population by census area and ethnic group. It can be seen that among the three main ethnic groups the Chinese predominated in all the census areas. There were high concentrations of Chinese in the Central City Area, City Periphery (Northeast), City Periphery (West), and Suburb (North). In contrast, Malays were found in the Outlying Area (East), Suburb (East) and Suburb (West). The Indians were more dispersed.

Within some of the ten census areas, there occurred pockets of high ethnic concentration. The Chinese formed more than 95 per cent of the total population in the census divisions of Havelock, Kim Seng, and Bukit Ho Swee. As they were the largest ethnic group, they formed more than half of the population in all the census divisions in 1980; this was so despite relative concentrations of other ethnic groups in a few divisions. The census divisions of Kampong Serai, Kampong Kembangan and Kampong Ubi had over 30 per cent Malays in 1980. The Indians, despite their small numerical size in the total population, had accounted for more than 20 per cent of the total population in two census divisions — Sembawang (24.3%) and Anson (22.9%). Finally, high concentrations of the group "Others" occurred in Cairnhill (17.4%), Tanglin (16.4%) and River Valley (10.5%).

Although public housing and urban renewal programmes had resulted in substantial suburbanization as well as a relocation of the population in certain precincts within the Central City Area since the 1960s, the pattern of ethnic and Chinese dialect group areal concentrations that developed since the early days (Hodder 1953) still perpetuates to a certain extent to this day (see Figure 1.5). This is because urban renewal is a long-term process. Nevertheless, blocks of buildings that used to consist of only one ethnic or Chinese dialect group are fast giving way to multi-storey buildings housing a fair cross-section of the total population.

2
Dialect Groups, Ecology and Bāng Structure

The Chinese in Singapore have been divided into several sub-groups, principally based on dialect differences. Terms usually used for classifying these distinct sub-groups of Chinese are "tribe", "community", "speech group", and "dialect group". Prior to 1957, the term "tribe" gained its currency for census purposes (1911, 1921, 1931 and 1947 Population Censuses). The term "tribe" was "admittedly based on an inconsistent blend of political, geographic and linguistic, rather than ethnographic criteria . . . [being] intended to reflect those broad divisions with which a non-specialist administrator is mainly concerned in Malaya" (Vlieland 1932:77). In both the 1957 and 1970 censuses, however, the term "tribe" was replaced by "community" and "dialect group" which were used interchangeably. However, in the 1980 census, only "dialect group" was used. In his study of the Chinese Society in Thailand, Skinner (1962:29) preferred the term "speech group", for he believed "it was accurate so far as it goes and otherwise non-committal". Skinner argued that the term "tribe" "seems particularly inept, since both the technical anthropological sense and the popular meaning are scarcely germane". "Dialect group", said Skinner, "is also unfortunate in as much as the speech differences which determine the groups are more than dialectal in most cases."

Nevertheless, in this study the term "dialect group" is preferred. There are good reasons for such a preference. Increased literacy and interdialect contact over the years have somewhat broken down the dialect barrier. Furthermore, dialect has long been the principal basis for classifying the Chinese different sub-groups. In the Singapore context, the term "speech group" fails to reflect the dynamism of each group which, apart from its phonetic distinction, also assumes political, territorial and socioeconomic dimensions.

In Singapore, there are more than a dozen dialects spoken by the Chinese. The importance of a dialect in a locality is determined by the degree of concentration of that dialect group as well as by its numerical size in the total population in that locality. At the national level, however, the importance of a dialect is largely determined by its numerical size in relation to other dialect groups. Table 2.1 shows the percentage distribution of the Chinese dialect groups from 1881 to 1980. Hokkiens, Teochews, Cantonese, Hakkas, and Hainanese are the five major dialect groups and together they

TABLE 2.1 PERCENTAGE DISTRIBUTION OF CHINESE BY DIALECT GROUP, 1881–1980

Dialect Group	1881	1891	1901	1911	1921	1931	1947	1957	1970	1980
Hokkien	28.8[1]	37.6[1]	36.0[1]	41.7[1]	43.0	43.0	39.6	40.6	42.2	43.1
Teochew	26.1	19.5	16.8	17.1	16.8	19.7	21.6	22.5	22.4	22.0
Cantonese	17.1	19.2	18.8	22.2	24.9	22.5	21.6	18.9	17.0	16.5
Hainanese	9.6	7.1	5.8	4.9	4.6	4.7	7.1	7.2	7.3	7.1
Hakka	7.1	6.1	5.2	6.6	4.6	4.6	5.5	6.7	7.0	7.4
Foochow					4.0	1.6	1.3	1.5	1.7	1.7
Sānjiāngrén					0.4	N.A.	N.A.	1.0	0.8	0.8
Henghua					0.5	N.A.	1.0	0.8	0.8	0.7
Hokchia					1.8[2]	2.1[2]	0.9	0.7	N.A.	N.A.
Kwongsai					a	0.2	0.1	a	N.A.	N.A.
Others	0.3			7.5	2.2	1.6	1.3	0.1	0.7	0.7
Straits-born[3]	11.0	10.5	9.4	N.A.	N.A.	N.A.	N.A.	N.A.	N.A.	N.A.
Total (%)	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
Total No. ('000)	86.8	121.9	164.0	219.6	317.5	418.6	729.5	1,090.6	1,579.9	1,856.2

Notes: [1]Probably including Foochow, Henghua and Hokchia.
[2]Probably including Henghua.
[3]They were largely Hokkiens migrated from Malacca, and thus could be classified under Hokkien.
N.A. — Not available.
[a]Less than 0.1%.

