – *Penang Sin Poe*
SCM – *Straits Chinese Magazine*
Shih-lu – *Ta Ch'ing li-ch'ao shih-lu*
ST – *Straits Times*
SWKP – *Shang-wu kuan-pao*
TFTC – *Tung-fang tsa-chih*
THHL – *Tung-hua hsü-lu*
WCSL – *Ch'ing-chi wai-chiao shih-liao*
YCTK – Sheng Hsuan-huai, *Yü-chai ts'un-kao*

1 The foreign experience

[1] *Ch'ao-chou chih; ts'ung-tan chih, jen-pu* (Chaochow Gazetteer; miscellaneous biographical essays), 24. See also Wong Yao, 53. A Malay-language version exists in Mei Jing, *Riwayat Orang*[2] *Tionghoa yang Mashor di-Tanah Melayu* (A history of famous Chinese in Malaya, Singapore, 1961), 92–3.

[2] Bibliographical material on Thio (Chang Pi-shih) is relatively scarce. See the *Ch'ao-chou chih*, 23b–24b; Wong Yao, 52–4; Mei Jing, 86–99. Unquestionably the preferred reference for later activity in China is Cheng Kuan-ying: *Chang Pi-shih chün sheng-p'ing shih-lueh* (Chin-tai Chung-kuo shih-liao ts'ung-k'an, vol. 747). The most easily available, but not always accurate, account in English is in Howard Boorman, ed., vol. 1, 90–2. Other works of some limited value include: *Hsin-chia-po ch'a-yang hui-kuan pai-nien chi-nien k'an*, 9; *Hsing-chou shih-nien: Hsing- chou jih-pao shih-chou-nien chi-nien t'e-k'an*, 1032–3; Koh Kow Chiang, *Tung-nan-ya jen-wu chih* ('Who's Who in Southeast Asia 1965'; Singapore), A217–18; Liang Shao-wen, 69–70; Kuang Kuo-hsiang, 97–107; and T'ang Su-min, ed., 293–5. T'ang has written about Chang Pi-shih in Chu Hsiu-hsia, ed., 51–6. Finally, some material can be found in Wen Hsiung-fei, 279–81.

[3] Wong Yao, 51. J. Kreemer, vol. 2, 49 and 71. Anthony Reid, *The Contest for North Sumatra: Atjeh, the Netherlands and Britain 1858–1898*, 194, 260–9.

[4] *ST* (Singapore), 16 February 1895.

[5] *ibid.*

[6] Biographical information about Loke Yew can be found in these works: Song Ong Siang; *SCM*, vol. 8 (December 1904), 203–6; Arnold Wright, ed., *Twentieth Century Impressions of British Malaya*, 893–5; and C. A. Middleton Smith, ch. 11. There is abundant material available in Chinese but the sources overlap and Wong Yao, 104–5, is representative.

[7] *ST*, 21 March 1905. Reference is made to his trip to Europe on 25 March 1902 and following dates. Reports about the steam yacht appear 24 April and 18 July 1903. The motorized mail service is described on 21 March 1905.

[8] *ST* citing the *Malay Mail* on 9 March 1905.

[9] His philanthropy is widely discussed. See the biographical material or these examples: *ST*, 19 February 1900, 21 May and 25 August 1903, 14 May 1904, 5 July 1905 and 8 June 1907.

[10] *ST*, 3 January 1916. Brian Harrison, ed., 36 and 221. C. A. Middleton Smith, 108 and Song Ong Siang, 539–40.

[11] Smith, 112.

[12] Harrison, ed., 36 and 47–8, 127–8 and 221. See also the *PSP* of 26 June 1909.

[13] *SCM*, vol. 8 (June 1904), 142.

[14] *ibid.*, 140–2; See Wright, ed., *Impressions of British Malaya*, 130–1; Kuang, 114–17; Wong Yao, 80–1.

[15] Harrison, ed., 47–8, 127 and 221.

[16] The principal biographical treatments of the Tjong brothers (Chang Yü-nan and Chang Hung-nan) include: Liang Shao-wen, 84–99; Kuang Kuo-hsiang, 90–3; Sung Cho-ying, ed., vol. 1, 62 and vol. 2, 193–4; Liu Huan-jan, ed., 1–15; and Huang Ching-ch'u, 44–5. Western language works are rare but see: W. Feldwick, ed., 1195 and A. G. De Bruin, 45 and 109. The Dutch commercial newspaper, *De Indische Mercuur*, honored Tjong A Fie's 30th anniversary of loyal service to the government on 3 November 1916 and also contains a notice of Yong Hian's death, 10 October 1911.

[17] Statistics from Victor Purcell, *The Chinese in Southeast Asia*, 434.

[18] For a general history of the Chinese in Indonesia, consult Purcell, 383–491. Analysis of the growth of overseas Chinese nationalism is the special contribution of Williams. See also Vandenbosch.

[19] See Purcell, 428–34.

[20] *SCM*, vol. 6 (June 1902), 88 and *ST*, 14 July 1903.

[21] Williams, 102.

[22] Biographical points about Oei abound in Williams, Song Ong Siang and Feldwick, ed., 352. See also: Willmott. There is a very short sketch in Huang Ching-ch'u, 43 and a longer essay by T'ang Su-min in Chu, ed., 87–92.

[23] Song Ong Siang, 331.

[24] Willmott, 21–2.

[25] De Bruin, 111–12. Williams discusses the Dutch reforms and translates the essence of this Dutch source, see 124–36.

[26] *ibid.*

[27] Feldwick, ed., 1195. Refer back to note 16.

[28] De Bruin, 109 and also 45.

[29] *De Indische Mercuur*, 8 October 1907 and 29 October; *ST*, 17 September and 3 October 1907.

[30] Liang Shao-wen, 94.

[31] See: E. S. DeKlerck, vol. 2, 432–4; J. S. Furnivall, 348–55. Unquestionably the best work on the Sumatran coolie trade, however, is Anthony Reid, 'Early Chinese Migration into North Sumatra'.

[32] *ibid.*; and Campbell.

[33] Liu Huan-jan, ed., 1.

[34] *ibid.*, 1–5; also refer back to note 16.

[35] Kuang Kuo-hsiang, 91–3; *De Indische Mercuur*, 8 October 1907; and Arnold Wright, ed., *British Malaya*, 770.

[36] Wright, 777 and photo on 158. See also C. S. Wong, 24–5.

[37] Song Ong Siang, 351 and Wright, 640.

[38] See Song Ong Siang, 343–5; *ST*, 6 November and 11, 12, 15 and 18 December 1903.
[39] *ST*, *ibid.*, and during July–August 1903.
[40] *ST*, 15 February 1902 and 30 March 1908.
[41] See Victor Purcell, *The Chinese in Malaya.*
[42] C. S. Wong.
[43] See: Blythe, and two works by Leon Comber.
[44] For Chung Keng Kwee, see C. S. Wong, 77–80. An informative sketch appeared in *ST*, 16 December 1901.
[45] Song Ong Siang, 76–8.
[46] Song's *One Hundred Years' History of the Chinese in Singapore* naturally contains autobiographical detail. See, in particular, 235 and 242–8.
[47] *ibid.* See the entry on Lim in Boorman, ed., vol. 2, 386–7. Also consult Khor Eng Hee.
[48] *ST*, 22 March 1897 welcomed the first issue of *SCM*. See also *ST*, February through March of 1900 for Lim's special relationship to the visiting K'ang Yu-wei.
[49] *ST*, 31 March 1894.
[50] *ST*, February and March 1900, 11 September 1903.

