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Overseas Chinese Nationalism in Singapore and Malaya 1877–1912

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Introduction

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

The Origins of Overseas Chinese Nationalism

From the time when overseas Chinese donated tens of thousands of dollars to relief funds for China at the end of the nineteenth century, through the time of their active participation in the 1911 revolutionary movement, and on to the strong support given to the anti-Japanese resistance movement in the 1930s and 1940s, they have demonstrated deep emotional attachment to China's destiny. This keen concern for China's fate is the main characteristic of the overseas Chinese nationalism. The majority of the overseas Chinese nationalists did not intend to

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create a separate political entity outside China, nor did they take much interest in the political future of the host societies. In other words, overseas Chinese nationalism was not a component part of the indigenous nationalist movements, but an extension of modern Chinese nationalism.

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

Most of the overseas Chinese during the period under study shared the common feelings mentioned above, and would have liked to see a rich and powerful China which could provide them with prestige overseas. But a strong China would mean different things to them depending on where they were. To those in hostile white countries such as Australia, New Zealand, the United States and Canada, and to those who were ill-treated by their host governments such as the Dutch East Indies, French Indo-China and Thailand, a strong China would give

[1] See Sia U Chin, 'Annual Remittances by Chinese Immigrants to Their Families in China', in *Journal of the Indian Archipelago and Eastern Asia*, Vol. 1 (1847), pp. 35–6.

[2] The best example is the Tung Hua I Yen (the Tung Hua Hospital) founded in Hong Kong in early 1870s. It began as a hospital offering Chinese medical treatments. It also acted as centre for collecting famine relief funds for China from any overseas Chinese communities. See E. Wickberg, *The Chinese in Philippine Life 1850–1898* (New Haven, 1965), p. 216.

[3] The best example was the involvement of Tan Kar Kee, a wealthy overseas Chinese leader from Singapore, in the establishment of schools and colleges in his home district in the Fukien province. See Tan Kar Kee, *Nan-ch'iao hui-i lu* (Autobiography), 2 vols.

[4] For the involvement of Chang Pi-shih and Chang I-nan, two well-known overseas Chinese leaders in Southeast Asia, in the construction of railways in their home districts, see M. R. Godley, 'Chang Pi-shih and Nanyang Chinese Involvement in South China's Railroads 1896–1911', in *Journal of Southeast Asian Studies*, Vol. 4, No. 1 (March, 1973), pp. 16–30.

them not just prestige but also protection. Thus overseas Chinese nationalism was not merely an expression of the emigrants' compassion for their motherland, but could also be used as a weapon to counter the hostile policies of the host governments.

The Chinese in Singapore and Malaya, who formed a major portion of the population and lived under a more enlightened British government, had fewer grievances than other overseas Chinese. Local hostility was therefore not a major cause of the emergence of nationalist feeling, which arose chiefly from the concern for China's future and social prestige. It has been pointed out that the political loyalty of the Chinese in Singapore and Malaya was divided,[5] and therefore some risks of generalization are being taken here. Nevertheless, since the expression of nationalism was the most salient aspect of overseas Chinese political life and since in other respects the overseas Chinese communities seem to have been fairly apolitical during the relevant period, it seems reasonable to assume that the nationalism expressed by the articulate minority probably did reflect the state of mind of the silent majority as well.

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

Cultural Nationalism

a. The Lo Shan She Lecture Movement

Like other immigrants, the overseas Chinese in Singapore and Malaya expressed a strong desire to preserve their cultural identity. This was indicated in their close adherence to Chinese ways of life. They ate Chinese foods, wore Chinese costumes and queues,[6] built Chinese-style houses, observed Chinese customs and traditions,[7] and exalted Chinese

[5] See Wang Gungwu, 'Chinese Politics in Malaya', in *The China Quarterly*, No. 43 (July–September 1970), pp. 1–30; Yong Ching Fatt, 'Patterns and Traditions of Loyalty in the Chinese Community of Singapore 1900–1941', in *The New Zealand Journal of History*, Vol. 4, No. 1 (April, 1970), pp. 77–87.

[6] Queues and costumes that the overseas Chinese wore during this period under study were actually of the Manchus. As the conquerors, the Manchus were able to force Chinese to accept their outfits. Thus Manchu constumes and queues were regarded as part of Chinese culture at that time.

[7] Most Chinese customs regarding festivals, marriage, burial, child birth and

values.[8] Their Chinese identity was nevertheless threatened by Western and Malay cultures. The spread of Western culture in the Chinese communities came mainly through English education. As more and more Straits-born Chinese children went to English schools, English education transmitted new ideas and values. They came to accept Western values of equality, liberty and materialism.[9] Western influence also appeared in their behaviour. They tended to behave like Westerners, to abandon their own dialects, and to despise the Chinese way of life.[10] Malay influence on the other hand was the product of social environment rather than formal education. Before the end of the nineteenth century, some Chinese settlers married Malay women and produced a distinctive group known as 'Babas'. Culturally and linguistically, the Babas were closer to the Malays than to the Chinese.[11] Although Sino-Malay intermarriage was arrested at the end of the nineteenth century by an increase of Chinese female immigrants, the Malay influence was filtered through the Straits-born Chinese girls known as 'Nyonyas'.[12] Moreover, the Malay language which was the *lingua franca* in the region helped to strengthen Malay cultural influence in the Chinese communities.

Viewed from a broad historical perspective, a certain degree of acculturation in the Chinese communities was the inevitable result of Malayan environment and British rule, and was necessary for the development of a harmonious plural society. But to the Chinese cultural nationalists, the trends towards Westernization and 'Babaization' were undesirable. Unlike China where members of the scholar-gentry class

domestic habits were observed among the Chinese in Singapore and Malaya. See *Lat Pau*, 16/5/1899, p. 1, 7/2/1890, p. 1, 13/2/1892, p. 1; *Sing Po*, 4/9/1890, p. 1, 21/6/1890, p. 1, 23/2/1891, p. 1. 9/5/1893, pp. 1 and 4; *Penang Sin Pao*, 6/2/1909, p. 3; *The Sun Pao*, 4/3/1910, p. 7. See also J. D. Vaughan, *The Manners and Customs of the Chinese of the Straits Settlements* (The Mission Press: Singapore, 1879), pp. 26–48; anonymous, 'Notes on the Chinese of Penang', in the *Journal of Indian Archipelago*, Vol. VIII (1854), pp. 1–27; 'Reports on the Federated Malay States for 1903', p. 8 in *CD* 2243; *The Straits Times*, 2/3/1904, p. 5.

[8] Traditional Chinese values such as loyalty, filial piety, chastity and thrift were upheld. See *Sing Po*, 3/11/1890, p. 1, 24/11/1893, p. 1.

[9] See Khor Eng Hee, 'The Public Life of Dr. Lim Boon Kheng' (an unpublished B.A. Honours thesis, University of Malaya in Singapore, 1958), pp. 18–20.

[10] See Lim Boon Keng, 'Straits Chinese Reform: Filial Piety', in the *Straits Chinese Magazine*, 1899.

[11] See Rosie Tan Kim Neo, 'The Straits Chinese in Singapore: A Study of the Straits Chinese Way of Life' (an unpublished research paper, University of Malaya, Singapore, 1958), pp. 1–2, quoted in Png Poh-seng, 'Straits Chinese in Singapore: A Case of Local Identity and Socio-Cultural Accommodation', in *Journal of Southeast Asian History*, Vol. 10, No. 1 (March, 1969), p. 99.

[12] Png Poh-seng, 'Straits Chinese in Singapore', pp. 109–14.

were the chief guardians of Chinese culture and traditions,[13] the cultural nationalists in the Chinese communities in Singapore and Malaya were Chinese-educated merchants and intellectuals rather than the 'youthful Westernized Chinese'.[14] The merchants expressed their national feeling by financing cultural activities, while the intellectuals offered leadership, organization and publicity.

One of the important steps taken by the cultural nationalists was to reassert traditional values in the Chinese communities. Fearing the loss of traditional values and probably encouraged by the Chinese consul, some cultural nationalists got together to found a society named the 'Lo Shan She' (樂善社) in Singapore in 1881.[15] Borrowing the idea of ideological control of the 'Hsiang-Yueh lecture' system in China,[16] the society conducted regular lectures on the 1st and 15th of every month (in the lunar calendar) to expound the Sixteen Sacred Maxims of the Emperor K'ang-hsi.[17] The society collected donations from patrons, engaged full-time and part-time lecturers, and used T'ien Fu Kung (天福宮, the Temple of Heavenly Blessings), the Fukien community centre, as the main venue for lectures. As lectures became more popular, four additional venues were established in Singapore.[18] The lectures

[13] See a discussion in Paul A. Cohen, *China and Christianity: The Missionary Movement and the Growth of Chinese Antiforeignism 1860–1870* (Cambridge, Mass., 1963), pp. 77–82.