Sources: 1881: Talbot, *et al.*, 1882:12–13.
1891, 1901: Lee 1974:143.
1911, 1921: Nathan 1922: 79–83.
1931: Vlieland 1932: 181.
1947, 1957: Chua 1964: 68, 148–149.
1970: Arumainathan 1973, Vol. II: 32–33.
1980: Khoo 1981, *Release No. 2*:59–60.

formed 96.1 per cent of the total Chinese population in 1980. Since the 1880s, the relative size of each dialect group has remained fairly constant. The Hokkien dialect, because of its numerical size as well as its predominance in the economy (see Chapter 4) has over the years become the *lingua franca* of the Chinese.

Although Chinese contact with Southeast Asian countries dates back to several centuries before the advent of the Europeans, large scale emigration occurred only from roughly the middle of the nineteenth century. These emigrations have been well documented (see, for instance, Chen 1923 and 1939; Campbell 1971; Li 1934; Skinner 1962; Ee 1961). From 1819 to about the outbreak of the Second World War, Singapore was an important port of call where the largely poverty-stricken emigrants from the Fújiàn and Guǎngdōng provinces in southeastern China arrived and whence they proceeded to Indonesia and Malaysia in response to the opening-up process in these countries.

On the whole, Chinese emigration to Singapore was an unorganised individual process unaided by the government. Its motive was to improve the economic lot of oneself and of one's dependants and the migration was intended to be only temporary with the hope of ultimately returning to China after a few years of hard work and savings. However, as noted by Siah U Chin (1848:285), "Out of 10 only 1 or 2 individuals are able to return after a sojourn of 3 or 4 years, and when they do return they do not take with them much wealth."

Emigration to Singapore and thence to other destinations was conditioned by knowledge about the receiving countries, availability of shipping, and the agents of migration. Among these factors, the agents played a decisive role. By and large, among the important agents were the returned migrants; professional recruiters; shipowners; sailors; the lodging houses in emigration ports and Singapore; and the remittance houses and traders. Through these agents migrants were channelled from their home villages to the emigration ports and thence shipped to overseas destinations. Figure 2.1 depicts the process of Chinese migration to Singapore.

Figure 2.2 shows the emigrant areas of the various dialect groups in Fújiàn and Guǎngdōng. The Hokkiens are centred in the southern area of Fújiàn province. The name, Hokkien, represents the pronunciation in that dialect of the province name. The Hokkiens are known to other dialect groups in Singapore as Fújiànrén, i.e., people of Fújiàn. Thus the name Hokkien is a misnomer. The correct name for this dialect group is "Mǐnnánrén", i.e., people of Southern Fújiàn. In Singapore (and in Malaysia as well), because of their numerical size and economic predominance, the Hokkiens are taken, as they claim, to represent the people of Fújiàn.

The first arrivals of Chinese after the founding of Singapore are known to have come from Malacca (Song 1923:7). The majority are believed to be