2 Environment and Chinese values

[1] Wang Gungwu, 'Traditional Leadership in a New Nation: the Chinese in Malaya and Singapore', 210.
[2] On the entire question of the importance of wealth in overseas communities, see: Skinner, 'Overseas Chinese Leadership: Paradigm for a Paradox', 191–207.
[3] See, for example, Maurice Freedman.
[4] A more detailed description of the traditional role of the Chinese merchant can be found in: Etienne Balazs, *Chinese Civilization and Bureaucracy* (New Haven, 1964); Max Weber, *The Religion of China* (Glencoe, Illinois, 1951); Wolfram Eberhard, *Social Mobility in Traditional China* (Leiden, 1962), 238–63; and Marion J. Levy, Jr, 'The Social Background of Modern Business Development in China' in Levy and Shih Kuo-heng's *The Rise of the Modern Chinese Business Class* (New York, 1949), 1–17.
[5] The most eloquent spokesman for this position is Karl August Wittfogel, *Oriental Despotism: A Comparative Study of Total Power* (New Haven, 1959).
[6] Some of the better works on the Chinese gentry include: Fei Hsiao-tung, *China's Gentry: Essays in Rural-Urban Relations* (Chicago, 1953); Chang Chung-li, *Chinese Gentry, Studies on Their Role in Nineteenth Century Chinese Society* (Seattle, 1955); and *The Income of the Chinese Gentry: A Sequel to the Chinese Gentry* (Seattle, 1962).
[7] See Ho Ping-ti, 'The Salt Merchants of Yang-chou: A Study of Commercial Capitalism in Eighteenth-Century China' *Harvard Journal of Asiatic Studies*, vol. 17 (June 1954), 130–68.
[8] See Eberhard, *Social Mobility* and Ho Ping-ti, *The Ladder of Success in Imperial China: Aspects of Social Mobility 1368–1911* (New York, 1962).
[9] Weber, *Religion of China.*
[10] *ST*, 3 February and 18 March 1897.
[11] Song Ong Siang, 312–13.
[12] Facts surrounding the incident are somewhat confused but see reports in *ST*, 6 April and 14, 15 July 1906 or the *PSP*, 16 April 1906.
[13] *ST*, 27 August 1908.
[14] *ibid.*
[15] *PG*, 18 and 21 August 1894.
[16] See: C. S. Wong, 21–2; Joseph R. Levenson, *Confucian China and Its Modern Fate* (Berkeley, 1968), I., 105; Howard Boorman, ed., vol. 2, 250–2.
[17] Yen Ching Hwang, 'Ch'ing's Sale of Honours and the Chinese Leadership in Singapore and Malaya (1877–1912)'.
[18] *ibid.*, 24–6.
[19] *SCM*, vol. 8 (June 1904), 142.
[20] Yen Ching Hwang, 26.
[21] Skinner, 'Overseas Chinese Leadership', refers to having seen pictures of such kapitans dressed in their mandarin robes in four different Javanese cities, 205 note 36.

[22] Yen Ching Hwang, 30 and miscellaneous photographs in C. S. Wong.
[23] *ST*, 10 March 1894 and *PG*, 14 March 1894.
[24] *PG*, 19 March 1894.
[25] *ST*, 7 and 8 April 1896.
[26] Song Ong Siang, 249. See also the *Singapore Free Press and Mercantile Advertiser*, 26 February 1899.
[27] *LP*, 1 August 1901; *ST*, 31 July, 6 August and 25 October 1901.
[28] *ST*, 31 July 1901.
[29] *SCM*, vol. 5 (1901), 116.
[30] *PSP*, 3 August 1901.
[31] *ST*, 2 and 3 August 1904.
[32] See Hummel, vol. 2, 780–2; *LP*, 2 July 1906; *ST*, 2 and 11 July 1906.
[33] Song Ong Siang, 144, 205, 387–8 and 398. Yen Ching Hwang, 25.
[34] We are fortunate to have a remarkably complete description of the turn-of-the-century social scene in Singapore written in English by a Chinese author in *SCM*, vol. 4 (June 1899), 43–7. His findings, confirmed by more modern sociological studies, point out the need for the Chinese to discover acceptably broad standards for community leadership.
[35] Wright, ed., *British Malaya*, 156–8 and 757, 760 and 761; *Singapore and Straits Directory for 1901* (Singapore, 1901), 196; *PG*, 17 November 1895; *ST*, 12 December 1898.
[36] *PG*, 11 October 1894; *ST*, 17 May 1900 and 16 February 1895.
[37] See the *Singapore and Straits Directory for 1904*, 200.
[38] *SCM*, vol. 8 (June 1904), 141.
[39] *ST*, 29 March and 10 November 1909.
[40] *ST*, 10 December 1907 and 14 December 1901.
[41] *ST*, 13 October 1906; Wright, ed., *British Malaya*, 130–1; *SCM*, vol. 8 (June 1904), 142; *PSP*, 14 October 1907 and 17 February 1909; *LP*, 31 October 1908.
[42] Yen Ching Hwang, 26 and Song Ong Siang, 354.
[43] Song Ong Siang, 332–3.
[44] *ST*, 2, 26 July and 3 August 1904.
[45] See the outstanding work by Hao Yen-p'ing, *The Comprador in Nineteenth Century China: Bridge Between East and West* (Cambridge, Massachusetts, 1970).
[46] Mary C. Wright, *The Last Stand of Chinese Conservatism: the T'ung-Chih Restoration, 1862–1874* (New York, 1966) is the standard reference on the period.
[47] See: Albert Feuerwerker, *The Chinese Economy ca. 1870–1911*, and the longer work, *China's Early Industrialization: Sheng Hsuan-huai (1844–1916) and Mandarin Enterprise*; Shih Kuo-heng, 'The Early Development of the Modern Chinese Business Class' in Levy and Shih.
[48] For a comprehensive treatment of the late Ch'ing period's economic reforms, consult Chan.
[49] Feuerwerker, *Sheng Hsuan-huai*.
[50] Lim Boon Keng, 'The Role of the Babas in the Development of China', *SCM*, vol. 8 (1904), 94–100.
[51] *ST*, 16 July 1907 and 14 September 1901.

3 China's discovery of the Nanyang Chinese

[1] For a short history of the Chinese attitude toward the Chinese abroad, see: Tso Shih-ju, 94–101; H. F. MacNair, 'Relation of China to her Nationals Abroad', 23–4; and *WCSL*, 87: 14b–17. Probably the most readily available summary is found in Purcell's *The Chinese in Southeast Asia*, 24–30.
[2] My translation from Tso Shih-ju, 94. The standard English translation complete with some unnecessary literary flourishes is found in Sir George Thomas Staunton, *Ta Tsing Leu Lee* (London, 1810), 543–4.
[3] H. F. MacNair, 23–30; and Wickberg, 209–12.
[4] *WCSL*, 87:14b–15; Tso Shih-ju, 94.

[5] *WCSL*, 87:15; *ST*, 30 January 1894; Purcell, *The Chinese in Southeast Asia*, 27–8; and Ta Chen.
[6] *IWSM*, TC 39:3b.
[7] For a complete history of the coolie trade and the changing governmental attitude, see Robert Lee Irick. See also the classic work by Campbell, particularly ch. 3: 'Foreign Competition for Chinese Labour', 86–160.
[8] Campbell, 100.
[9] *ibid.*, 101–3. See also Morse, vol. 1, 401–2.
[10] MacNair, *Modern Chinese History*, 411.
[11] William Frederick Mayers, ed., *Treaties Between the Empire of China and Foreign Powers* (Taipei, 1966), 9. For the Chinese text, consult *Ch'ing ch'u chi chung ch'i tui wai-chiao she t'iao-yueh chi*, 252.
[12] *IWSM*, TC 39:3b–20b.
[13] *ibid.*, 3b–5.
[14] *ibid.*, TC 39:13b–20b; Mayers, ed., *Treaties*, 32–6; *Ch'ing mo tui wai-chiao she t'iao-yueh chi*, 136–43. See also note x on 286 of Mary Wright.
[15] Morse, vol. 2., 177.
[16] See: Jackson; Campbell, 1–25; Siew Yoong Ng; and Eunice Thio.
[17] Cited by Morse, vol. 2, 180.
[18] *ibid.*, 179–90.
[19] Mayers, ed., *Treaties*, 204–8.
[20] *IWSM*, TC 55:21b.
[21] *ibid.*
[22] Song Ong Siang, 56. By August 1855, Hoo's fame as a merchant had spread to San Francisco where the following appeared in the *Oriental:* 'Here is a remarkable man combining the features and costume of a Chinese with thoroughly English feelings . . . His deportment and conversation are those of a shrewd but good natured man of the world.'
[23] *IWSM*, TC 55:22.
[24] *ibid.*, KH 11:13–15.
[25] *WCSL*, KH 11:30b–31b.
[26] *ibid.*, 13–15.
[27] Song Ong Siang, 56.
[28] A very scholarly work has been done on the early developments in Singapore. See Wen Chung Chi. There are two short but informative articles by Tan Yeok Seong, dean of the Singapore specialists on overseas Chinese affairs, in *Nanyang Tsa-chih* ('The Nanyang Miscellany'): '*Tso Tzu-hsing ling-shih tui Hsin-chia-po hua-ch'iao te kung-hsien*'; and '*Hsin-chia-po Chung-kuo ling-shih she chih-shih*'. Also consult Tan's '*Chung-kuo p'ai-ch'ien ti-i ling-shih Tso Ping-lung hsien-sheng chu Hsin cheng-chi*'.
[29] *ibid.* See also: Song Ong Siang; and Wong Yao, 192–3. For the documentary account of Tso's appointment, please consult: Hsueh Fu-ch'eng, (collected work, vol. 117 of Modern China Source Materials), 4:3; and Chang Yü-nan and Chang Hung-nan, 1:24–29b.
[30] For a splendid history of the *Lat Pau* and its relationship to other pioneering Singapore Chinese newspapers, read Chen Mong Hock.
[31] Cited in Song Ong Siang, 226.
[32] See the *Singapore Free Press*, 4 July 1885 and the sound analysis by Wen Chung Chi, 108–9.
[33] *LP*, 29 February 1888 and 12 August 1889.
[34] Cited by Wen Chung Chi, 110–11.
[35] Song Ong Siang, 220.
[36] *WCSL*, KH 4:17–19: 'The Board of Foreign Affairs memorializes to request the sending of an ambassador to America, Spain and Peru to protect Chinese laborers.'
[37] *WCSL*, KH 14:32.
[38] *WCSL*, KH 15:7–8b. See also *CCHWHTK*, vol. 4, 10791.
[39] *WCSL*, KH 25:22–3; KH 31:22; 134:20.
[40] *ibid.*, KH 84: 1–7b. For a detailed account of the circumstances leading up to this action, see Wickberg, 203–10.