[14] The claim by Professor L. E. Williams that the 'Confucianist phase of overseas Chinese nationalism was led not by elderly scholars in long gowns but by youthful Westernized Chinese' cannot be substantiated from the available evidence. The role of Lim Boon Keng in the Confucian revival movement in Singapore, Malaya and Dutch East-Indies was an exception. See L. E. Williams, *Overseas Chinese Nationalism: The Genesis of the Pan-Chinese-Movement in Indonesia 1900–1916* (Glencoe, 1960), p. 55; Yen Ching-hwang, 'The Confucian Revival Movement in Singapore and Malaya 1899–1911', in *Journal of Southeast Asian Studies*, Vol. VII, No. 1 (March, 1976), pp. 51–3.

[15] See the society's statement on its history and activities, in *Sing Po* 15/2/1895, pp. 5 and 8.

[16] The 'Hsiang-yueh lecture' system is claimed to have been inaugurated by the Emperor Shun-chih, the first Ch'ing Emperor, with the promulgation of his Six Maxims of Hortatory Edict (Liu Yu), urging his subjects to practise virtues and to lead a peaceful life. In order to propagate these virtues, a hsiang-yueh was appointed to each locality to give lectures at fixed intervals. For details, see Kung-chuan Hsiao, *Rural China: Imperial Control in the Nineteenth Century* (Seattle, 1967), pp. 184–94.

[17] The Sixteen Maxims of the K'ang-hsi Emperor must be differentitated from the Six Maxims of the Emperor Shun-chih. The former was known as Sheng-yu (the Sacred Edict), while the latter was known as Liu-yu. The former was the expanded version of the latter. Apart from Sheng-yu and Liu-yu, there was a Sheng-yu kuang-hsuan (聖諭廣訓, the Amplified Instructions of the Sacred Edict) of 10,000 words promulgated by Emperor Yung-cheng, son of the K'ang-hsi Emperor. He must have thought that even the Sixteen Maxims were too brief for the comprehension of the ignorant masses. *Ibid.*, p. 185.

[18] The venues were established in Market Street, the Ts'ui Ying Chinese School in Amoy Street and Java Street. See *Sing Po*, 15/2/1895, pp. 5 and 8.

attracted audiences, principal among whom were merchants and community leaders. Similar societies were organized in Malacca, Penang and Kuala Lumpur before 1895.[19]

Two points must be noted about the Lo Shan She. Firstly the Sixteen Maxims which formed the basic contents of the lectures contained many of the traditional values such as filial piety, loyalty to the clan, propriety and thrift, law-abiding, emphasis on agricultural work, appeasing neighbours and fellow-villagers, rejection of false doctrines and exaltation of the right learning.[20] Because the Sixteen Maxims had been compiled for the ideological control of the Chinese in China, some of the Maxims were unsuitable for overseas conditions; but values such as filial piety, loyalty to the clan, and propriety, were relevant anywhere. To the Chinese cultural nationalist in Singapore and Malaya, the Maxim of rejecting false doctrines and exalting the correct learning was of great significance, for it could be used to arrest and reverse the growing trend towards Westernization and Babaization. Although they did not pinpoint the false doctrines, they vaguely implied that the culprits were Christianity and Islam. In an article on the Sixteen Maxims published in *Sing Po*, a local Chinese newspaper, in 1892, a cultural nationalist with the pen-name of 'Ku-shan ta-shih' (Lonely mountain and giant rock) said of the Chinese communities in Singapore and Malaya that 'social morality declines, and various heterodoxies undermine the orthodoxy' (Jen-hsin fang-shih, ch'-un-hsieh h'ai cheng) (人心放失邪害正).[21] The orthodoxy–heterodoxy antithesis had long been used in Chinese history to define the relationship between Confucianism and non-Confucian doctrines.[22] In the context of Singapore and Malaya, the charge of heterodoxy seems rather to have been directed against Chritianity and Islam. If the Christian and Muslim influence in the Chinese communities were to be contained, the best way was not to launch any direct attack on them, but to re-assert the traditional values of Confucianism.

Secondly, an examination of a list of patrons of the society published in 1897 reveals that the majority of the supporters of the Lo Shan She lecture movement were rich merchants of Chinese-educated back-

[19] *Ibid.*, p. 5

[20] An English translation of the Maxims is found in Kung-chuan Hsiao, *Rural China: Imperial Control in the Nineteenth Century*, pp. 187–8. A Chinese version which was probably used as a text for the Lo Shan She lectures in Singapore and Malaya, is found in G. T. Hare's collected documents on the Chinese in the Straits Settlements. See G. T. Hare, *A Text Book of Documentary Chinese* (Singapore, 1894), Pt 1, No. 2, pp. 92–3.

[21] See Ku-shan ta-shih, 'Hsuan-chiang sheng-yu lun' (A Discussion of the Lectures on the Sixteen Maxims of Emperor K'ang-hsi), in *Sing Po*, 30/8/1892, p. 1.

[22] For a good discussion on this subject, see Cohen, *China and Christianity*.

ground. Among the principal patrons were Wu Chin-ch'ing (吳進卿), Chang Jen-hsien (章壬憲), Yeh Ch'ung-yun (業從雲), Goh Siew-tin (吳壽珍) and Tan Tai (陳泰).[23] It is noticeable that the most of these were also holders of Ch'ing official titles.[24] The acquisition of Ch'ing honours by purchase was a clear indication of their interest in the traditional values.[25] Besides making donations to the Lo Shan She some of these wealthy merchants set up additional lecture halls in their shops.[26] They participated enthusiastically in most of the lectures so as to set the example for other people to follow.[27] Another small group of supporters of the Lo Shan She consisted of Chinese-educated intellectuals. Most of them had received traditional Chinese education in China, and it may have been after failing to pass higher imperial examinations to qualify themselves for official positions that they came to overseas Chinese communities and found employment in educational and cultural institutions.[28] It was natural for them to be active in the cultural nationalist movement, for it was their vested interest to spread Chinese culture, to expound Confucian values to promote Chinese literary learning. Among five lecturers employed by the Lo Shan She for the years 1896 and 1897, three had close connections with literary societies and the Confucian revival movement. Lin Shang-chen (林上珍), a full-time lecturer and Liao Chi-san (廖及三), a part-time lecturer, were important members of the Hui Hsien She, a literary

[23] See 'Balance sheet of the Lo Shan She for the years of 1895 and 1896', in *Sing Po*, 25/1/1897, p. 5.

[24] Wu Chin-ch'ing had purchased five Ch'ing official titles between 1889 and 1896 ranging from Tzu-cheng to Yen-yun-shih with feather; Chang Jen-hsien purchased two titles of Lang-chung and Erh-p'in between 1889 and 1896. Goh Siew-tin possessed Chih-fu and Tao-t'ai titles, and Tan Tai possessed Chung-hsien ta-fu and T'ung-feng ta-fu titles. See Yen Ching-hwang, trans. by Chang Ch'ing-chiang, 'Ch'ing-ch'ao tsu-kuan chih-tu yu Hsin-Ma hua-tsu ling-tao-ch'en 1877–1912', appendix 1, in K'o Mu-lin and Wu Chen-ch'iang (eds), *Hsin-chia-po hua-tsu shih lun-chi* (Singapore, 1972), pp. 71–2.

[25] For the interpretation of the possession of Ch'ing honours and the traditional value systems, see Yen Ching-hwang, 'Ch'ing Sale of Honours and the Chinese Leadership in Singapore and Malaya 1877–1912', in *Journal of Southeast Asian Studies*, Vol. 1, No. 2 (September 1970), pp. 26–8.

[26] See *Sing Po*, 15/2/1895, pp. 5 and 8.

[27] The typical example was Wu Chin-ch'ing (also known as Wu I-ting or Wu Hsin-k'o). Wu attended many of the lectures given by the Lo Shan She and this was reported in the press. See *Sing Po*, 16/3/1893, p. 5, 3/3/1894, p. 4, 18/2/1895, p. 5.

[28] For instance, the three teachers employed by the Ts'ui Ying Chinese School in Singapore were Wang Pan-kuei, Hsu H'o-ming (許鶴鳴) and Wang Yun-kuei (王雲桂). All of them were intellectuals from China. From 1895 to 1897, the three teachers of the same school were Wang Pan-kuei, Huang Shih-tso (黃世作) and Hsia Chi-ming (夏既明). Both Huang and Hsia were also intellectuals from China. See *Sing Po*, 24/2/1891, p. 8; 16/2/1895, p. 8; 22/12/1897, p. 5.

society in Singapore founded by the Ch'ing consul, Tso Ping-lung.[29] Another full-time lecturer, Wang Hui-yi (王會儀), was one of the founders of the Confucian Revival movement in Singapore and Malaya.[30]

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

Compared with the scholar-gentry in China, the cultural nationalists in Singapore and Malaya were less steeped in, and devoted to, Chinese culture. The intellectuals who found jobs overseas appeared to be of inferior quality,[32] while the merchants could not spare sufficient time for cultural activities. They desired to uphold Chinese culture, and were aware of the threats of Westernization and 'Babaization', but they lacked perseverance and a well thought-out plan. Moreover, they were far from a cohesive group. Because of the Pang System and the divisions and prejudices it caused,[33] the movement failed to cut across dialect lines: few Cantonese or Teochew would be willing to attend lectures sponsored by the Fukien community.[34] Cantonese and Teochew organized their own lecturing societies known as 'T'ung Shan She'

[29] See *Sing Po*, 10/11/1891, p. 1, 25/1/1897, p. 5.