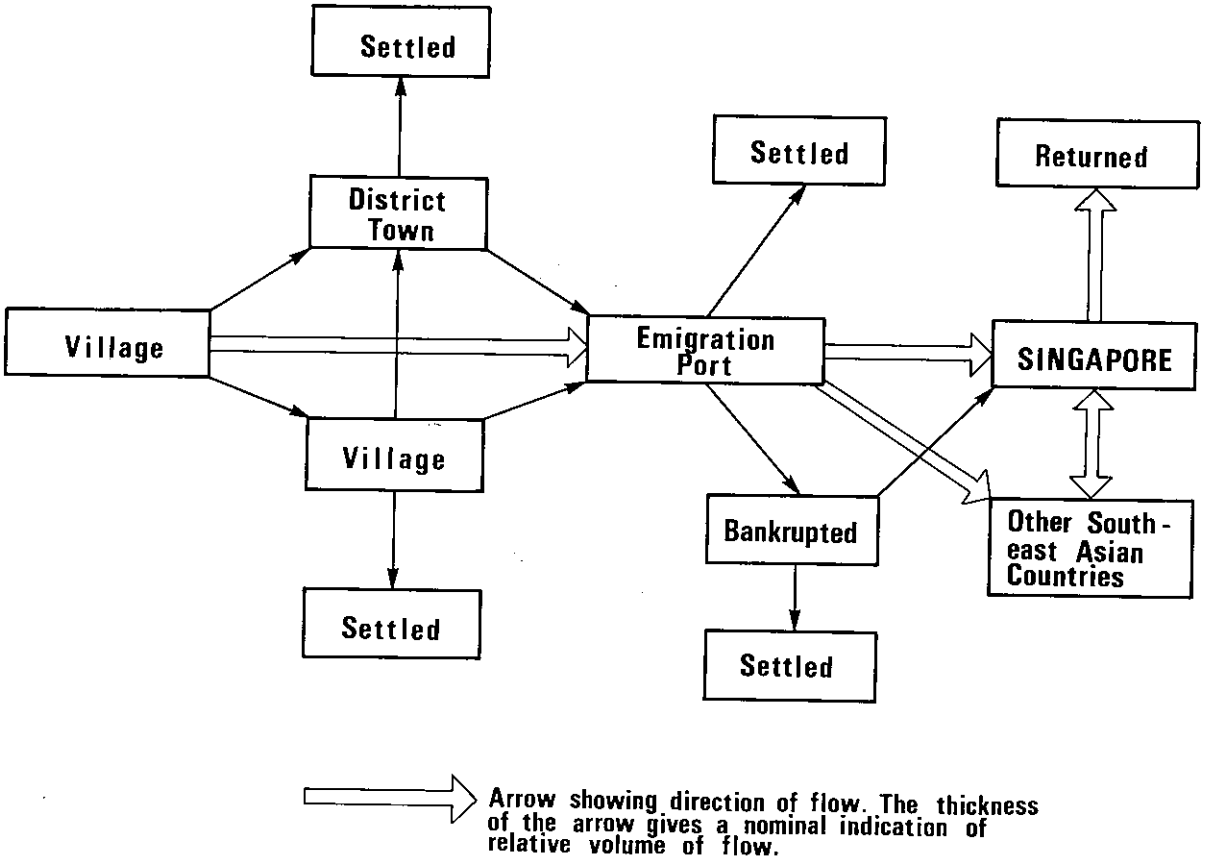

Fig. 2.1 Process of Chinese Migration to Singapore

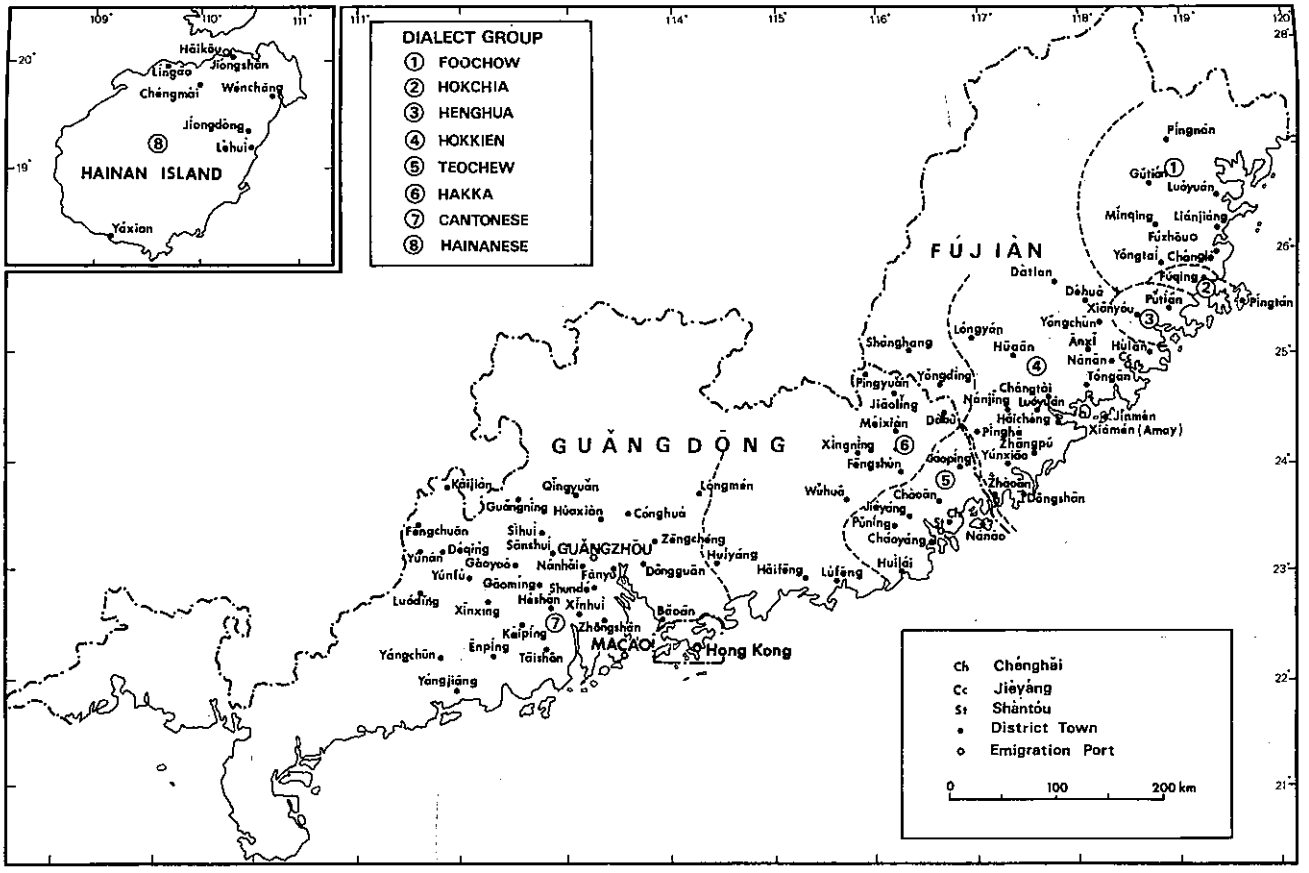

Fig. 2.2 Main Areas of Chinese Emigration to Singapore

Hokkiens who were then known as Malacca-born Chinese (Siah 1848:283; Lin 1975). Soon after, they were joined by junk traders from Siam (Lee Y.L. 1971:6), Brunei, the Philippines, Cochin-China (Song 1923:9) and Indonesia (Earl 1837:23–24). Prior to 1819, the Hokkiens were known for centuries to have been active in junk trade in the Philippines, Indonesia, Malaya and Siam (Skinner 1962:40; Ng 1973). It is not surprising, then, that these Hokkien junk traders should have been among the first Chinese to be attracted to Singapore, for the free-port status of Singapore offered them a safer place to do business (Song 1923:8–10).

In February 1821, the first junk from Xiàmén arrived in Singapore, initiating a series of such journeys that were to bring the Hokkiens and subsequently other Chinese immigrants to the island. In 1842, Xiàmén was opened as a treaty port and direct passenger traffic by steamer was made possible between Xiàmén and Singapore and, "by 1870 such traffic was scheduled and regularized" (Skinner 1962:43). Steamer passenger traffic accounted for more than 50 per cent of all emigrants from Xiàmén (to all destinations) in 1872 and, by 1875, some 95 per cent. In the first fifty years after its founding, Singapore prospered on entrepôt trade. The strong mercantile orientation of the Hokkiens, who had already seized on the opportunity to build a strong footing in Singapore in the first few decades, coupled with the change in passenger traffic between Xiàmén and Singapore as mentioned earlier, might have been, among others, the chief factors contributing to their predominance in Singapore.