[41] See Wickberg, 214.
[42] *ibid.*, 214–15.
[43] *CWHKCC*, 15:7b–14.
[44] *ibid.*; see also 13:12–13b.
[45] *ibid.*
[46] *ibid.* For information on the prototype schools in Cuba and elsewhere, see *WCSL*, KH 70:10–11.
[47] *WCSL*, KH 74:22–7; *CCHWHTK*, vol. 4, 10795–7; *Hai-kuo kung yü chi-lü*, 4:60–3.
[48] For a longer English-language summary of translated original documents, see the accurate account in Wickberg, 218–19.
[49] Williams, 148.
[50] *WCSL*, KH 74:23–4; *Hai-kuo kung yü chi-lu*, 4:60–3.
[51] See Hummel, ed., 331–2.
[52] Hsueh Fu-ch'eng, (collected work), 1:6b; 3:8b–9, 11, 12; 4:3, 18b; 5:8b, 11b, 13b and 18b.
[53] Diary, 4:14b.
[54] *WCSL*, KH 83:336–7.
[55] See Wickberg, 224–33.
[56] *WCSL*, KH 83:33b–37 and 84:28b–30b.
[57] For Huang's life, see Hummel, 350–1; and Milner, 49–94.
[58] Teng and Fairbank, *China's Response to the West*, 149.
[59] Cited by Chen Mong Hock, 116.
[60] Wen Chung Chi, 196–202.
[61] G. T. Hare dispatch number 551 (28 September 1903): Public Record Office CO 273.395, p. 237.
[62] *ibid.*, 228–68.
[63] Translation in Song Ong Siang, 282–3. For the original Chinese text of the British announcement, see *LP*, 5 December 1894.
[64] For the general British reaction, see reports in *ST*, 3 and 4 December 1894 and also as far away as *The Times* (London), 5 February 1895.
[65] *ST*, 30 January 1894 which cites the *North China Daily News* translation of this imperial proclamation. For the actual Chinese text, see *WCSL*, KH 87:14b–17b; or the *Shih-lu*, KH 327:1b.
[66] *Shih-lu*, KH 327:1b.
[67] *ST*, 31 January 1894.
[68] *PG*, 24 May 1893.

4 The recruitment of Chang Pi-shih

[1] *LP*, 12 August 1889.
[2] See *PSP*, 8 March 1899.
[3] Wen Chung Chi, 192.
[4] *WCSL*, KH 91:22–3.
[5] *LP*, 17 July 1894.
[6] See Wong Yao, 53.
[7] Wong Yao, 52; Kuang Kuo-hsiang 97–101; and p. 9 of the *Char Yong Association 100th Anniversary Yearbook*.
[8] From Wong Yao, 52.
[9] *PG*, 5 November 1894.
[10] *LP*, 19 November 1894.
[11] *ST*, 22 November and 3 December 1894.
[12] For Huang's explanation of German actions, see *ST*, 23 February 1897. Also consult: Hummel, vol. 1, 350–1; Joseph Levenson, *Liang Ch'i-ch'ao and the Mind of Modern China* (Berkeley, 1970), 23–5; and Michael Gasster's essay 'Reform and Revolution in China's Political Modernization' in Mary Wright, ed., 70–2.
[13] *LP*, 19 November 1894.
[14] *LP*, 1 and 4 January 1895; *ST*, 7 January and 16 February 1895.

[15] *Singapore Free Press and Mercantile Advertiser*, 8 January 1895.
[16] *Sing Chow Shih Nien*, 181; *ST*, 16 February 1895 and 9 February 1909; and Song Ong Siang, 216.
[17] Song Ong Siang, 289; *LP*, 29 April 1896, 23 January, 12 February and 25 March 1897.
[18] See *ST*, 27 August and 4 September 1900, 4 December 1901, 18 May 1903, 8 February and 28 March 1905, 29 August 1907 and 9 February 1909.
[19] Wickberg, 188–201.
[20] *PG*, 22 June 1895; *LP*, 4 June 1895; Wen Chung Chi, 238–9.
[21] See the *LP*, 3 June 1890.
[22] *PSP*, 8 March 1899; *CCHWHTK*, vol. 4, 11323.
[23] *ibid.*, *PSP*, 3 December 1895.
[24] 'A Record of the Circumstances Surrounding the Establishment of a Wine Making Company' from *PSP*, 8, 9 and 10 March 1899. Also consult *CCHWHTK*, vol. 4, 11323; and *SWKP*, no. 1 (1907), 34–35b and no. 3, 29–32b. A Chinese summary of the enterprise can be found in *Chung-kuo chin-tai kung-yeh shih tzu-liao*, 487–8. There is a short description of the Chang Yü Pioneer Wine Company including valuable photographs in Arnold Wright, ed., *Treaty Ports*, 770–71. It is interesting to note that Chang's winery received mention in the British parliament. See the first-hand account 'Report by Mr. W. J. Garnett of a Journey Through the Provinces of Shantung and Kiangsu' in *Accounts and Papers 12 February to 28 August 1907* (London: Harrison and Sons for His Majesty's Stationery Office), 1–26. Reference is made to the above work in *ST*, 14 August 1907. The sources above have been supplemented by interviews in Singapore on March 11 and 12, 1971 with Mr Chang Tan-nung whose grandfather, Chang Lien-keh served for a time as the manager of the winery.
[25] *Shih-lu*, KH 420:15. See also *CCHWHTK*, vol. 4, 11300.
[26] *LP*, 29 April 1896.
[27] *PSP*, 28 May and 6 June 1896.
[28] *YCTK*, 25:4b–5, 7; and *CWHKCC Draft Telegrams*, 27:13.
[29] *ibid.* For a discussion of Sheng's dilemma, see Li Kuo-ch'i, *passim*, but particularly 137–43. See also Feuerwerker's *Sheng Hsuan-huai*, 227–8 and 267–8.
[30] Li Kuo-ch'i, 139–43 and *YCTK*, 25:8b.
[31] *ibid.* and *CWHKCC Draft Telegrams*, 27:4.
[32] For example, the *PSP*, 15 December 1896.
[33] The *PSP* of 12 February 1897 refers to Chang as a sub prefect (*t'ai shou*) while *LP* of 11 March 1897 honors him as a circuit intendant or taotai (*kuan ch'a*).
[34] *YCTK*, 26:1b.
[35] See: Feuerwerker, *Sheng Hsuan-huai*, 225–41; Hall, 8–28, 43.
[36] *ibid.* See also: *NCH*, 12 March 1897; *ST*, 12, 24 March and month of June 1897; *LP*, 12 February and 10, 11, 16, 18, 19 March and 17 June 1897; and *PSP*, 12 February 1897.
[37] Hall, 11.
[38] Tan Ee Leong, 113. *LP*, 12 February 1897 reported that the members of the board of directors had been asked to provide a surety of 200,000 taels each. This may well have been the goal but it appears unlikely that the amount was actually subscribed although it is possible that one or two directors made the payment.
[39] *LP*, 15 August 1898.
[40] *ST*, 5 September 1898.
[41] *LP*, 19 November 1904; and *PSP*, 22 November 1904.
[42] *PSP*, 28 September 1903. Similar tales continued. The Manila-based *Far Eastern Review* (November 1904), 40, suggested that Chang was expected to raise some four million taels for a national bank.
[43] *LP*, 14 January and 2 February 1898; *PSP*, 28 February 1898.
[44] *YCTK*, 33:5b–6; *LP*, 26 and 27 July 1898; *ST*, 23, 30 September and 18 November 1898.
[45] For an example, see *LP*, 21 February 1899.
[46] *CCHWHTK*, vol. 4, 11133.
[47] *PSP*, 10 and 15 March 1899.
[48] *PSP*, 15 May and 21 August 1900; *LP*, 7, 16, 17, 21 May 1900.