[30] See *Sing Po*, 25/1/1897, p. 5; the list of the directors of the founding of Confucian temples and modern schools, in *Thien Nan Shin Pao*, 19/3/1902, p. 1.

[31] The normal procedure of conducting a lecture was to set up an incense altar at the lecture hall. The Chinese consult-general in his official robes would lead executive members of the Lo Shan She to perform kowtow ceremony towards the North. This act was a symbol of kowtowing to the emperor of China. After the ceremony the lecturer would begin his lecture. Sometimes, the consul-general might give a concluding speech towards the end of the proceedings. See 'Sheng-yu shou-chiang', in *Sing Po*, 16/3/1893, p. 5; 'Hsuan chiang sheng-yu chi-ch'en', in *Sing Po*, 15/2/1895, p. 5; 'Shan-t'ang chi-tien', in *Sing Po*, 18/2/1895, p. 5.

[32] This opinion was held overseas as well as in China. In 1909, for instance, when the Ch'ing Ministry of Education intended to promote Chinese education among its overseas subjects, it had to induce qualified teachers to serve overseas by special rewards. See 'Memorial of the Ministry of Education relating to Overseas Chinese Schools and Teachers dated 21st December 1909', in *Cheng-chih kuan-pao* (The Ch'ing Government Gazette) (Taipei, Reprint, n.d.), No. 27, pp. 210–11.

[33] A good discussion on the Pang division and politics in nineteenth-century Singapore is Lin Hsiao-sheng's article 'Shih-chiu shih-chi Hsing Hua she-hui te pang-ch'uan cheng-chih' (The Pang Politics of the Chinese Community in 19th Century Singapore), in Lin Hsiao-sheng and others, *Shih-le ku-chi* (Historical Relics of Singapore (Singapore, 1975), pp. 3–38.

[34] The practice at the Lo Shan She's lectures was to read the Sixteen Maxims in Mandarin, then the lecturers translated and expounded them in southern Fukien

(同善社), Society for Doing Common Good),[35] set up separate halls, and conducted lectures in their own dialects.[36] There was a lack of co-operation and co-ordination among these different dialect societies, and the disunity greatly weakened the movement. It had some influence in merchant circles, but failed to develop into a large-scale cultural movement for the Chinese as a whole.

b. The Confucian Revival Movement

Perhaps the most important expression of Chinese cultural nationalism in Singapore and Malaya was the Confucian revival movement which emerged in 1889. Although the movement contained a mixture of cultural, religious, political and social elements, the cultural was perhaps the most important as cultural nationalists strove to revive Confucian values in the overseas Chinese communities. Spurred by the Confucian revival movement in China, the cultural nationalists opened their campaign in Kuala Lumpur. They convened a meeting in September and resolved to observe Confucius's birthday (27th day of 8th moon of the lunar calendar) as a public holiday for all Chinese. Shops should be closed for business, there should be a celebration at home, and people should pay homage to a portrait of Confucius temporarily installed at the T'ung Shan Hospital.[37] The meeting also resolved that representatives should be elected from various dialect groups in the local community to perform sacrificial ceremonies to Confucius. All Chinese were called upon to adopt the Confucian calendar along with Emperor Kuang-hsu's reigning year.[38] The movement quickly spread to Singapore and Malacca. About two weeks after the convention in Kuala Lumpur, the Fukien community leaders in Singapore decided to follow suit by observing Confucius's birthday.[39] A similar step was taken by the Chinese in Malacca in December of the

dialect. This tended to exclude those who did not understand the dialect. See *Sing Po*, 18/2/1895, p. 5.

[35] Both Cantonese and Teochew merchants in Singapore adopted the same name for their societies. See *Sing Po*, 15/2/1895, p. 5, 6/3/1897, p. 5.

[36] The main lecture hall of the Teochew T'ung Shan She was set up at the Yeh-hai-ch'ing temple, the Teochew community centre, and the lectures were conducted in Teochew dialect. See *Sing Po*, 6/3/1897, p. 5.

[37] See *Thien Nan Shin Pao*, 28/9/1899, p. 2, 30/9/1899, pp. 1–2.

[38] See 'Regulation of Promoting the Worship of Confucius', in *Thien Nan Shin Pao*, 30/9/1899, p. 1.

[39] It was the committee members of the Chinese Free School (Chui Eng Si E, or Ts'ui Ying Shu Yuan, 萃英書院), that decided to follow the example of the Kuala Lumpur Chinese. Since most leaders of the school were also leaders of the Fukien community, the decision was in fact for the Fukien community. See *Thien Nan Shin Pao*, 13/10/1899, p. 7.

same year.[40] At this early stage of the movement, it is significant that it concentrated chiefly on the symbols of Confucius's portrait and the Confucian calendar. In the Chinese cultural context, the worship of Confucius's portrait was expected to produce lasting psychological effects on individuals, and to revive and strengthen the Chinese culture which had been weakened by an alien environment. Worship of his portrait would help to re-establish Confucius's authority. Enthusiasm kindled in that way would then be heightened by the celebration of Confucius's birthday and the use of the Confucian calendar. This strategy was substantially different from that of the Lo Shan She lecture movement. The lecture movement attempted to restore some Confucian values by expounding their substance. The Confucian revival movement attempted to revive some Confucian values not so much by explaining the essence of those values, but by establishing the authority of Confucius in the minds of the overseas Chinese. By doing so, the cultural nationalists effectively laid the foundation for a mass movement.

If the cultural nationalists believed that worshipping was a more effective measure than reasoning for reviving Confucian values, it was logical for them to champion the establishment of Confucian temples. Once Confucianism was made a religion, it would exert religious power over its converts. The movement was supported by three Chinese newspapers in Singapore, namely, the *Sing Po* (星　報), the *Thien Nan Shin Pao* (天南新報) and *Jit Shin Pau* (日新報). The papers gave wide coverage to the activities and published editorials and articles to create a favourable intellectual atmosphere for the movement to develop.[41] At the same time the movement was aided by some visiting Confucian scholar-officials. Although they came to Singapore and Malaya in an official capacity to promote commerce,[42] they also delivered public lectures and contributed articles to boost the movement. As the movement gathered sufficient momentum, it made a major thrust into the local Chinese communities in 1902. A body which was to spearhead the movement was created early in that year following two important meetings in Singapore. A committee of 195 members was set up; a public

[40] *Thien Nan Shin Pao*, 4/12/1899, p. 2.

[41] See Yen Ching-hwang, 'The Confucian Revival Movement in Singapore and Malaya,' pp. 37–40.

[42] These Confucian scholar-officials were Ch'iu Feng-chia (丘逢甲), Wang Hsiao-ch'ang (王曉滄), Chang K'o-ch'eng (張克誠) and Wu T'ung-lin (吳桐林); all of them were sent by the Kwangtung provincial government to tour Southeast Asia to promote commerce. See *Jit Shin Pau*, 27/3/1900, p. 1; *Thien Nan Shin Pao*, 17/3/1902, pp. 1–2.

notice appealing to all Chinese was published; and regulations for establishing Confucian temples and modern schools were issued.[43] The main task of the committee was to raise funds for the construction of the temples and schools. Apart from on-the-spot donations, the committee organized its members to press for house-to-house donations.[44] But the most effective method was the giving of prestige to big donors. Regulations provided that ancestral tablets of the more generous donors would be placed in the shrine built in or beside the Confucian temple.[45] As a result of this intensive campaign, more than 200,000 Straits dollars were raised by mid-1902.[46] But the movement then abruptly receded because of its inherent weaknesses and the impact of a sudden change of attitude in Liang Ch'i-ch'ao. As the movement was primarily a cultural one, it lacked religious zeal and a tight-knit organization to implement its programmes. It also lacked dedicated leaders except Dr Lim Boon Keng.[47] The immediate impact on the movement was the change of Liang Ch'i-ch'ao's attitude towards Confucianism. Demoralized by the defeat of the Reformer's armed uprising in 1900,[48] Liang was politically unstable in the period between 1901 and 1903,[49] and his attitude towards Confucianism was also affected. He began to question the wisdom of making Confucianism the state religion of China, and of worshipping Confucius. This abrupt change of attitude was demonstrated in his article entitled 'Pao-chiao fei tsun-kung lun' (To Protect the Religion is not to Worship Confucius) which was published in the *Hsin-min ts'ung-pao*, the Reformers' organ in Japan in February 1902, and it was reproduced in the *Thien Nan Shin Pao* in Singapore.[50] In this

[43] See 'Hsin-chiao-po ch'ang-chien k'ung-miao hsueh-t'ang ch'uan-chien ch'i' (A Public Notice for Soliciting Funds for Establishing Confucian Temples and Schools in Singapore), in *Thien Nan Shin Pao*, 10/3/1902, p. 2.

[44] See *Thien Nan Shin Pao*, 17/3/1902, pp. 1–2.