The Singapore Hokkiens appear to have come from the old prefectures of Quánzhōu, Zhāngzhōu, Yǒngchūn and Lóngyán. A survey undertaken by the Singapore Ann Kway (i.e., Ānxī) Association in 1952 showed that there were then about 52,000 Hokkiens from the Ānxī district of the Quánzhōu Prefecture (Péng ed. 1973:128). By 1977, the number of Ānxī people was estimated to have doubled. It is claimed and generally accepted by the Hokkiens that the Ānxī people form the largest section of the Hokkiens in Singapore. The old Zhāngzhōu Prefecture had seven districts. Apart from Ānxī, people from the remaining six districts, namely, Jìnjiāng, Nánān, Huìān, Tóngān, Xiàmén and Jīnmén (i.e., Quemoy), are also well represented in Singapore. Together the Quánzhōu people form the largest subgroup of the Hokkiens, followed by those from the Zhāngzhōu Prefecture.

Next to the Hokkiens in terms of numbers are the Teochews from the Cháozhōu Prefecture, which is drained by the Hán River in the northeastern part of Guǎngdōng province. The name, Teochew, is the pronunciation in that dialect of the prefecture name. Among the ten districts (i.e., Cháoān, Cháoyāng, Jiēyáng, Ráoping, Huìlái, Chénghǎi, Pǔníng, Nánào, Dàbu and Fēngshùn) that made up the old Cháozhōu Prefecture, Dàbù and Fēngshuǐ are largely populated by Hakkas. Thus the people from Dàbù and

Féngshùn are excluded from the Teo Chew Poit Ip Huay Kuan (i.e., Teochew Eight Districts Association), the main association of the Teochews in Singapore. The dialect of Cháoān district is the standard Teochew dialect in Singapore.