[49] *PSP*, 30 March 1901; and *LP*, 14 September 1901.
[50] *PSP*, 3 March 1902.
[51] *PSP*, 25 September, 1 and 15 November 1902 and 12, 27 August 1903.
[52] *KWT*, 3086.
[53] See Teng Ssu-yu and John K. Fairbank, *China's Response to the West* (Cambridge, Mass., 1954), 112 and 116.
[54] *KWT*, 3086–7; and *LP*, 26 April 1900.
[55] Boorman, ed., vol. 1, 91.
[56] *PSP*, 4 September 1897. See also the *Singapore and Straits Directory for 1901*, 291 and *1904*, 314.
[57] *ST*, 29 May 1900.
[58] *Singapore and Straits Directory for 1901*, 205 and 209.
[59] *ibid.*, 196.
[60] *ST*, 22 March 1897.
[61] *ST*, 19 August 1901; and *LP*, 22 August 1901.
[62] *PSP*, 22 November 1902.
[63] *Shih-lu*, KH 512:17b; *LP*, 8, 29 April 1903; *PSP*, 11 April 1903; and *THHL*, KH 178:11b.
[64] *Shih-lu*, KH 516:4b.
[65] *ibid.*, 5b.
[66] *PSP*, 11 August 1903; and *LP*, 11 August 1903.
[67] *PSP*, 31 October 1903.
[68] *Shih-lu*, KH 527:1b.
[69] *THHL*, KH 190:1–2.
[70] *THHL, KH 189:8b; Shih-lu*, KH 535:6b; *LP*, 19 November 1904; *PSP*, 22 and 29 November and 29 October 1904.
[71] *Shih-lu*, KH 535:6b.
[72] *PSP*, 16 December 1904.
[73] *Shih-lu*, KH 541:4.

5 A program for the development of industry and commerce

[1] *PSP*, 7 August 1903. See also *PSP* and *LP* during December through February 1905–6.
[2] *Shih-lu*, KH 517:66–7.
[3] For the text of Chang's discussion of merchant participation in water conservation, see *PSP*, 15 and 16 December 1905.
[4] *PSP*, 18 December 1905.
[5] *ibid.*
[6] *LP*, 15 December 1905.
[7] *PSP*, 15 and 16 December 1905.
[8] *PSP*, 16 December 1905.
[9] *LP*, 20 December 1905.
[10] *LP*, 15 December 1905.
[11] *LP*, 28 and 29 December 1905.
[12] *ibid.*
[13] *ibid.*
[14] *PSP*, 21 December 1905.
[15] *ibid.*
[16] *PSP*, 22 December 1905. See also *THHL*, KH 190:1–2b.
[17] *THHL*, KH 153:13b. A biography of Hsu's grandson, Hsu Ch'ung-chih, appears in Boorman, ed., vol. 2, 124–6. See also *LP*, 12 and 14 June 1899.
[18] *THHL*, KH 153:15.
[19] *ibid.*, KH 156:4 and 184:2. See also *CCHWHTK*, vol. 4, 11398.
[20] *CCHWHTK*, vol. 4, 11398; and *THHL*, KH 184:2b.
[21] *THHL*, KH 184:2b–3.
[22] *ibid.* and KH 178:11. See also *ST*, 17 April 1903.
[23] *PSP*, 22 November 1904; or *LP*, 19 November 1904.

[24] *PSP*, 22 December 1905; or *LP*, 14 February 1906.
[25] *ibid.*
[26] *PSP*, 23 December 1905; or *LP*, 14 February 1906.
[27] *ibid.*
[28] *PSP*, 28 December 1905.
[29] *ibid.*, 29 December 1905.
[30] *ibid.*
[31] *ibid.*
[32] *PSP*, 22 and 29 November 1904, 19 and 20 December 1905; *LP*, 19 November 1904.
[33] *THHL*, KH 190: 1–2b.
[34] *ibid.*, 1b.
[35] *ibid.* and KH 198:8b; *Shih-lu*, KH 535:6b. Also in *TFTC*, (28 February 1905), internal affairs, 7–9.
[36] Kuang Kuo-hsiang, 107; Chu Hsiu-hsia, ed., *Hua-ch'iao ming-jen chuan*, 54; and, for example, *LP*, 8 March 1905; *PSP*, 25 June 1909 and 23 September 1916; and *ST*, 15 March 1905.
[37] *PSP*, 22 December 1903 and 28 March 1905; Hsieh Pin, 464; Feuerwerker, *Sheng Hsuan-huai*, 235; *SWKP*, no. 5 (1907), 9b–10; *TFTC* (30 January 1905), commercial affairs, 156; and *Ch'ao-chou chih: chiao-t'ung chih* (Chaochow gazetteer: essay on communications), 52b. These works and others discuss Chang's presence on the board of directors.
[38] *PSP*, 18 March 1905; *Shih-lu*, KH 536:6.
[39] *PSP*, 15 and 16 December 1904 and 23 February 1905.

6 The search for overseas Chinese talent and wealth

[1] *PSP*, 16 December 1904, 28 February and 18 March 1905.
[2] *PSP*, 11 March 1905; or *LP* 3 March 1905.
[3] *PSP*, 16 December and 18 March 1905.
[4] *PSP*, 20 March 1905.
[5] *THHL*, KH 184:2a–3b; *LP*, 22 January 1904.
[6] *THHL*, KH 193:6a–8a; *PSP*, 16 December 1904. See also: *PSP* 22 August 1901 and 23 February 1901.
[7] Translation from the *North China Herald* cited in *ST*, 9 June 1905.
[8] Feuerwerker, *Sheng Hsuan-huai*, 70–1.
[9] *NCH*, 20 January 1905.
[10] See Wang Ch'ing-mu's report in *PSP*, 6 and 7 December 1905; also *THHL*, KH 194:12b–13b.
[11] *ibid.*; Wright, ed., *Treaty Ports*, 822–3; *THHL*, KH 193:6b and 200:20b–21b; and *LP*, 18 September 1905.
[12] *PSP*, 7 December 1905; and *THHL*, KH 194:13a–b.
[13] *ST*, 12 July and 8 September 1905; *PSP* 8 September 1905; *SWKP*, (September 2, 1907) no. 19, 5a.
[14] *THHL*, KH 198:18b; and 200:11b–12a.
[15] *THHL*, KH 200:12b.
[16] *PSP*, 6 December 1905.
[17] See H. S. Brunnert and V. V. Hagelstrom, *Present Day Political Organization of China* (Peking, 1911), 362.
[18] *LP*, 8 and 13 December 1905.
[19] Song Ong Siang, 387.
[20] *Hsin-chia-po Chung-hua tsung-shang-hui hsin ta-hsia lo ch'eng chi-nien k'an*, 150–210. Events can be followed more closely in *LP*. See, for example, 13, 16, 18 and 20 December 1905 or 19 April and 3 August 1906. A brief English-language history can be found in Song Ong Siang, 387–90; or *ST*, 2 April and 19 July 1906.
[21] *Hsin-chia-po Chung-hua*, 145.
[22] See: Song Ong Siang, 390 and *ST*, 3 December 1906.