[45] According to this regulation, four grades—$5,000, $3,000, $1,000 and $500—were offered. The ancestral tablets of donors of the first grade were to be placed at the centre of the shrine; those of the second grade at centre left; those of the third grade at centre right, and those of the last grade at the left of the shrine. This gradation system was obviously based on a traditional Chinese concept of gradation of position. See 'The Fourteen Regulations for Fund Raising for Confucian Temples and Modern Schools', in *Thien Nan Shin Pao*, 10/3/1902, p. 7.

[46] See Ting Wen-chiang (ed.), *Liang Jen-kung hsien-sheng nien-p'u ch'ang-pien ch'u-kao* (The Draft of the Liang Ch'i-ch'ao's Chronological Biography) (Taipei, 1959), p. 152.

[47] For reasons contributing to the recession of the movement, see Yen Ching-hwang, 'Confucian Revival Movement in Singapore and Malaya', pp. 45–6.

[48] See Philip C. Huang, *Liang Ch'i-ch'ao and Modern Chinese Liberalism* (Seattle and London, 1972), pp. 94–6.

[48] See Chang Peng-yuan, *Liang Ch'i-ch'ao yu Ch'ing-chi ko-ming* (Liang Ch'i-ch'ao and the 1911 Revolution) (Taipei, 1964), pp. 156–78.

[50] See *Thien Nan Shin Pao*, 23/5/1902, p. 2, 24/5/1902, p. 2, 26/5/1902, p. 2.

article, he reversed his former position and argued that there was no need to make Confucianism the state religion which would curtail the freedom of thought of Chinese people.[51] Liang was also obsessed by the frivolous and symbolic inclinations of the movement such as building Confucian temples and worshipping Confucius's portraits. As Liang wielded tremendous influence among the overseas Chinese through his writings, his drastic change of attitude must have shattered the faith of many of his followers, and held them back from supporting the movement in Singapore and Malaya.[52]

It was not until 1908 that it revived again in the form of observing Confucius's birthday. On the 27th of the 8th moon of each year many Chinese paid homage to the sage by making that day a holiday.[53] Shops closed for business, schools closed and sacrifices were made at home in front of Confucius's portrait.[54] The movement built up momentum again, but this time the centre of gravity shifted from Singapore to Penang; control of the leadership had passed to a group of pro-Ch'ing wealthy merchants led by the ex-dignitary Chang Pi-shih (張弼士, also known as Chang Chen-hsun, best known in the West as Thio Tiauw Siat) whose base of operations was in Penang. The resurgence reached its climax in 1911 with large-scale fund-raising activity in Penang. Rich merchants of various dialect groups were organized, and so were many ordinary people.[55] A Confucian temple, the first of its kind in Singapore and Malaya, was built in Penang at the end of 1911.[56]

Compared with the Lo Shan She Lecture movement, the Confucian Revival movement had three notable achievements. First, it was a better organized and co-ordinated attempt to restore the traditional and reformed values of Confucianism. It had a centralized body to plan and co-ordinate its work. Although the movement did not convert all Chinese in Singapore and Malaya into Confucianists, it had visible achievements in the observance of Confucius's birthday, the opening of

[51] See Liang Ch'i-ch'ao, *Yin-ping-shieh wen-chi* (Literary Works of Liang Ch'i-ch'ao) (Hong Kong, 1955), Vol. 3, pp. 20–2.

[52] See Yen Ching-hwang, 'The Confucian Revival Movement in Singapore and Malaya', p. 46.

[53] Traditionally Chinese had few holidays except on Chinese new year and a couple of major festivals; the Chinese in Singapore and Malaya during this time seem to have followed that practice. Thus making the Confucian birthday an extra holiday for all Chinese must have been considered to be very important in the community.

[54] See *Lat Pau*, 23/9/1908, p. 1.

[55] See *Penang Sin Pao*, 5/8/1911, p. 3, 21/8/1911, p. 3, 12/9/1911, p. 3, 23/10/1911, p. 3; see also Yen Ching-hwang, 'Confucian Revival Movement in Singapore and Malaya', pp. 48–9.

[56] *Penang Sin Pao*, 30/9/1911, p. 9.

modern schools, and the construction of Confucian temples. Second, it was a concerted effort by all Chinese cultural nationalists, both traditional and modern, to establish an institution through which Confucian values could be reasserted. It was the first movement in the region that cut across dialect lines, and thus contributed to the solidarity of the Chinese communities in Singapore and Malaya. Third, it was a more broadly-based cultural movement. The news media were used to mobilize public support, and together with house-to-house soliciting provided the movement with effective means to reach the masses.

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

Political Nationalism

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

a. Pro-Ch'ing Nationalism

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

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

As the Ch'ing consul had no legal power over the Chinese in Singapore and Malaya, he could only appear, or use his influence to persuade people to conform, but he could not punish anyone who disregarded his notices. His influence was further curtailed by the British colonial authorities who jealously guarded their power over the Chinese subjects in the colonies.[60] In such circumstances, an effective way of mobilizing and keeping alive the overseas Chinese loyalty was to foster Chinese identity. The key to the fostering of Chinese identity was to arouse enthusiasm for Chinese culture. Things Chinese were to be promoted, encouraged and valued. The consul began to promote literary interest in the Chinese classics and poetry. In 1882 the consul Tso Ping-lung helped to organize and launch a literary society in Singapore named Hui Hsien She (The Society for the Meeting of Literary Excellence), the first of its kind in the Chinese-speaking communities in Singapore and Malaya. He acted as the patron and the judge, and set topics for essay and poem competitions at the beginning of every month.[61] Tso's successor, consul-general Huang Tsun-hsien,

[57] See *Thien Nan Shin Pao*, 12/8/1898, p. 2, 21/11/1898, p. 2, 10/11.1899, p. 2, 29/7/1902, p. 1, 8/11/1902, p. 3; *Lat Pau*, 3/8/1888, p. 2, 11/2/1899, p. 2.

[58] See *Lat Pau*, 3/8/1888, p. 2.

[59] See Yen Ching-hwang, *The Overseas Chinese and the 1911 Revolution: with Special Reference to Singapore and Malaya* (Oxford U.P., Kuala Lumpur, 1976), p. 20.

[60] For a discussion on the jealousy and rivalry of power between the Ch'ing consul and the Colonial officials of the Straits Settlements in the late nineteenth century, see Lin Hsiao-sheng, 'Ch'ing-ch'ao chu Hsin ling-shih yu hai-hsia chih-min-ti cheng-fu chien te chiu-fen 1877–94' (The Dispute between the Ch'ing Consul in Singapore and the Colonial Government of the Straits Settlements 1877–94), in K'o Mo-lin and Wu chen-ch'iang (eds), *Hsin-chia-po hua-tsu shih lun-chi* (Papers on the Chinese in Singapore) (Singapore, 1972), pp. 13–29.

[61] See Tan Yeok Seong, 'Tso Tzu-hsing ling shih tui Hsin-chia-po hua-ch'iao te kung-hsien' (The Contribution of the Consul Tso Ping-lung to the Overseas Chinese in

continued to foster Chinese identity in the early 1890s. Like Tso, he patronized the literary society. The Hui Hsien She was renamed Tu Nan She which means the Society for Approaching the South,[62] the new name indicated an ambition to embrace all Chinese in the South Seas (Nanyang, Chinese name for the region of Southeast Asia). The new consul encouraged literary activities by offering higher awards for the winners of the competitions.[63] He also patronized the Lo Shan She lectures and the Confucian Revival movements,[64] and rewarded those who adhered strictly to the Confucian values such as filial piety and chastity.[65]

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

Pro-Ch'ing nationalism was stimulated by the visits of Ch'ing

Singapore), in Tso Ping-lung, *Ch'in-mien-t'ang shih-ch'ao* (Hong Kong, 1959); *Lat Pau* 27/7/1899; Chen Mong Hock, *The Early Chinese Newspapers of Singapore 1881–1912* (Singapore, 1967), p. 115.

[62] Chen Mong Hock, *ibid.*

[63] See *Sing Po*, 1/1/1892, 23/10/1893, 12/3/1894.

[64] See the early section of the article, and Yen Ching-hwang, 'The Confucian Revival Movement in Singapore and Malaya', p. 44; see also Hsi K'uang-sheng, 'Hsiang-chi Hsin-chia-po k'ung-chiao t'ung-jen yen-shuo' (Details of the Speeches made by the Singapore Confucian Revivalists), in *Thien Nan Shin Pao*, 11/10/1901, p. 2.

[65] This was done by the consul-general Huang Tsun-hsien who would recommend them for awards from the Ch'ing government. See 'Ts'ai-fang chien hsiao kao shih' (Report on the notice of chastity and filial piety), in *Sing Po*, 15/8/1894, p. 5.

[66] See Yen Ching-hwang, 'Ch'ing Sale of Honours and the Chinese Leadership in Singapore and Malaya', pp. 22–4.