It is believed that most of the agriculturalists who settled in Singapore prior to 1819 were Teochews. The first Teochews who arrived after 1819 are known to have come from the Rhio Islands and Siam. In contrast to the Hokkiens' strong mercantile orientation, the Teochews in the early decades tended to be agriculture-oriented. The first three decades of Singapore witnessed a great expansion in agriculture in which gambier and pepper, the two most important crops, accounted for 76 per cent of the total acreage and 61 per cent of the total of agricultural gross revenue in 1848 (Makepeace *et al.*, 1921, Vol. II:71). Seah (Siah) U Chin, a Teochew, is said to be the first to start gambier and pepper planting on a large scale in Singapore. His plantation "stretched for eight to ten miles from the upper end of River Valley Road to Bukit Timah and Thomson Road" (Song 1923:20). In the late 1840s, the Teochews made up over 95 per cent of the Chinese gambier and pepper planters and coolies (Braddell 1855:116).

Since 1850 (Makepeace *et al.*, 1921, Vol. II:80), the cultivation of gambier in Singapore has begun to decline as a result of soil exhaustion (Song 1923:35). The Chinese, especially the Teochews, turned to Johore at the invitation of the Johore's Sultan, initiating the "Gǎngzhǔ" system in Johore which was to last until 1917 (Song: 37; Hsü 1961:27). Out of the 103 "Gǎngzhǔ" which are known to have existed in Johore, 68 were Teochews (Hsü 1961:21–22). This was one of the chief factors contributing to the large numbers of Teochews in the Johore state. The agricultural orientation of the Teochews was partly responsible for the flow of Teochews, beginning from the early nineteenth century, to Siam (Skinner 1962:46) where the Teochews formed the largest Chinese dialect group. In 1858, Shàntóu, the ocean-port of Cháozhōu, was opened as a treaty port, but scheduled steamer passenger traffic between Shàntóu and Singapore was not regularized until 1870. Nevertheless, the commercial environment of Singapore did not seem to have retained most of the agriculture-oriented Teochews who arrived from China. Today in Singapore, apart from Nánào and Rāoping, the Teochews from the remaining six districts are all well represented. The Teochews from the Cháoān district form the majority, followed by those from Chénghai, Cháoyāng and Jiēyáng.

The Cantonese, numbering 305,956 in 1980, form the third largest Chinese dialect group. The term Cantonese refers to the emigrants from Guǎngzhōu and Zhàoqìng Prefectures in central Guǎngdōng province where the provincial capital, Guǎngzhōu (i.e., Canton), is located. The dialect of Guǎngzhōu is standard Cantonese there. The Cantonese call

themselves Guǎngzhōurén, i.e., "people of Guǎngzhōu Prefecture", or Guǎngfǔrén, Guǎngdōngrén, "people of Guǎngdōng province". In this case, Guǎngdōngrén is a misnomer. The Cantonese are generally called Guǎngzhōurén by the Teochews, but Guǎngfǔrén by the Hokkiens. It is said that Chow Ah Chi, a carpenter from Penang, was the first Cantonese who arrived in Singapore with Sir Stamford Raffles in 1819. That paved the way for his clansmen in Penang to follow suit.

Although Guǎngzhōu was opened as a treaty port in 1842, evidence shows that, at least up to 1848, Macao was the main junk port for Cantonese emigration (Siah 1848:286). This had earned the Cantonese the name "Macaos", which was the case until the 1940s. The Cantonese were less mercantile-oriented compared to the Hokkiens and Teochews. This, coupled with the fact that a substantial number of the Cantonese were channelled to the Western Hemisphere, Australia and New Zealand via Hongkong since 1842 (Skinner 1962:47), might have reduced the number of Cantonese for Singapore. Nevertheless, the Cantonese were, after Hokkiens, the second largest dialect group from 1891 to 1947 in Singapore. Only after 1947 was their number exceeded by the Teochews.

The old Guǎngzhōu Prefecture consisted of fourteen districts and the old Zhàoqìng Prefecture sixteen districts.[1] An analysis of the dates of establishment of the various Cantonese district associations shows that in the first fifty years of the founding of Singapore, the majority of Cantonese were from Guǎngzhōu Prefecture. Today, in Singapore, all the Cantonese from the thirty districts of the two old prefectures are represented. However, the majority of Cantonese appear to have come from the districts of Tāishān, Fānyú, Shùndé, Zhōngshān, Dōngguǎn, Nánhǎi, Xīnhuì, Kāiping, Gāoyaò, Hèshān, Ēnpíng and Sìhuì.

The Hainanese populate the coastal plains of Hǎinán Island. As part of the Guǎngdōng province, Hǎiñan Island formed the Qióngzhōu Prefecture, consisting of sixteen districts. In Singapore, the Hainanese are known to themselves as well as to other dialect groups as Hǎinánrén, or Qióngzhōurén. Although the Hainanese had been renowned as a sea-going people, their junks, prior to the 1840s, were generally small compared to those of the Teochews (Skinner 1962:42) and Hokkiens. Consequently, the Hainanese junk trade was mainly conducted between Hainan Island and the coastal areas of mainland Southeast Asia (Lim 1972:18). Despite this early