[23] *Hsin-chia-po Chung-hua*, at the beginning of the text.
[24] *LP*, 3 August 1906; *SWKP*, no. 1 (1907), 9a–b; *PSP*, 20 July 1906.
[25] Consult reports in *ST*, 11 and 14 March, 8 June, 30 July, 3 August 1908 and 16 April 1909.
[26] *ST*, 9 June 1905.
[27] *Singapore Free Press*, 21 June 1905; and *ST*, 22 June 1905.
[28] *ST*, 23 June and 3 July 1905.
[29] *Dispatches from United States Consuls in Singapore, 1833–1906*. See items: no. 13 (23 June 1905); no. 18 (4 July); no. 29 (31 July); no. 30 (15 August) and no. 35 (24 August). See also *ST*, 12 and 21 July and 18 August 1905.
[30] *ST*, 2, 12 and 24 August 1905.
[31] *Dispatches from Singapore*, no. 42 (12 September 1905) and no. 45 (19 September 1905).
[32] *ST*, 24 August 1905.
[33] *Dispatches from Singapore*, no. 59 (13 November 1905) through no. 62 (15 November 1905).
[34] *ibid.* and also numbers 63 (16 November 1905) through 72 (23 December 1905). For accounts of the *Acme* incident, see *ST*, and *Singapore Free Press*, 14 December 1905.
[35] *Dispatches from Singapore*, no. 84 (6 January 1906) through no. 125 (13 June 1906).
[36] *SWKP*, no. 14 (14 July 1907), 5.
[37] Williams, 54–95.
[38] *PSP*, 22 May 1907; *SWKP*, no. 19 (2 September 1907), 5a–b.
[39] See, for example, *SWKP*, no. 25 (31 October 1907), 4a–b and no. 32 (8 January 1908), 6a–b; or *CCKP*, no. 488 (9 March 1909), 6, no. 535 (26 April 1909), 4–5 and no. 584 (14 June 1909), 5.
[40] Skinner, *Chinese Society in Thailand*, 170.
[41] *Fei-lü-pin Man-li-na Chung-hua shang-hui san-shih chou nien chi-nien k'an*, 56; *SWKP*, no. 32 (8 January 1908), 4a–b.
[42] *CCKP*, no. 555 (16 May 1909), 6; *SWKP*, no. 27 (20 November 1907); *PSP*, 14 and 17 October 1907, 7 May 1909 and 5 June 1909; *CCHWHTK*, vol. 4, 11412.
[43] *ST*, 25 November 1907.
[44] *CCKP*, no. 734 (11 November 1909), 7.
[45] *Hsin-chia-po Chung-hua*, 145.
[46] See *ST*, 8 October 1907; Song Ong Siang, 204–5 and *Hsin-chia-po Chung-hua*, 152.
[47] *PSP*, 14 December 1907; *ST*, 9 December 1907.
[48] *LP*, 11 September 1906.
[49] *Hsin-chia-po Chung-hua*, 151; and *LP*, 16 August 1906.
[50] See the advertisements run in *Lat Pau* during December 1908 and June 1909.
[51] *SWKP*, no. 21 (22 September 1907), 9b–10; *LP*, 10 October 1907.
[52] *LP*, 2 and 13 October 1907; *PSP*, 22 and 23 October 1907; *ST*, 8 October 1907; and *Hsin-chia-po Chung-hua*, 152.
[53] *LP*, 2 October 1907.
[54] *Fei-lü-pin Man-li-na*, 57; and *Hsin-chia-po Chung-hua*, 154.
[55] *Hsin-chia-po Chung-hua*, 152.
[56] *LP*, 24 September 1908.
[57] *ST*, 15 and 16 September 1908.
[58] See advertisements appearing regularly in the Singapore press during 1903–4.
[59] *PSP*, 26 May and 21 September 1903.
[60] *Shih-lu*, KH 500:10b. See, for example, *PSP*, 18 December 1901 and 16 December 1903.
[61] *LP*, 21 December 1903; *PSP*, 9, 11, 21 January 1904.
[62] *De Indische Mercuur*, 10 October 1911; *ST*, 13 October 1911 or *PSP*, 13 May 1911.
[63] *LP*, 23 and 29 December 1903 and 29 February 1904; *PSP*, 21 September 1903 and 11, 21 January 1904; *ST*, 15 and 24 December 1904. Consult *Chung-kuo chin-tai huo-pi shih tzu-liao* (Materials on the history of modern Chinese currency, Peking, 1964), vol. 2, 1037.
[64] *Shih-lu*, KH 547:5a–b; *CCHWHTK*, vol. 4, 11091.
[65] *PSP*, 27 February, 1 March and 11 April 1906.
[66] *PSP*, 24 and 26 February and 12 April 1906.

[67] *THHL*, KH 187:6. At about the same time *TFTC* (6 August 1904) notes that a Hunanese taotai named Huang was off in Singapore raising capital.
[68] *LP*, 1 November 1906.
[69] See text, pp. 157–8 and 171–2.
[70] See, for example, *CCHWHTK*, vol. 4, 11095.
[71] *ST*, 29 June 1909.
[72] *LP*, 16 January and 22 February 1907.
[73] *ST*, 19 January 1907.
[74] *ST*, 29 May, 26 June, 10 July and 1 October 1908.
[75] *ST*, 22 May 1909.
[76] Williams, 156.
[77] *ST*, 9 June, 30 July, 6 August 1908 and 15 December 1909.
[78] *ST*, 21 and 28 May 1907, 14 and 17 July 1908; *Fei-lü-pin Man-li-na*, 156; *Hsin-chia-po Chung-hua*, 152–4.
[79] *SWKP*, no. 13 (5 July 1907), 17b–20b; no. 20 (9 September 1907), 16b–20; and no. 30 (19 December 1907), 17b–20b.
[80] *Hsin-chia-po Chung-hua*, 151.
[81] *LP*, 1 November 1907.
[82] *Hsin-chia-po Chung-hua*, 152–4.
[83] *CCHWHTK*, vol. 4, 11405.
[84] *ibid.*, 11406.
[85] *ibid.; LP*, 14 July 1908.
[86] See *THHL*, KH 198:18b, 201:19, 202:17b and 204:4.
[87] See *ST*, 1 and 9 September 1907.
[88] Cited in *ST*, 4 June 1907.
[89] *ST*, 5 December 1907.
[90] *ST*, 11 November 1907.
[91] *SWKP*, no. 32 (18 January 1908), 4; *Fei-lü-pin Man-li-na*, 56; *SCM*, vol. 11 (December 1907), 161.
[92] *SCM*, *ibid.; LP*, 3, 5, 10, 11 December 1907; *ST*, 4 December 1907.
[93] *SCM*, vol. 11 (December 1907), 162; *LP*, 5 December 1907; *ST*, 5, 6 and 9 December 1907.
[94] *ST*, 20 July 1907.
[95] *ST*, 20 December 1907.
[96] *SCM*, vol. 11 (December 1907), 161.
[97] Williams, 152.
[98] *ibid.*, 151–2; see Ch'ien's report to the Chinese Foreign Ministry in *WCSL*, 204:19–24b.
[99] *ST*, 18 December 1907.
[100] *ibid.*, and *SCM*, vol. 11 (December 1907), 162.
[101] *SCM*, *ibid.*
[102] *ibid.*; Williams, 154; *ST*, 24 and 27 December 1907.
[103] *SCM*, vol. 11 (December 1907), 162–3; *ST*, 21 and 24 December 1907.
[104] *ST*, 8, 9, 11 and 13 January 1908; *SCM*, vol. 11 (December 1907), 163–4.
[105] *ST*, 16 March and 14 April 1908; *PSP*, 5 May 1908; *LP*, 16 and 27 April 1908; *Shih-lu*, KH 588:9b; and *THHL*, KH 215:7.
[106] *THHL*, KH 214:17–18b; or *WCSL*, 210:10–14; or *CCHWHTK*, vol. 4, 11407–8. As was common practice the memorial was also printed in Nanyang; see *LP*, 23, 24 and 25 April 1908.
[107] *Shih-lu*, KH 588:14b; *ST*, 1 May 1908.
[108] Williams, 155–7; *LP*, 4 January and 11 July 1908.
[109] *ST*, 22 October, 17 November 1908 and 5 January 1909; *LP*, 27 January 1908 and 14 January 1909; *PSP*, 15 April 1909.
[110] *ST*, 6, 8, 10, 11, 12 and 13 April 1909.
[111] See Williams, 157; *ST*, 21 and 28 April 1909 and 13, 20 May 1909.
[112] *LP*, 20 March 1909; and *PSP*, 22 March 1909.
[113] *Hsin-chia-po Chung-hua*, 154; Williams, 158–9.