[67] *Ibid.*

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

There were six major visits by imperial envoys to Singapore and Malaya from 1890 to 1911.[71] These visitors did have political purposes. They were intending to spread China's prestige overseas, to cultivate loyalty among the overseas subjects, and to defuse the anti-Ch'ing activities of the reformists and revolutionaries in the overseas Chinese communities.[72] Pro-Ch'ing nationalists sentiment was both excited and rewarded by the splendour of the visitations with their glamorous escort of Chinese warships. In 1894, for instance, the Singapore visit of Admiral Ting Ju-ch'ang with four warships created a sensational response. Large numbers of the local Chinese (old and young, men and women alike) crowded the harbour, all exalted by the sight of the warships and the dragon flags, and the noise of salutes.[73] The visits of the imperial envoys

[68] After the establishment of the Chinese consulate in Singapore in 1877, many Chinese diplomats who were posted to European countries, stopped over in Singapore. They included Tseng Chi-tse, Hsueh Fu-ch'eng, Kung Chao-yuan and others. Among visiting dignitaries to Singapore in this period were Li Hung-chang (1896), Prince Ch'un (1901) and Tsai-chen (1902). See Tseng Chi-tse, *Tseng Hui-min kung shih-hsi jih-chi* (The Diary of Tseng Chi-tse's Mission to the West), Vol. 1, pp. 26–7; Hsueh Fu-ch'eng, *Chu-shih Ying, Fa, I, Pi, ssu-kuo jih-chi* (Diary of My Mission to Britain, France, Italy and Belgium), Vol. 1, pp. 7–8; Wu Chung-lien, *Sui-yao pi-chi ssu-chung*, Vol. 1, pp. 6–7; *Sing Po*, 8/4/1896, p. 4; *Lat Pau*, 1/8/1901, 3/8/1901, 2/5/1902, 3/5/1902.

[69] See Tsai Chen, *Ying-yao jih-chi* (Diary of My Mission to Britain), Vol. 2, p. 8.

[70] See, for instance, a notice in *Lat Pau* calling local Chinese to contribute to the funds for flood relief in Hopei province in 1891. It was put out by the visiting officials Ch'iu Hung-i, Chuang Sung-ling and Wang Kuan together with a local leader, Tan Kim Ching. See *Lat Pau*, 5/1/1891, p. 6.

[71] The first two visits were led by Ting Ju-ch'ang, the Chinese Admiral. Escorted by Chinese warships, Ting visited Singapore first in April 1890, and then in March 1894. The third imperial envoy was Chang Pi-shih who visited Singapore in December 1905. In December 1907, Yang Shih-ch'i visited Southeast Asia, and then followed by Wang Ta-chen in April 1908, and Chao Ch'ung-fan in 1911. See Chui Kwei-chiang, 'Wan Ch'ing Kuan-li fang-wen Hsin-chia-po', in *Journal of South Seas Society*, Vol. 29, Pts 1 and 2, pp. 20–2, 27–9.

[72] See *Ta-ch'ing te-tsung ching-huang-ti shih-lu*, Vol. 576, pp. 10b–11a; Chu Shou-p'eng (ed.), *Kuang-hsu-ch'ao tung-hua lu* (Peking), Vol. 5, p. 91; *Lat Pau*, 24/12/1907, p. 3.

[73] See *Sing Po*, 5/3/1894, p. 4, 12/4/1894, p. 4; see also Chui Kwei-chiang, 'Wan-ch'ing

also attracted many expressions of loyalty by members of the Chinese merchant class who were often community leaders. As many of them had purchased Ch'ing brevet titles,[74] they dressed themselves in official costumes, and gathered at the harbour to greet the distinguished visitors. These were followed by banquets hosted by the Ch'ing consul or prominent merchants with many pledges of loyalty to the emperor and to China.[75] It even happened that some leaders of the Straits Chinese whose usual political loyalty was to the British empire, nevertheless pledged their loyalty to the Ch'ing government on some of these occasions.[76] This reflected the identity problem of some of the Straits Chinese.

The spontaneous expression of pro-Ch'ing nationalism was impressive, but it could not be lasting for it could not be effectively mobilized to serve the Manchu interests without a mechanism. Partly to provide such a mechanism, the Ch'ing government encouraged the establishment of chambers of commerce throughout overseas Chinese communities. The Chinese chamber of commerce of course had its origin in China, beginning in Shanghai in 1902 as an organization to attract business support. When it proved to be successful at home, it was introduced to the overseas Chinese communities. The man who was instrumental in establishing Chinese chambers of commerce in Southeast Asia was Chang Pi-shih, a wealthy Chinese leader in the region. Chang had an audience with the Empress-Dowager Tz'u-hsi in 1903 and impressed her with his ideas for modernizing China.[77] He was appointed the Imperial Commissioner to inspect Commercial Affairs Overseas (K'ao-ch'a shang-wu ta-ch'en), with a duty to tour the region to gain the support of the overseas Chinese.[78] Chang had wide contacts in the region, including his commercial empire in Penang, Sumatra, Java, and his experience as vice-consul in Penang and acting consul-general in Singapore[79] facilitated his operations. When he arrived in Singapore in

Kuan-li fang-wen Hsin-chia-po' (The Visits of the Chinese Officials to Singapore during the Late Ch'ing Period), in Chui Kwei-chiang, *Hsin-ma shih lun-ts'ung* (Papers on the History of Singapore and Malaysia) (Singapore, 1977), pp. 90–1.

[74] See Yen Ching-hwang, 'Ch'ing Sale of Honours and Chinese Leadership of Singapore and Malaya', pp. 20–32.

[75] See *Lat Pau*, 10/4/1890, p. 2, 14/4/1890, p. 2, 15/4/1890, p. 5.

[76] See *Lat Pau*, 10/4/1890, p. 2; Chui Kuei-chiang, *Hsin-ma shih lun-t'sung*, p. 84.

[77] See M. R. Godley, 'The Late Ch'ing Courtship of the Chinese in Southeast Asia', in *Journal of Asian Studies*, 34:2 (February 1975), pp. 372–3; see also M. R. Godley, 'The Mandarin Capitalist from Nanyang: Overseas Chinese Enterprise and the Modernization of China' (unpublished Ph.D. thesis of the Brown University, 1973), Ch. 6, 'A Program for the Development of Industry and Commerce').

[78] See *Ta-Ch'ing te-tsung ching-huang-ti shih-lu*, Vol. 535, p. 6b; see also Cheng Kuan-ying, *Chang Pi-shih hsien-sheng sheng-p'ing shin-Lun*, p. 14.

[79] Chang was appointed by Hsueh Fu-ch'eng as the first vice-consul of Penang in

December 1905, he quickly mobilized the support of the leaders of various dialect groups, and convened a meeting on 18 December at the Tong Chai Hospital. There he proposed the founding of a Chinese chamber of commerce, and donated S$3,000 for the new organization. As a result, the Singapore Chinese Chamber of commerce, the first of its kind in Southeast Asia, was inaugurated on 16 March 1906.[80] With Chang's direct influence, the Chinese chamber of commerce of Penang was founded in 1907.[81] This was followed by the founding of the Selangor and Perak Chinese chambers of commerce respectively in 1909.[82] In retrospect, the Chinese chambers of commerce in Singapore and Malaya during this period helped to unite the local Chinese communities, and served the interests of the Ch'ing government well. All chambers were given official recognition by registering with the Department of Agriculture, Industry and Commerce in Peking, and each of them was granted an official seal by the court.[83] The chambers thus enjoyed semi-official status in relation to China. They communicated directly with the Department of Agriculture, Industry and Commerce, without going through the local Chinese consulates, and isssued protective passes to their members who escorted coffins back to China.[84] They helped the Ch'ing government to raise funds and to float capital for investment in China.[85] At the same time, they fostered pro-Ch'ing nationalism, and channelled it towards the Manchu government.[86]

The use of the Chinese chamber of commerce as the Ch'ing March 1893. In 1895, Chang was made the acting consul-general of the Straits Settlements when Huang Tsun-hsien retired from his job in Singapore. See Hsueh Fu-ch'eng, *Ch'u-shih kung-tu* (Taipei, n.d.), original Vol. 7, pp. 13–14; *Sing Po*, 10/1/1895, p. 5, 1/11/1895, p. 8.

[80] See 'Hsin-chia-po chung-hua shang-wu tsung-hui teng-chi i-chih-pu' (Minutes of the Singapore Chinese Chamber of Commerce) (Unpublished), Vol. 1, pp. 2–3.

[81] See *Shang-wu kuan-pao* (Gazette of the Ministry of Agriculture, Industry and Commerce, Peking), Vol. 1 of the Ting Wei year (1907), pp. 9–10.

[82] See *Shang-wu kuan-pao*, Vol. 7 and 12 of the Chi Yu year (1909).

[83] *Shang-wu kuan-pao*, Vol. 1 of the Ting Wei year (1907), pp. 8–10, Vols 7 and 12 of the Chi Yu year (1909). In Kuala Lumpur, a general meeting was called by the Chinese chamber of commerce in July 1909 to celebrate the use of the official seal granted by the Ch'ing court. See *Nan-yang tsung-hui pao* (The Union Times), 22/7/1909, p. 3.

[84] See 'Hsin -chia-po chung-hua shang-wu tsung-hui teng-chi i-shih-pu' Chi Yu year (1909), Vol. 1, p. 144.