[1]The districts that made up the old Guǎngzhōu and Zhàoqìng Prefectures were as follows:
Guǎngzhōu: Qīngyuǎn, Zhōngshān, Fānyú, Xīnhuì, Huāxiàn, Lóngmén, Nánhǎi, Bǎoān, Sānshuì, Shùndé, Tāishān, Zēngchéng, Cónghuâ and Dōngguān.
Zhàoqìng: Ēnpíng, Fēngchuān, Hèshān, Xīnxìng, Kāijiàn, Kāipíng, Gāomíng, Gāoyào, Guǎngníng, Luótìng, Sìhuì, Dèqìng, Yāngjiāng, Yāngchūn, Yùnán and Yúnfú.

junk trade, it is certain that in the first two decades after 1819 there was not a significant number of Hainanese in Singapore. This is indicated by two facts: (a) there was no concentration of Hainanese in the Old Chinatown, the initial Chinese settlement after 1819; and (b) the first Hainanese association, the Kheng Chiu Tin Hou Kong-cum-Singapore Kiung Chow Hwee Kuan was not established until 1857. The late migration of Hainanese to Singapore could be partly due to Hainanese customs which, until 1921, forbade their women to emigrate (Vlieland 1932:82). In 1876, Hǎikǒu was opened as a treaty port. Since then, the numbers of Hainanese who arrived in Singapore increased significantly. However, the Hainanese dialect group remained unstable for a long time as reflected in the unbalanced sex ratio, which in 1931, ten years after the lifting of the ban on women emigration, showed 6,082 males per 1,000 females (Arumainathan 1973, Vol. 1:257). By 1947, the sex ratio had improved to 1,795 males per 1,000 females, and by 1970, 1,127 to every 1,000 females. Today the Hainanese in Singapore appear to have come mainly from the northeastern and eastern districts of Hǎinán Island.

The Hakkas are very widespread in China, stretching from Jiāngxī and Húnán in the north to Hǎinán Island in the south, and from Taiwan in the east to Sìchuān in the west. But the Hakkas in Singapore are known to have come mainly from the Jiāyìngzhōu Prefecture (to the northwest of the Cháozhōu Prefecture), the Dàbù and Féngshùn districts in Cháozhōu Prefecture, the Yǒngding and Shàngháng districts in Tīngzhōu Prefecture (Fújiàn) and the Huìzhōu Prefecture (west and south of Jiāyìngzhōu). The term "Hakka" is a Cantonese pronunciation for "kèjiā", meaning "guest family". The Hakkas call themselves Kèrén, but are called Kè by the Teochews, Hokkiens and Hainanese. It is from the word Kè that the term Kheh is derived.

Although the first Hakka association, Ying Fo Fui Kun (i.e., the association of Jiāyìngzhōu) was established as early as 1823 in Telok Ayer Street, the centre of Hokkien concentration in the Old Chinatown, there was no trace of any significant Hakka concentration in the area. This indicates that in the early years the Hakkas were either a minority or not mercantile-oriented, or both. Information gathered in the field suggests that the early Hakkas settled largely in Pasir Panjang, Lim Chu Kang, Chua Chu Kang, Kampong Bahru and Jurong. By contrast, the Hakkas were the largest dialect group in the Federated Malay States in 1911, accounting for 33.1 per cent of the total Chinese population (Nathan 1922:78). During the early years of the Emergency in Malaya (1948–60), there was an influx of rural Hakkas to Singapore.

Apart from the five major dialect groups discussed above, there are four other minority dialect groups — Foochows, Hokchias, Henghuas, and Sānjiāngrén — which merit our attention. The Foochows are centred on

the lower reach of Mǐnjiāng, in eastern Fújiàn, where the provincial capital Fúzhōu is located. Foochow is the pronunciation in that dialect of Fúzhōu. They are called Hokchius by the Hokkiens and Fúzhōurén by the Teochews. The old Fúzhōu Prefecture consisted of ten districts, viz., Chánglè, Fúqīng, Fúzhōu, Gǔtián, Liánjiāng, Luóyuán, Mínqīng, Pingnán, Píngtán, and Yǒngtaì. It was not until 1909 that the Singapore Foochow Association was established, indicating that prior to the twentieth century the number of Foochows in Singapore was insignificant.

The Henghuas in China inhabit the old Xīnghuà Prefecture which is situated between the Fúzhōu Prefecture in the north and the Quánzhōu Prefecture in the south. The old Xīnghuà Prefecture consisted of two districts, namely, Pǔtían and Xiānyóu. Hin Ann Huay Kuan, the first and main association of the Henghuas in Singapore, was established in 1920, indicating their late migration to Singapore as compared with other dialect groups discussed earlier. Indeed, the Henghuas numbered only 1,659 in 1921 (Nathan 1922:186), but considering that the Xīnghuà Prefecture had only two districts, the figure was by no means small. The absence of any ocean-port in the Xīnghuà Prefecture meant that the prospective Henghua emigrants had to embark either at Fúzhōu in the north or, more often, at Xiàmén in the south. This might have accounted for their late emigration as compared with the Foochows.