[114] *ST*, 14, 21 and 28 October 1907.
[115] *SCM*, vol. 2 (September 1898), 104.
[116] See Wong Yao, 57; *PSP*, 1 and 4 July 1904; *LP*, 30 December 1904; *ST*, 20 March 1904.
[117] *PSP*, 1 July 1904.
[118] *PSP*, 20 December 1904.
[119] *ibid.*
[120] *ibid. Shih-lu*, KH 536:6; *CCHWHTK*, vol. 2, 8717; *PSP*, 16 December 1904; and *LP*, 4 March 1905.
[121] *PSP*, 16 and 17 December 1904; or *LP*, 30 December 1904.
[122] *ibid.*; see also *PSP*, 12 March 1906.
[123] *Hsing-chou shih-nien*, 1033.
[124] Wong Yao, 57; *ST*, 27 November 1905.
[125] *PSP*, 12–15 March, 8–10 and 14 June 1906; Wong Yao, 61–2; *Yin-ni hua-ch'iao chih*, 49; and Williams, 88, 150–1. See also the documentary record in *THHL*, KH 203:13b–14; and *CCHWHTK*, vol. 2, 8717.
[126] *LP*, 24 October 1906; *ST*, 23 and 25 October 1906.
[127] *CCHWHTK*, vol. 2, 8718; Williams, 88–93.
[128] *ST*, 2 March 1907.
[129] *SWKP*, no. 24 (21 October 1907), 19.
[130] *LP*, 11 July 1908.
[131] *CCHWHTK*, vol. 2, 8717.
[132] Chen Mong Hock, 132.
[133] See Williams, 155.
[134] *ibid.*, 157.
[135] *ST*, 6 April; *LP*, 9 April; and *PSP*, 16 April 1906.
[136] *PSP*, 23 November and 18 December 1906; *ST*, 14 and 28 November 1906.
[137] *PSP*, 18 December 1906; and *LP*, 4 December 1906.
[138] *ST*, 26 July 1907; *PSP*, 25 and 26 July 1907.
[139] *KWT*, 2975–7.
[140] *KWT*, 3062–5; *PSP*, 13 December 1907; 31 December and 2 February 1909; *ST*, 25 May 1908. See also Li En-han, 363.
[141] *Shih-lu*, KH 588:9b; *PSP*, 5 May 1908; *LP*, 16 and 27 April, 2 June 1908; and *ST*, 11 May 1908.
[142] *ST*, 25 April and 11 May 1908.
[143] *Shih-lu*, KH 588:8b; *CCKP*, no. 297 (5 September 1908), 7–14; *THHL*, KH 218:14–16b; *PSP*, 26 May, 19 and 22 September and 3 October 1908; *ST*, 16 April 1908.
[144] *LP*, 5 April 1908; *PSP*, 4 May 1909; *ST*, 6 May 1909.
[145] *KWT*, 3090–5; *CCKP*, no. 297 (5 September 1908), 14; *ST*, 24 April 1908, 1 April and 6 May 1909; *LP*, 4 September 1908; and Li En-han, 363.
[146] *THHL*, KH 203:15 and 216:14b–15; *CCHWHTK*, vol. 4, 11257 and 11355.
[147] *SWKP*, no. 5 (17 April 1907), 9b–10.
[148] *SWKP*, no. 32 (27 December 1908), 4b–5b.
[149] *THHL*, KH 216:14b–15; *Shih-lu*, HT 49:8; *CCHWHTK*, vol. 4, 11417; *PSP*, 15 July 1907.
[150] *SWKP*, no. 7 (17 May 1907), 5. See the same story in *PSP*, 1 May 1907.

7 South China's railroad offensive 1904–1908

[1] Translated by Teng and Fairbank, 117 (see Chapter 4, note 53).
[2] There are a number of good accounts of China's struggle to build railroads. Two shorter works are: E-tu Zen Sun, 'The Pattern of Railroad Development in China' in the *Far Eastern Quarterly*, (February 1955), vol. 14, 179–99; and Mongton Chih Hsu, 'Railroad Problems in China' in *Studies in History, Economics and Public Law* (New York, 1915),

vol. 159. Monograph-length works of assistance include: Horace Percy Kent; Cheng Lin, *The Chinese Railways: Past and Present* (Shanghai, 1937); Tseng K'un-hua; Ling Hung-hsun; and Hsieh Pin.

[3] *PSP*, 21 December 1905.

[4] *THHL*, KH 183:15b; *CCHWHTK*, vol. 4, 11089; *Shih-lu*, KH 522:16b–17; *Ch'ao-chou chih: chiao-t'ung chih*, 47b–48; Kent, 172–3; Cheng Lin, 119; and Wright, ed., *Treaty Ports*, 680.

[5] *PSP*, 22 December 1903.

[6] Sources do not agree on the share distribution. The figures given in the text are from *LP*, 22 August 1904 and *PSP*, 29 November 1904. Not all Chinese sources credit Wu with $500,000. The Chaochow local history states that Li also invested $500,000 but this is contradicted by the *Lat Pau* which gives the lower figure and by the fact that the *Ch'ao-chou chih* itself contends that Li's shares were bought out by Chang Hung-nan in 1908 for the lesser amount. Both Wright (in *Treaty Ports*) and Tseng K'un-hua state that Huang was a principal shareholder but furnish no further details.

[7] Wright, 680.

[8] *PSP*, 7 May 1904; *CCHWHTK*, vol. 4, 11148; Wright, 830; Cheng Lin, 119; *Ch'ao-chou chih: chiao-t'ung chih*, 47b; and Srinivas R. Wagel, *Finance in China* (Shanghai, 1914), 433–4.

[9] *LP*, 22 August 1904; and *PSP*, 14 October 1904 provide sample reports from the Nanyang press.

[10] See: *PSP*, 9 March 1905 which published an editorial from a China newspaper entitled: 'On the Essential Factors on the Outbreak of Troubles between the Swatow– Chaochow Railroad and the Japanese Consul'; *NCH*, 31 March 1905; Kent, 172; *PSP*, 19 and 20 September 1905.

[11] *PSP*, 6, 11, 15, 21, 25 and 27 March and 11 April 1905; *LP*, 6 April 1905.

[12] *PSP*, 11 and 16 March 1905.

[13] *PSP*, 17 March 1905; and *Ch'ao-chou chih*, 47b.

[14] *PSP*, 12 and 26 April 1905.

[15] *LP*, 20 and 28 July 1905. For Wang's report, see *PSP*, 19 and 20 September 1905; *CCHWHTK*, vol. 4, 11088 and 11148.

[16] *Ch'ao-chou chih*, 47b; *CCHWHTK*, vol. 4, 11148.

[17] *PSP*, 22 and 30 November 1906; Kent, 680; *NCH*, 20 December 1907; *LP*, 13 November 1906.

[18] *NCH*, 20 December 1907; Cheng Lin, 119; Wright, ed., *Treaty Ports*, 680; *Ch'ao-chou chih*, 47b; *ST*, 6 April 1907; and H. T. Montague Bell and H. G. W. Woodhead, *The China Yearbook* (London, 1916), 239.

[19] *SWKP*, no. 10 (7 April 1907), 10.

[20] For a survey of events on the Canton–Hankow line, see Mongton Chih Hsu, 81–4 (see note 2 for reference) or *CCHWHTK*, vol. 4, 11133–4. The background context for railroad-rights recovery is carefully traced in Lee En-han.

[21] *PSP*, 28 October 1904; and *LP*, 26 October 1904.

[22] *PSP*, 22, 28 and 30 November 1904 and 15 December 1904; Mongton Chih Hsu, 83–4 (see note 2 for reference).

[23] E-tu Zen Sun, 187 (see note 2 for reference).

[24] *LP*, 16 September 1905; *CCHWHTK*, vol. 4, 11091.

[25] *PSP*, 20 and 29 March 1906.

[26] *PSP*, 25 October and 3 November 1906; *LP*, 31 October and 14 November 1906; *ST*, 6 December 1906.

[27] *ST*, 9 and 31 January, 7 February and 2 March 1907; *LP*, 12 April, 10, 27 and 31 May 1907; *CCHWHTK*, vol. 4, 11133.

[28] *Ch'ao-chou chih*, 47b and 52b; *CCHWHTK*, vol. 4, 11092; *PSP*, 28 February 1905. Ts'en and Chang Pi-shih's joint proclamation concerning this railroad can be found as an appendix to Waiwupu document no. 288 in *HFT:TL*, 498.

[29] *PSP*, 28 February, 21 March, 15 and 17 May 1905; *LP*, 12 May 1905.

[30] *TFTC* (18 May 1906), communications, 122–4; *CCHWHTK*, vol. 4, 11092; *THHL*, KH 197:13b–14b; *PSP*, 1 May 1906; *LP*, 5 May and 24 November 1906; the Hong Kong *She Man Po* as translated by *ST*, 29 November 1906. For a brief description of the Canton–Amoy project, see Hsieh Pin, 464–5.

[31] *She Man Po* cited by *ST*, 29 November 1906.

[32] *South China Morning Post* cited by *ST*, 9 October 1906; *PSP*, 20 March, 6 April, 6 November and 19 December 1906; *ST*, 26 October 1906; and *HFT:TL*, 494–7.

[33] *PSP*, 15, 17 May 1905 and 20 March 1906.

[34] *North China Daily News* from the *ST*, 18 December 1906; *ST*, 19 December 1906; *The Times* (London), 10 September, 12 November and 4 December 1906; *NCH*, 7, 21 and 28 December 1906; *HFT:TL*, 500–2.

[35] Cited in *ST*, 14 January 1907.

[36] *HFT:TL*, 505, 510; a similar conclusion may be reached after surveying *CCHWHTK*, vol. 4, 11103; and *WCSL*, 200:4b–18b.

[37] See *WCSL*, 200:4b–18b; and Kent, 173–6 plus Appendix F in Kent, 287–97.

[38] *HFT:TL*, 499.

[39] *ST*, 19 January 1907; *SWKP*, no. 12 (25 June 1907), 6b–7; *LP*, 2 and 31 July 1907.