[85] *Ibid.*, pp. 110–11; 'Hsin-chia-po chung-hua tsung-shang-hui shih-chi' (Historical Records of the Singapore Chinese Chamber of Commerce), in *Hsin-chia-po chung-hua tsung-shang-hui ta-sha lo-ch'eng chi-lien k'an* (Souvenir of the Opening Ceremony of the Newly Completed Singapore Chinese Chamber of Commerce Building) (Singapore, 1964), p. 152; *Nan-yang tsung-hui pao*, 17/7/1908, 7/8/1908, p. 1.

[86] See 'hsin-chia-po chung-hua shang-wu tsung-hui teng-chi i-shih-pu', Ping Wu year to Hsin Hai year (1906–1911), Vol. 1, pp. 25, 30, 75, 80; Vol. 2, pp. 43, 67.

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

Who were the pro-Ch'ing nationalists in the Chinese communities in Singapore and Malaya? What socio-economic and educational background did they come from? A pro-Ch'ing political nationalist was likely to be a person who was wealthy, China-born and Chinese educated. He was also likely to have purchased Ch'ing official titles and contacts with Ch'ing diplomats and visiting officials. Certainly many of the leaders of the Chinese chambers of commerce of the region were pro-Ch'ing nationalist leaders. In Singapore the first president of the chamber, Goh Siew-tin, was a well-known pro-Ch'ing leader. Goh was a wealthy merchant, born in China and had a Chinese education. He possessed two Ch'ing brevet titles, Chih-fu (知府銜) and Tao-t'ai (道台銜),[88] and had been at one stage the acting Ch'ing consul-general in Singapore.[89] He was an important leader of the Lo Shan She lecture movement,[90] and a staunch supporter of the Confucian revival movement.[91] Other well-known pro-Ch'ing nationalist leaders in Singapore during the period under study were Wu Ching-ch'ing (吳進卿, also known as Wu I-ting 吳翼鼎 or Wu Hsin-ko 吳新科), Wu K'uei-p'u (吳夔甫, also known as Wu P'ei-chiu 吳丕球), Huang Chiang-shui (黃江水), Gan Eng Seng (顏永成, also known as Yen Hsi-k'un 顏錫坤), Hu Hsin-ts'un (胡心存), Lee Cheng Yan (李清淵) and Khoo Chen Tiong (邱正忠). Most of them were wealthy merchants, China-born, Chinese educated,

[87] See Lin Hsiao-sheng, 'Ch'ing-ch'ao chu Hsin ling-shih yu hai-hsia chih-min-ti cheng-fu chien te chiu-fen 1877–94', in K'o Mo-lin and Wu Chen-ch'iang (eds), *Hsin-chia-po hua-tsu shih lun-chi*, pp. 13–29.

[88] See Yen Ching-hwang, trans. by Chang Ch'ing-chiang, 'Ch'ing-ch'ao tsu-kuan chih-tu yu Hsin-Ma hua-tsu ling-tao-ch'en 1877–1912' (Ch'ing Sale of Honours and the Chinese Leadership in Singapore and Malaya 1877–1912), appendix I, in K'o Mo-lin and Wu Chen-ch'iang (eds) *Hsin-chia-po hua-tsu shih lun-chi* (Papers on the Chinese in Singapore), p. 71.

[89] Goh Siew-tin was appointed the acting consul-general for the Straits Settlements from January to May 1902. See *Thien Nan Shin Pao*, 22/1/1902, pp. 1–2, 1/5/1902, p. 2, 2/5/1902, p. 7, 4/6/1902, p. 1.

[90] Goh was a director of the committee of the Lo Shan She in Singapore. See *Sing Po*, 25/1/1897, p. 5.

[91] See Yen Ching-hwang, 'The Confucian Revival Movement in Singapore and Malaya', pp. 44 and 49.

and possessed Ch'ing official titles.[92] They actively promoted pro-Ch'ing nationalism on occasions such as the Emperor's and Empress-Dowager's birthdays, and the Emperor Kuang-hsu's marriage.[93] They welcomed the visits of the Ch'ing dignitaries,[94] and mobilized financial support at times when China faced national calamities, or war with foreign powers.[95]

b. Reformist Nationalism

Part of the overseas Chinese nationalism in Singapore and Malaya was expressed through the reformist movement. The movement was clearly an extension of the world-wide reformist movement led by K'ang Yu-wei. After the Empress-Dowager Tz'u-hsi's palace coup against the Emperor Kuang-hsu, and the failure of the Hundred Days' Reform in 1898, K'ang Yu-wei, the main figure behind the reform, had to flee to Hong Kong and Japan for his life.[96] He then went to North America and Southeast Asia to mobilize support among the overseas Chinese. K'ang's launching of the Emperor Protection Society (Pao Huang Hui 保皇會) in July 1899 demonstrated his intention of saving the Emperor from the control of the Empress-Dowager, and of restoring the sovereign power of the Emperor.[97] To K'ang and other reformist leaders, the overseas Chinese were their most important assets. They had little hope of restoring the Emperor's power by force. But they could use the overseas Chinese to bring pressure to bear on the Ch'ing government, from bases beyond that government's control K'ang and his main disciples seem to have believed that persuasions of that kind could restore the Emperor's rule. In planning a world-wide campaign to press the Empress-Dowager to give up her power, the reformist leaders considered Singapore and Malaya as the key to the successful mobilization of the Chinese in Southeast Asia. But before the arrival of K'ang

[92] For the holding of Ch'ing official titles, see appendices 1, 2 and 5, Yen Ching-hwang, trans. by Chang Ch'ing-chiang, 'Ch'ing-ch'ao tsu-kuan chih-tu yu Hsin-Ma hua-tsu ling-tao-ch'en' in K'o Mo-lin and Wu Chen-ch'iang (eds), *Hsin-chia-po hua-tsu shih lun-chi*, pp. 71–4, 83–4.

[93] See *Lat Pau*, 7/3/1899, p. 2.

[94] See *Lat Pau*, 14/4/1890, p. 2, 15/4/1890, p. 5, 16/4/1890, p. 2.

[95] See 'Ch'ou tsu hsiang ssu' (To Raise Military Funds for the Sino-Japanese War), in *Sing Po*, 5/3/1895, p. 5.

[96] K'ang fled China on the eve of the *coup d'état* to Hong Kong. He was then invited by Marquis Okuma Shigenobu, the Prime Minister of Japan, to visit Japan. See Jung-pang Lo, 'Sequel to Autobiography', in Jung-pang Lo (ed.), *K'ang Yu-wei: A Biography and A Symposium* (Tucson, 1967), p. 178.

[97] *Ibid.*, p. 180.

Yu-wei in Singapore in February 1900,[98] a movement had already developed in support of K'ang's cause. The moving spirits of the movement were Khoo Seok-wan (邱菽園) and Dr Lim Boon Keng (林文慶). Both were appalled by the decline of China's power and the rising threat of foreign imperialism, and shared the view that China could not be saved from imminent peril without a thorough political reform.[99] Stimulated by the increasing pressure of the Western imperialist powers on China, and influenced by the activities of the reformists at home, both Khoo and Lim saw the need to mobilize local Chinese for the reformist cause. In May 1898, they founded in Singapore the *Thien Nan Shin Pao* (天南新報), a modern Chinese newspaper.[100] The newspaper used the Confucian calendar which was symbolic of reviving the reinterpreted Confucianism in the service of China's reform.[101] Khoo became the publisher and the Chinese editor, Dr Lim Boon Keng was made the English editor of the newspaper.[102] The newspaper was echoing the demand of the reformists in China. It advocated the introduction of a parliamentary system, attacked the corruption and inefficiency of the Ch'ing bureaucracy, and widely publicized the programmes of the Hundred Days' Reform (11 June to 21 September 1898).[103] The dramatic failure of the Hundred Days' Reform seems not to have disheartened the reformists in Singapore and Malaya. Instead, they mobilized public opinion to give continuing support to K'ang Yu-wei's cause.

Throughout 1899, the reformists in Singapore and Malaya under the leadership of Khoo Seok-wan and Dr Lim Boon Keng, campaigned actively for the return of the Emperor Kuang-hsu's rule. On 28 September 1899, the *Thien Nan Shin Pao*, the mouth piece of the reformists, published an editorial urging the Empress-Dowager Tz'u-hsi to return sovereign power to the Emperor,[104] emphasizing that it was the wish of the people to see the wise and beloved Emperor return to

[98] See the *Straits Times*, 3/2/1900, p. 2.

[99] See Wen Ching (Lim Boon Keng), *The Chinese Crisis from Within* (London, 1901), especially pp. 100–67, 285–329.

[100] See *Thien Nan Shin Pao*, 28/5/1898.

[101] *Ibid.*; Yen Ching-hwang, 'The Confucian Revival Movement in Singapore and Malaya', pp. 33–57.

[102] *Thien Nan Shin Pao*, 31/5/1898, p. 1; see also Yang Ch'eng-tsu, 'Ch'iu Shu-yuan yen-chiu' (A Study of Khoo Seok-wan), in *Nanyang University Journal*, Vol. 4 (1969) (Singapore), p. 102.

[103] See editorials of the *Thien Nan Shin Pao*, June to September 1898.