The Chinese who came from the provinces north of Fújiàn and Guǎngdōng are generally called in Singapore, Waijiāngrén, i.e., "people beyond the Chángjiāng", or Sānjiāngrén, i.e., "people of the three jiāng" (Jiāngxī, Jiāngsū and Zhèjiāng). It is not clear whether the "Shanghainese" as classified in the Singapore censuses referred to those originating from Shanghai and its environs or to those coming from central and northern China. In contrast to other dialect groups, which consisted substantially of peasants, the early Sānjiāng migrants seemed largely to have an urban background as indicated by their possession of a common language, Mandarin. The Sam Kiang Huay Kwan was the first association established by the group in 1908. In 1921, the number of Chinese classified under "Northern Provinces" stood at 1,177 (Nathan 1922:186), and by 1970 the number had increased to 13,427 which was more than the Henghuas by 401.

The Fúqīng district of Fúzhōu Prefecture is the abode of the Hokchias in Singapore. The term "Hokchia" is the pronunciation in Henghua of the district name. Linguistically, the people of Fúqīng can be divided into two broad groups — Hokchia and Henghua. Hokchia dialect is a branch of the Foochow dialect, but is unintelligible to the Henghuas. Thus for the purpose of discussion we shall categorise them as Henghua-speaking Hokchias and Hockchia-speaking Hokchias, while both groups are collectively known as Hokchias. The Henghua-speaking Hokchias are a minority in the Fúqīng

district. Linguistically, the Henghua-speaking Hokchias in Singapore are members of the Henghua dialect group, but territorially they call themselves Hokchias, and not Foochows nor Henghuas. Furthermore, since the beginning of this century, both the Henghuas and the Hokchias have been dominant in the bicycle and spare-parts trade as well as in the road transport industry. This has caused much confusion about the distinction made between the Henghuas and the Hokchias. Nevertheless, the Hokchias form a distinct group in Singapore. It is not known whether the Hokchias, as classified in the population censuses, referred only to the Hokchia-speaking Hokchias or whether it included the Henghua-speaking Hokchias as well. The Singapore Futsing Association (i.e., the Hokchias' Association) was not formed until 1920. Its late establishment as compared with other dialect-based associations indicates that the numbers of Hokchias as well as their economic power were still insignificant prior to the second decade of the present century. Indeed, there were only 3,845 Hokchias in Singapore in 1921 as compared with 3,631 in 1911 (Nathan 1922:84).

Structure

Traditionally the various dialect groups are structured along the lines of bāng. What then is a bāng? The word bāng was first phonetically translated by Suyama (1961) from the Chinese character 幇, meaning "a grouping" or "a gang". Bāng is an age-old concept and, in local usage, it denotes a Chinese politico-socio-economic grouping based principally on a dialect. Thus the various dialect groups are more often referred to as the various ...ngs. "Bāng" and "dialect groups" are synonyms in local Chinese literature, but the usage of "bāng" is more common than that of "dialect group" simply because "bāng" denotes the dynamism of each dialect group.

The concept of bāng is singularly developed in Singapore. This is principally because the power structure of the Singapore Chinese Chamber of Commerce and Industry (SCCCI)[2] is based upon bāng, a phenomenon which is absent in similar associations located elsewhere in Southeast Asian countries. The bāng structure of SCCCI dates back to 1906 when it was founded. It was then recognised that Chinese society was divided along the lines of bāng — a result of historical development that took shape and strengthened during the nineteenth century. Although common economic interests had brought the leaders of the different bāngs together, the lack of

[2]The SCCCI is the present name of its predecessors, the Zhōnghuá Shāngwù Zǒnghuì (1906–1915) and the Singapore Chinese Chamber of Commerce (SCCC 1915–1976/77).

a common tongue and inter-bāng rivalry (Tan 1969:833) tended to keep the bāngs apart. In order to avoid the situation where the proposed association was overwhelmed and dominated by a particular bāng, a bāng-structured SCCCI was created.

Although over the years various amendments to the rules and regulations of the SCCCI have been made, the bāng structure has basically remained unchanged. Figure 2.3 shows the present bāng structure of the SCCCI. Initially the members of the Chamber were divided into Fújian and Guǎngdōng bāngs; and the latter was further sub-divided into Teochew, Cantonese, Hainanese and Méixiàn (i.e., Jiāyìng) bāngs. It is clear, then, that in confronting the Fújiàn bāng the Guǎngdōng bāng was a united front, but within the latter, each bāng was independent. The Dàbù bāng was originally included in the Teochew bāng simply because the Dàbù district was part of the old Cháozhōu Prefecture. However, following a complaint lodged by the Dàbù bāng in 1907 that their interest was not represented in the SCCCI's management committee because of the dominance of Teochews, a seat was allocated by the Teochews to the Dàbù (Luō, ed. 1968:241). As the number of members registered under each bāng varied, it was stipulated that there should be at least one management committee member elected from each bāng. But the total number of management committee members from each bāng was allocated in proportion to the total number of the Chamber's membership registered under each bāng (Tan 1969), subject to a maximum number as stipulated. The entry of Sānjiāng bāng and the Trade Associations into the bāng structure of SCCCI took place in 1934 (Ngow 1977:17).