[40] *ST*, 19 January 1907 and 29 January 1909.

[41] *NCH*, 21 December 1906.

[42] *PSP*, 6 May and 21 December 1908, 8 January 1909; *ST*, 6 June 1908.

[43] *PSP*, 4 October 1911; *LP*, 15 September 1911.

[44] Ling Hung-hsun, 410–11; Cheng Lin, 97–8 (see note 2 for reference).

[45] *CCHWHTK*, vol. 4, 11140; *PSP*, 13 May and 14 December 1906.

[46] See Hummel, vol. 1, 305; and *PSP*, 18 May 1905.

[47] *PSP*, 16 December and 18 May 1905.

[48] *ibid.*; *CCHWHTK*, vol. 4, 11091 and 11140; *THHL*, KH 195:16; *LP*, 22 November 1905.

[49] *LP*, 12 May 1905; *ST*, 12 August 1905.

[50] *LP*, 7 July 1906.

[51] *PSP*, 18 May 1905.

[52] *LP*, 30 April and 1 May 1906.

[53] *ibid.*

[54] See the *LP* and *PSP* October through December 1906.

[55] *CCHWHTK*, vol. 2, 8717.

[56] *ST*, 28 and 29 November 1906; *LP*, 27 November 1906.

[57] *ST*, 14 and 15 November 1906.

[58] *LP*, 4 December 1906.

[59] See the *PSP*, 18 May 1905.

[60] Williams, 153.

[61] *PSP*, 11, 12, 13 and 14 December 1906; or *LP*, 27 and 28 November 1906.

[62] *PSP*, 14 December 1906.

[63] *ST*, 14 November 1906.

[64] *ST*, 14 and 29 November, 3 and 18 December 1906.

[65] *ST*, 14 January 1907. Williams, using Dutch materials, contends that Ch'en only raised 150,000 Straits dollars in Java. The *Straits Times* 6 April 1907 states that only a few Chinese in Semarang and Batavia bought shares while no one did so in Surabaya.

[66] Ling Hung-hsun, 399.

[67] Mongton Chih Hsu, 94. *The Times* (London), 20 December 1906 states that the Singapore shares were all fully paid.

[68] Cheng Lin, 118.

[69] *YCTK*, 20:17.

[70] *CCHWHTK*, vol. 4, 11140; *ST*, 23 March 1909; Cheng Lin, 118.

[71] While archival material may be available, information about the Hsin-ning railroad is scarce in published works. See: *CCHWHTK*, vol. 4, 11095 and 11148–9; or *THHL*, KH 198:17; *SWKP*, no. 25 (31 October 1907), 4b–5; and *CCKP*, no. 715 (21 October 1909), 8–9. See also: Tseng K'un-hua, 878; Hsieh Pin, 408–9; Mongton Chih Hsu, 92–3 (see note 2 for reference); and *LP*, 29 April 1905.

[72] H. S. Brunnert and V. V. Hagelstrom, *Present Day Political Organization of China* (Peking, 1911), 303.

[73] A general history of the Canton–Macao railroad can be found in Kent, 176–7; and Hsieh Pin, 463–4. See also *CCHWHTK*, vol. 4, 11089. *The Far Eastern Review* states that American Chinese investors were involved (June 1904).

[74] *ST*, 17 September and 17 December 1907; *LP*, 30 August 1907. Individual documents can be found in *HFT:TL*, 221 and 237–48.
[75] *WCSL*, 207:1–6b.
[76] *LP*, 8 January 1909 and 27, 28 November 1908. See documents in *HFT:TL*, 604–5, 609, 666–70, 674, 678–80, 696–7, 699, 706, 729, 731, 736–7, 740–1, 751–9.
[77] *HFT:TL*, 773.
[78] *ibid.*, 780, 784–5, 791, 794, 800–3, 823–4, 826, 828, 835–6, 870–4.

8 The overseas Chinese and economic change

[1] See the amazing biographies in Feldwick, ed. The point is emphasized in a more scholarly fashion by Paul Cohen; and by Yen-p'ing Hao.
[2] The image is presented in Thomas Know, 'John Comprador', *Harper's Monthly Magazine*, vol. 57 (1878), 427–37.
[3] I am indebted to Paul Cohen for this suggestion. Consult his *Wang T'ao*, 256–9.
[4] Cohen, 262–76. The overall question of the real impact of the treaty ports is discussed in the controversial but often quite convincing essay by Rhoads Murphey, 'The Treaty Ports and China's Modernization: What Went Wrong?', which appears in a revised form in Mark Elvin and G. William Skinner, eds.
[5] The theme is developed by Levenson, *Confucian China and Its Modern Fate: A Trilogy* (Berkeley, 1965).
[6] See Marie-Claire Bergère, 'The Role of the Bourgeoisie' in Mary Wright, ed., 242–57. The process is ably traced by Chan.
[7] The exact role of the bourgeoisie in the Revolution of 1911 is surrounded with controversy. See the interpretation by Bergère, above, and in *La Bourgeoisie Chinoise et la Révolution de 1911*. The different interpretations of events are summarized by Joseph W. Eserick in his handy review essay in *Modern China: An International Quarterly*, vol. 2 (April 1976), 141–82.
[8] See, for example, Chan or Feuerwerker's *Sheng Hsuan-huai*; and also his *Chinese Economy, ca. 1870–1911*.
[9] *ST*, 29 July 1909.
[10] *ST*, 5 April 1906.
[11] For details, see Godley, 'China's World's Fair of 1910: Lessons from a Forgotten Event'.
[12] *ibid.*, 517–19.
[13] *TFTC*, 6:3 (15 April 1909) reports, 8.
[14] *ibid.*, 9.
[15] See Chapter 6. Yang's remarks and official reports are cited in Godley, 'China's World's Fair of 1910'.
[16] *Shih-lu*, HT 49:8; *CCHWHTK*, vol. 4, 11417; *CCKP*, no. 1179 (13 February 1911), 14.

Epilogue

[1] *PSP*, 13 October 1911.
[2] *PSP*, 22, 26, 27 and 30 April 1912.
[3] 'Hu Han-min chiang-shu nan-yang Hua-ch'iao tsan-chia ke-ming chih ching-kuo' (Hu Han-min's speech on the participation of the overseas Chinese in Southeast Asia in the revolution) in Feng Tzu-yu, *Ke-ming i-shih*, 233–6.
[4] *Hsin-chia-po Chung-hua*, 154.
[5] *Hua-ch'iao chih* (Gazetteer of overseas Chinese, Taipei, 1956), 261–2.
[6] *Hsin-chia-po Chung-hua*, 154.
[7] *PSP*, 10 and 18 December 1913 and 9 January 1914.
[8] *Hsin-chia-po Chung-hua*, 155; *PSP*, 10 December 1913 and 17 April 1914.
[9] See the standard treatments of the early Republican years: Feng Tzu-yu, *Hua-ch'iao ke-ming k'ai-kuo shih*; Ch'en Ta; or the English translation, *Emigrant Communities of*

South China (New York, 1940); Ho Han-wen's account of governmental attitudes in *Hua-ch'iao kai-k'uang*.

[10] Liu Huan-jan, ed., 1; W. Feldwick, ed., 1195–6.

[11] Feldwick, ed., 1195; Sung Cho-ying, ed., 193–4.

[12] Many of the biographies contain material about his post-1912 career. See, for example, Wong Yao, 52–4; or the *Char Yong Association Yearbook*; or the authoritative compilation by Cheng Kuan-ying. Upon his death in 1916, Chang's life story was related in a variety of Nanyang newspapers in both Chinese and Western languages. *Chin Nam Poh* (Singapore), 16 and 18 September, reflects several viewpoints and notes that Chang was one of its founders thus adding the newspaper business to his long list of accomplishments. Other long accounts are in *PSP*, 23 September and the Singapore-based *Kok Mun Jit Poh* of 18 September.

[13] *PSP*, 30 March, 27 June 1914 and 1 May 1915. See Hsieh Chen-min, ed., 114–15 and the membership lists in Appendix, 23–4.

[14] *New York Times*, 6 June 1915. See also *Journal of the American Asiatic Association*, vol. 15 (June 1915), 132–4.

[15] *ibid.*

[16] *ibid.*; and 28 May 1915.

[17] *ibid.*, 3 June 1915.

[18] *ibid.*, 5 and 6 June and 23 July 1915; *PSP*, 11 May 1916; Kuang Kuo-hsiang, 107 and the Shanghai and Manila-based *The Far Eastern Review* of November 1915.

[19] *New York Times*, 6 and 7 June 1915.

[20] *ibid.*, 6 June.

[21] *De Indische Mercuur*, 24 November 1916. See obituaries in all the other Nanyang and Chinese newspapers.