[104] The editorial was entitled 'I kung-ch'ing t'ai-hou kuei-cheng i' (Respectfully Urge the Empress-Dowager to Return the Sovereign Power to the Emperor), in *Thien Nan Shin Pao*, 28/9/1899, pp. 1–2.

power.[105] Following the editorial, the reformists demonstrated their strength by collecting a few hundred signatures among the local Chinese for a petition to the Tsungli Yamen in Peking in October 1899.[106] Strangely, the petition did not mention anything about restoring sovereign power, but expressed deep concern for the health of the Emperor Kuang-hsu.[107] This was in fact a subtle way of expressing discontent with the Empress-Dowager Tz'u-hsi's handling of the whole affair, and was meant to deter her from deposing the Emperor, which she and her conservative supporters were already planning to do. In January 1899, she issued a decree claiming the Emperor was ill and cancelling all his official engagements; at the end of January, she interviewed some child princes who were likely to be chosen as heir to the Emperor T'ung-chih, the preceding emperor who had died in 1874 without an heir.[108] In September of the same year she issued a further decree claiming that the Emperor's illness was not improving.[109] All these were interpreted by the reformists in Singapore and Malaya as clear signs of a conspiracy to depose the Emperor. They thought that the best way to halt the conspiracy was not to attack the Empress-Dowager openly, but to express love and concern for the health of the Emperor. The unmentioned message of the petition ought to be clear to the Empress-Dowager: the Emperor was much loved by his overseas subjects, and any move to depose him would not be tolerated.

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

[105] *Ibid.*

[106] See *Thien Nan Shin Pao*, 7/10/1899, p. 5, 11/10/1899, p. 8.

[108] *Ibid.*

[108] See Kuo T'ing-yi, *Chin-tai Chung-kuo shih shih jih-chih* (A Chronology of Modern Chinese History) (Taipei, 1963), Vol. 2, pp. 1038–9.

[109] See *Thien Nan Shin Pao*, 7/10/1899, p. 5.

[110] It was claimed that there were a few hundred signatures collected in Singapore, and seven hundred collected in Kuala Lumpur. The telegrams were sent separately to the Tsungli Yamen in Peking; the Singapore telegram was under the leadership of Lin Yun-lung (林雲龍), a native of Nan-an district of Fukien, who was also a rich merchant; the Kuala Lumpur telegram was sent under the names of Fan Ch'ang (范昌) and Wang Tse-min (王澤民). See *Thien Nan Shin Pao* 13/11/1899, p. 2, 15/11/1899, p. 2; *Jit Shin Pau*, 11/11/1899, p. 4; 17/11/1899, p. 4.

[111] *Ibid.*

The October petition and November telegram highlighted the activities of the reformists in Singapore and Malaya before the coming of K'ang Yu-wei. There seemed to have been spontaneous responses to political developments in China during that year. After the arrival of K'ang Yu-wei in Singapore in early 1900, the reformist movement was stepped up, and was incorporated into the world-wide mobilization under the leadership of K'ang. Two lines of activity followed. First, there was continuing mobilization of overseas Chinese to put pressure on the Empress-Dowager's government. When other overseas Chinese communities in Southeast Asia protested against the conspiracy to depose the Emperor, they received wide publicity in the reformist press in Singapore and Malaya;[112] there were more attacks on the selection of heirs for the Emperor T'ung-chih;[113] and there was a full-scale celebration of the Emperor Kuang-hsu's 30th birthday as a token of strong support given to the unfortunate monarch.[114] Second, the reformists under the leadership of K'ang Yu-wei concentrated on a world-wide fund raised for the purpose of supporting a revolt in China. Only three months after K'ang's arrival in Singapore, the insurrections of the Boxers broke out and the wave of anti-foreignism swept through North China. K'ang and other reformist leaders saw this as an opportunity to organize an armed revolt to topple the Empress-Dowager's rule. All other important leaders were busy raising funds in the overseas Chinese communities in Japan, the United States, Canada, Hawaii, Macao and Southeast Asia, in making political contacts with foreign powers, and in arranging purchase of arms and ammunition,[115] while K'ang was directing and co-ordinating preparations from Singapore.[116] The revolt was scheduled to take place simultaneously in four provinces in central and south China on 9 August 1900. Owing to poor co-ordination and shortage of funds, it failed and the ringleaders were apprehended.[117] To what extent the Chinese in Singapore and

[112] The protest movement which received a great deal of coverage in the reformist newspapers in Singapore was the one in Thailand. It was claimed that the reformists in Thailand had obtained 80,000 signatures to petition the return of the Emperor's rule. See *Thien Nan Shin Pao*, 8/3/1900, p. 2, 20/3/1900, p. 2; *Jit Shin Pau*, 12/3/1900, p. 4, 13/3/1900, p. 7, 19/3/1900, p. 4.

[113] See *Jit Shin Pau*, 10/2/1900, p. 7, 12/2/1900, p. 6, 27/2/1900, p. 1, 28/2/1900, p. 1, 2/3/1900, p. 1, 3/3/1900, p. 1, 9/3/1900, p. 1, 25/4/1900, p. 1, 27/4/1900, p. 1.

[114] A full-scale celebration of the Emperor Kuang-hsu's 30th birthday took place in Ipoh, Perak. See *Thien Nan Shin Pao*, 31/7/1900 p. 7.

[115] See Jung-pang Lo, 'Sequel to Autobiography of K'ang Yu-wei', in Jung-pang Lo ed.), *K'ang Yu-wei: A Biography and A Symposium*, p. 184.

[116] *Ibid.*

[117] See Wu Hsien-tzu, *Chung-kuo min-chu hsien-cheng-tang shih* (A History of the Chinese

Malaya were involved in this revolt is uncertain. But Khoo Seok-wan (pronounced in Mandarin as Ch'iu Shu-yuan), the top leader of the reformist movement in Singapore and Malaya, had certainly donated a large sum of money to finance the revolt. One source claims that the donation was in the vicinity of S$250,000.[118] Given the influence that K'ang Yu-wei had among the local Chinese in Singapore and Malaya, it is reasonable to suggest that he must also have obtained donations other than Khoo's. Whatever amount the Chinese in Singapore and Malaya had donated, the abortive revolt dealt a heavy blow to the reformists in general, and the reformist movement in Singapore in particular. Khoo Seok-wan was disheartened, and his relationship with K'ang Yu-wei became cold. The strained relationship was finally broken up in 1901 after a quarrel over the handling of a contribution of S$50,000 made by the Chinese in Australia towards the revolt.[119] Khoo announced in the *Thien Nan Shin Pao* that he had disassociated himself from the reformists, and gave his support to the Ch'ing government.[120] In retrospect, Khoo Seok-wan's desertion from the reformist camp appears to have demoralized some of his followers,[121] and weakened the reformist movement in Singapore and Malaya. Although the movement recovered after 1905, and became the keen competitor to the Chinese revolutionaries led by Dr Sun Yat-sen, it had lost much of the dynamism generated between 1899 and 1900, and had reduced the chance of acquiring solid support from the overseas Chinese in the region.

In the course of mobilizing support, the reformists employed modern techniques. The use of media and front organizations was the best example. Modern media consisting mainly of newspapers, magazines and pamphlets had been used by the reformists to spread their political ideology, and to mobilize public opinion. The publishing of the *Thien Nan Shin Pao* in 1898 and the *Jit Shin Pau* in 1899[122] provided the reformists with effective means of reaching the general public. Both

Reformist Party) (San Francisco, 1952), pp. 34–6; Edmund Fung, 'The T'ang Ts'ai-ch'ang Revolt', in *Papers on Far Eastern History*, No. 1 (March, 1970), pp. 70–114.

[118] See Feng Tzu-yu, *Chung-hua min-kuo k'ai-kuo ch'ien Ko-ming shih* (A Revolutionary History Prior to the Founding of the Chinese Republic) (Taipei, 1954), Vol. 2, p. 105.

[119] Interview with Tan Chor-nam on 7 August 1966 at his residence in Singapore. Tan was a close friend of Khoo at that time; his information could be depended upon.

[120] See *Thien Nan Shin Pao*, 22/10/1901, pp. 1–2; 'Letter from Khoo Seok-wan to the Governor-General of Kwangtung and Kwangsi, T'ao Mo', reprinted in *Thien Nan Shin Pao*, 23/10/1901.

[121] Khoo's move had greatly affected Tan Chor-nam and Teo Eng-hock, two reformists supporters at the time, who later became the leaders of the revolutionaries in Singapore. See Yen Ching-hwang, *The Overseas Chinese and the 1911 Revolution*, p. 56.

[122] For details relating to the publication of the two newspapers, see Chen Mong Hock, *The Early Chinese Newspapers of Singapore*, pp. 63–80.