[22] *Char Yong Association Yearbook*, 9.

[23] *New York Times*, 6 June 1915.

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Lat Pau 叻報. Singapore, 1887-1911
Penang Sin Poe 檳城新報. Penang, 1896-1911
Shang-wu kuan-pao 商務官報. Peking, 1906-11
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Glossary

tzu (T)   ming (M)   hao (H)

Chang Chih-tung 張之洞
Chang Hung-nan 張鴻南 (T):
  Yao-hsuan 耀軒 (M). Also known as Tjong A Fie, Cheung Iu Hing, Tjong Moy Hian, Tjong Foeng Nam, Tsiong Tsiok Fie and Tjong Jiauw Hian
Chang Jen-chün 張人駿
Chang Pi-shih 張弼士 (T);
  Chao-hsieh 肇燮 (M); Chen-hsun 振勳 (H). Also known as Thio Thiau Siat and Cheung Pat Sze
Chang Pu-ch'ing 張步青
Chang Yin-huan 張蔭桓
Chang Yü-nan 張煜南 (T);
  Jung-hsuan 榕軒 (M). Also known as Tjong Yong Hian and Chong Yit Nam
Chang Yü Pioneer Wine Company
  張裕釀酒公司
Changchow 漳州
Chao Ts'ung-fan 趙從藩
Chaochow 潮州
Cheah Chen Eok 謝增煜
Chefoo 芝罘 (Yen-t'ai) 烟台
Ch'en I -hsi 陳宜禧
Ch'en I -lao 陳怡老
Ch'en Kuo-fen 陳國芬
Ch'en Lan-pin 陳蘭彬
Ch'en Pao-chen 陳寶箴
Ch'en Pao-ch'en 陳寶琛
Cheng Kuan-ying 鄭官應
Cheng Tsao-ju 鄭藻如
Ch'iao-feng kung-ssu 僑豐公司
Ch'iao-hsing tsung-kung-ssu 僑興總公司
Ch'ien Hsun 錢恂
Ch'ien-lung 乾隆
Chi-nan hsueh-t'ang 暨南學堂
chih-fu 知府
Chin Ah Yam 陳亞炎
chin-shih 進士
chü-jen 擧人
Chuan-chow 泉州
Ch'üan-kuo shang-hui 全國商會
Ch'üan-sheng k'uang-wu tsung-li
  全省礦務總理
chün-hsiu 俊秀
Chung-hua hsueh-hsiao 中華學校
Chung-hua hui-kuan 中華會舘
Chung-hua tsung-hui 中華總會
Chung Keng Kwee 鄭景貴
  Also known as Ah Quee 亞貴
Chung-kuo yin-hang 中國銀行
Chung Thye Phin 鄭大平
Chung-wai 中外
erh-teng i-yuan 二等議員
Eu Tong Sen 余東旋
Fatshan 佛山
Foo Choo Choon 胡子春
  Hu Kuo-lien 胡國廉 (T)
Foochow 福州
Fu-chien jih-pao 福建日報
fu-wei 撫慰
Ghee Hin 義興
Goh Choo Chye 吳梓材
Goh Siew Tin 吳壽珍
Hai-ch'i 海圻
Hai-jung 海容
Hai San 海山
Hainan 海南
Hankow 漢口
Hokchew 福潮
Hokkien 福建
Hoo Ah Kay 胡亞基
  Hu Hsuan-tse 胡旋澤 (T)
Hsieh Yung-kuang 謝榮光
  Also known as Tjia Tjoen Sen and Cheah Choon Seng 謝春生
Hsin-ning t'ieh-lu 新寧鐵路
Hsu Jui 徐銳
Hsueh Fu-ch'eng 薛福成
Hu Han-min 胡漢民
Hu-pu kuan yin-hang 戶部官銀行
hu-tan 護單
Hua-shang yin-hang 華商銀行
Huang Tsun-hsien 黃遵憲
Hui-chou fu (Waichow) 惠州府
Hui Hsien She 會賢社
i-teng nan-chüeh 一等男爵
i-teng tzu-chüeh 一等子爵
K'ai-p'ing (Kaiping) 開平
Kalgan (Chang-chia-k'ou) 張家口
K'ang-hsi 康熙
K'ang Yu-wei 康有爲
Khong Kauw Hwe 孔教會
Kian Gwan Kongsi 建源公司
Kiangsu 江蘇
Koh Hong Beng (Ku Hung-ming) 辜鴻銘

Koxinga (Cheng Ch'eng-kung) 鄭成功
kuan-tu shang-pan 官督商辦
Kuang-Hsia t'ieh-lu 廣廈鐵路
Kuang-hsu 光緒
Kung Chao-yuan 龔昭瑗
Kuo-chia yin-hang 國家銀行
Kuo Sung-tao 郭嵩燾
kuo-yü 國語
Kwangsi 廣西
Kwangtung 廣東
Lat Pau 叻報
Leong Fee (Liang T'ing-kuang) 梁廷光
Lew Yuk Lin 劉毓霖
Li-fa hui 理法會
Li Hung-chang 李鴻章
Li Kuo-lien 黎國廉
Li Wang Kongsi 荳旺公司
Li Ya-i 李亞義
Liang Ch'i-ch'ao 梁啓超
Liang-kuang hsueh-wu chü 兩廣學務局
Lien-ho wai-yang hua-ch'iao ch'uang-she chen-hua kung-ssu
聯合外洋華僑刱設振華公司
Lim Boon Keng (Lin Wen-ch'ing) 林文慶
Lin Erh-chia 林爾嘉
Lin Li-sheng 林麗生
Lin Te-yuan 林德遠
Lin Wei-yuan 林維源
Liu Shih-chi 劉士驥
Loke Yew (Lu Yu) 陸佑 (T);
Ju-yu 如佑 (M); Pi-chen 弼臣 (H)
Lu Ta-ying 陸大瀛
Mao Hung-pin 毛鴻賓
Moy Hian 梅縣
Nan-yang 南洋
Nan-yang ch'üan-yeh hui 南洋勸業會
Nan-yang ta-ch'en 南洋大臣
Nan-yang tsung-ling-shih 南洋總領事
Ning-yang t'ieh-lu 寧陽鐵路
Nung-kung-lu-k'uang tsung-pan-chü
農工路礦總辦局
Oei Tiong Ham 黃仲涵
Pei-yang 北洋
pen-ch'eng Kuang-Fu shen-shang
本城廣福紳商
Pin-lang hua-jen shang-wu chü
檳榔華人商務局
Prince Ch'un 醇親王
Prince Kung 恭親王
Samshui 三水
san-p'in ch'ing 三品卿
Seah Leang Seah 佘連城
shang-hui 商會
Shang-wu kuan-pao 商務官報
shang-wu kung-hui 商務公會
shang-yeh kung-so 商業公所
shen-ch'a tsung-chang 審察總長
Sheng Hsuan-huai 盛宣懷
Shih Ch'u-ch'ing 時楚卿
Song Ong Siang 宋旺相
Swatow 汕頭
Ta-Ch'ing yin-hang 大清銀行
Tai Hung-tz'u 戴鴻慈
Tan Jiak Kim 陳若錦
taotai = tao-t'ai 道臺
Teochew 潮州
Thio Thiau Siat *see* Chang Pi-shih
Ting Jih-ch'ang 丁日昌
Tjia Tjoen Sen *see* Hsieh Yung-kuang
Tjong A Fie *see* Chang Hung-nan
Tjong Yong Hian *see* Chang Yü-nan
Toi San 臺山
t'ou-teng ku-wen-kuan 頭等顧問官
Ts'an-cheng yuan 參政院
Ts'en Ch'un-hsuan 岑春煊
Tso Ping-lung 左秉隆
tsung-li 總理
tsung-pan 總辦
tu-pan 督辦
Tu-pan Ch'iung-yai k'en-k'uang shih-i
督辦瓊崖墾礦事議
Tuan Fang 端方
t'ung-chih 同知
T'ung Meng Hui 同盟會
Tung Wah Hospital 東華醫院
Waichow 惠州
Waiwupu (Wai-wu pu) 外務部
Wang Ch'ing-mu 王清穆
Wang Fung Cheong 汪鳳翔
Wang Ta-chen 王大貞
Wang Wen-hsing 王文星
Wang Wen-shao 王文韶
Wang Yung-ho 王榮和
Whampoa 黃埔 *see* Hoo Ah Kay
Wong Ah Fook 黃亞福
wu-teng i-yuan 五等議員
Wu T'ing-fang 伍廷芳
Yang Shih-ch'i 楊士琦
Yü Ch'iung 余瓗
Yuan Shih-k'ai 袁世凱
Yüeh-Han 粵漢
Yung-cheng 雍正

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