Thien Nan and *Jit Shin* were used to propagate Chinese nationalism and the reform idea, and to attack the Empress-Dowager's government. They were also used to publicize the activities of the reformists, to transmit political messages from the national reformist leaders, and to solicit financial and other forms of support from the readers.[123]

The reformists in Singapore and Malaya also adopted modern forms of organization. When the first Emperor Protection Society (Pao Huang Hui) was founded by K'ang Yu-wei in Victoria, Canada, in July 1899, branches quickly spread to other parts of Canada, United States, Mexico, South America, Hawaii and Japan. It is claimed by Wu Hsien-tzu, an important disciple of K'ang Yu-wei at that time, that a branch was set up in Penang probably in 1899, and the Singapore branch with Khoo Seok-wan as its president was established in 1900.[124] For unknown reasons, the branches in Singapore and Malaya and in other parts of Southeast Asia were made underground. This was in contrast to the branches in North and South America, Mexico, Hawaii and Japan where lists of the members' names were widely publicized.[125] Being clandestine, the societies in Singapore and Malaya badly needed front organizations to carry out activities. The organization that emerged to meet this need was Hao Hsueh Hui (好學會, known as the Chinese Philomatic Society) which was founded by Dr Lim Boon Keng on 6 September 1899 in Singapore.[126] In the announcement in the press, the society emphasized that it was a registered body, and was to organize public talks once a month at the *Thien Nan Shin Pao* office and the shop Heng Ch'un.[127] The emphasis on the legality of the society indicated the reformist concern for its image in the community. It was intended to spread its message widely. The professed aim of the society was to gather literary enthusiasts (Wen-hsueh chih-shih 文學志士) together to discuss politics (China and foreign, current and ancient) and new theories in science,[128] but in fact the society was to push the theory

[123] For details, see *Thien Nan Shin Pao* and the *Jit Shin Pau* between 1899 and 1900.

[124] Wu Hsien-tzu, *Chung-kuo min-chu hsien-cheng tang shih*, p. 28; Wang Gung-wu, 'Chinese Reformists and Revolutionaries in the Straits Settlements 1900–1911' (unpublished B.A. Honours thesis, University of Malaya, Singapore 1953), p. 40 and Appendix B.

[125] See Jung-pang Lo, *K'ang Yu-wei: A Biography and A Symposium*, p. 258, footnote 8.

[126] See the announcement of the formation of the Hao Hsueh Hui by Dr Lim Boon Keng published in the *Thien Nan Shin Pao*, 9/9/1899, p. 1.

[127] *Ibid.*

[128] Writing about the Chinese Philomatic Society (Hao Hsueh Hui), Song Ong Siang stated that it 'for a few years carried on a vigorous existence and brought together a number of young men and some of the older folks for the regular study of English literature, Western music and the Chinese language.' (See Song Ong Siang, *One Hundred*

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

Years' History of the Chinese in Singapore (reprint, Singapore, 1967), p. 236. This statement appears to have contradicted the professed aims of the society and was not in line with the early part of its activities. *Thien Nan Shin Pao*, 9/9/1899, p. 1.

[129] See *Thien Nan Shin Pao*, 5/10/1899, p. 1, 12/10/1899, p. 1, 24/10/1899, p. 1, 31/10/1899, p. 1, 9/11/1899, p. 1, 16/11/1899, p. 1; *Jit Shin Pau*, 6/10/1899, p. 4, 9/10/1899, p. 4, 11/10/1899, p. 1.

[130] See *Jit Shin Pau*, 6/10/1899, p. 4, 9/10/1899, p. 4, 11/10/1899, p. 1. Another reformist leader, Huang Nai-shang, who was in Peking during the Hundred Days' Reform, was invited to give his account in the 8th public lecture organized by the Hao Hsueh Hui on 18 November 1899. See the advertisement for the talk in the *Thien Nan Shin Pao*, 16/11/1899, p. 1.

[131] See *Thien Nan Shin Pao*, 16/11/1899, p. 1.

[132] In the lists of Hao Hsueh Hui 'members', men like Wang Hui-i (王會儀), Lin Tzu-chou (林茁儔), Hsu Chi-chun (徐季鈞), Li Yung-hsiang (李榕鄉) were Chinese journalists working with both the *Thien Nan Shin Pao* and *Jit Shin Pau*; men like Hu Po-hsiang (胡伯驤), Ch'en Yung-kuang (陳榮光), Liang Min-hsiu (梁敏修), Ch'iu Yen-pin (邱雁賓), Wu Ying-p'ei (吳應培), Teo Eng-hock (張永福), Huang Chao-k'un (黃兆焜), Huang Chao-chen (黃兆鎮), Huang Chao-yuan (黃兆源), Lin Wei-fang (林維芳), were known merchants. See lists of 'members' of the Hao Hsueh Hui published in the *Thien Nan Shin Pao*, 9/10/1899, p. 5; 12/10/1899, p. 8; 18/10/1899, p. 5; 30/10/1899, p. 5; 4/11/1899, p. 8; 11/11/1899, p. 5; 13/12/1899, p. 5.

seems reasonable to suggest that many of them may also have been members of the underground Emperor Protection Society.

c. Revolutionary Nationalism

Certainly the Chinese revolutionary movement in the period between 1900 and 1912 was the most important component part of overseas Chinese political nationalism. Details of the revolutionary movement have been discussed in my book, *The Overseas Chinese and the 1911 Revolution: With Special Reference to Singapore and Malaya*, and need not be repeated here. What should be elaborated is the relationship between the movement and overseas Chinese nationalism. Although Dr Sun Yat-sen's Three People's Principles—Nationalism, Democracy and People's Livelihood—were the guiding spirits of the Chinese 1911 revolutionary movement, nationalism was really the only one of the three that was preached in the overseas Chinese communities in Singapore and Malaya.[133] But the nature of the nationalism merits some discussion. Firstly the nationalism preached by the revolutionaries was wider in scope than the pro-Ch'ing and reformist nationalism. The pro-Ch'ing nationalists only promoted loyalty towards the Ch'ing dynasty. The reformists wanted to restore the Emperor Kuang-hsu. They also wanted to save China from foreign imperialism by institutional reforms, but still in a somewhat traditional way, under the Emperor Kuang-hsu. The revolutionaries were more radical in a number of ways. Their nationalism was directed not to an emperor or the reigning dynasty, but to the nation-state of China. They did their best to make clear the difference between loyalty to emperor and loyalty to the nation-state.[134] In line with the pervasive nationalism in the world at that time, Dr Sun Yat-sen was deliberately nationalistic, and thought that part of his revolutionary message was important for the survival of China.[135] Secondly, the revolutionaries had given Chinese nationalism new dimensions. The main component of revolutionary nationalism was anti-Manchuism. Of course, anti-Manchu nationalism was not new in Chinese history; it had arisen in the seventeenth century in the resistance against the Manchu conquest.[136] But it was systemati-

[133] See Yen Ching-hwang, *The Overseas Chinese and the 1911 Revolution*, pp. 118–21, and Appendix 2 and 7.

[134] *Ibid.*, pp. 104–5.

[135] See Dr Sun Yat-sen, 'Min-tsu chu-i' (Nationalism), in *Sun Chung-san hsuan-chi* (Selected Works of Dr Sun Yat-sen) (Hong Kong, 1962), Vol. 2, p. 593.

[136] The revolutionaries traced their anti-Manchu forerunner to the Koxinga (Cheng Ch'eng-kung) who led the resistance movement in South China and Taiwan against the

cally developed and perfected by the revolutionaries. More importantly, the new revolutionary nationalism also contained constructive elements: it proposed to build China as a modern and powerful nation-state, able to take its place and defend itself in the modern world.[137] This put the anti-Manchuism in proper context—to overthrow the Manchus was not an act of revenge, but a means to save China from foreign imperialism. Thirdly, the revolutionary nationalism had the greatest impact on the Chinese communities in Singapore and Malaya. Compared with the pro-Ch'ing nationalists and the reformists, the revolutionaries were more successful in mobilizing support. They possessed a reasonably well-organized party, the T'ung Meng Hui, a clearly defined platform, and a well-developed propaganda network. The use of newspapers, books and magazines to spread the revolutionary message was obviously not different from the reformists, but the use of reading clubs (Shu Pao She), night schools, public rallies and drama troupes as propaganda vehicles was new.[138] By these means the revolutionaries broadened their social base, and effectively mobilized support among the illiterate masses of the overseas Chinese. Thus revolutionary nationalism had a greater impact than pro-Ch'ing nationalism and reformist nationalism in the Chinese communities in Singapore and Malaya.

Conclusion

Some conclusions may be drawn from the above study. Two types of nationalist movements, cultural and political, existed side by side in the overseas Chinese Communities in Singapore and Malaya during the period under study. Most of these nationalist movements were China-oriented. There was little or no intention to develop a separate overseas Chinese identity, nor was there any interest in local indigenous movements in the region. In this context, we conclude that overseas Chinese nationalism was an offshoot of modern Chinese nationalism, and not a component part of indigenous nationalism in Southeast Asia.

Like nationalism in other countries, the nationalism of the overseas

Manchu conquest. For the relationship between the revolutionaries and the Koxinga's anti-Manchu nationalism see R. C. Crozier, *Koxinga and Chinese Nationalism* (Cambridge, Mass., 1977), pp. 50–6.

[137] See Sun Yat-sen, 'Min-tsu chu-i', pp. 626–37.

[138] See Yen Ching-hwang, 'Chinese Revolutionary Propaganda Organizations in Singapore and Malaya, 1906–1911', in *Journal of the South Seas Society*, Vol. 29, pts 1 and 2, pp. 54–61.

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