Prior to 1959, it was stipulated that the term of office for each management committee was one year. The posts of the president and vice-president for each term of office should not be held concurrently by persons from the same province; and each of these posts should not be held by persons from the same province for more than one term of office. Since 1959, amendments to the rules and regulations of the Chamber have been made to extend the term of office to two years, and the number of vice-presidents has also been increased to two, while the provincial background restriction of the president and vice-presidents has also been dropped.

Since its founding, a total of 42 Management Committees have been elected. As shown in Table 2.2, the Fújiàn bāng has dominated the SCCCI. The dominance has been particularly strong since 1960. The post of the president has been in the hands of the Fújiàn bāng, or to be more precise, in the hands of the Hokkien bāng. Within the Fújiàn bāng, there are Foochows, Henghuas, Hokchias and Hakkas (from Yǒngding district in southwest Fújiàn), but because they are a minority and economically weaker, they have to be satisfied by identifying themselves as Fújiànrén who are actually represented by the Hokkiens. Figure 2.4 shows the relationships

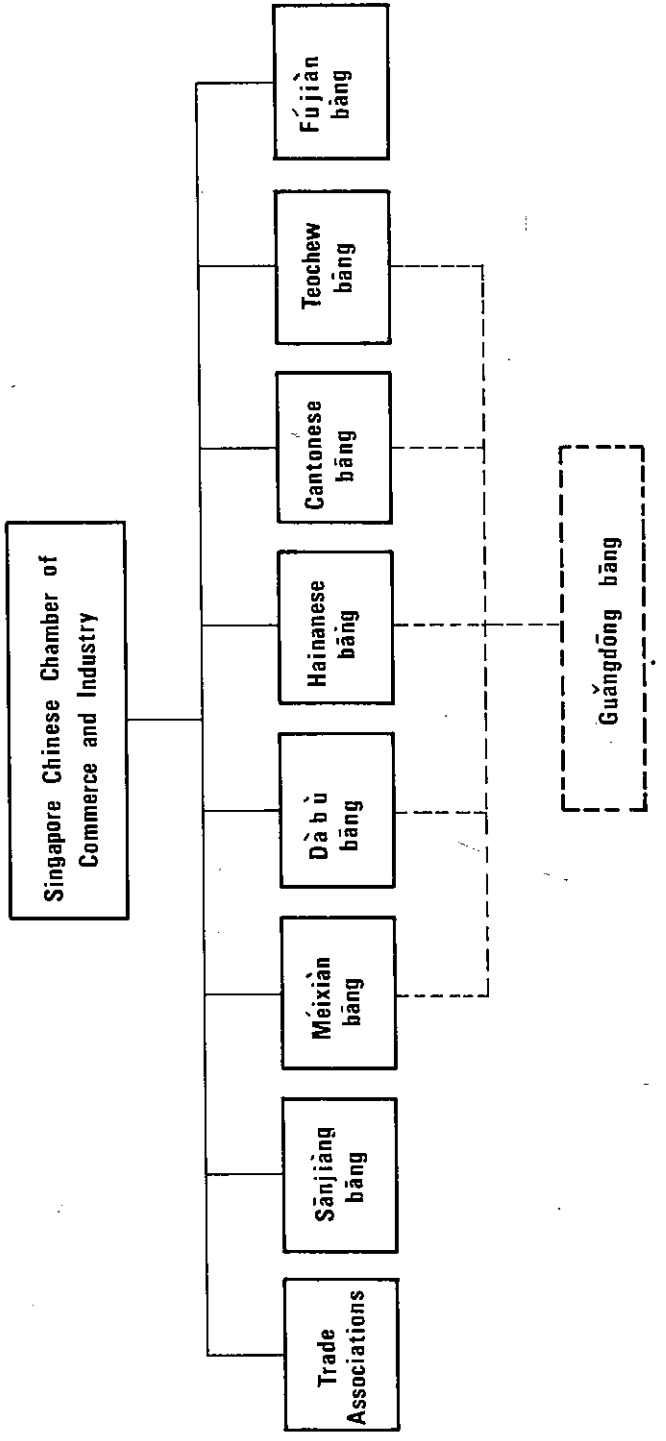

Fig. 2.3 Bāng Structure of the Singapore Chinese Chamber of Commerce and Industry, 1983

TABLE 2.2 DISTRIBUTION OF PRESIDENTS AND VICE-PRESIDENTS OF THE SINGAPORE CHINESE CHAMBER OF COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY BY BĀNG, 1906–1983

Bāng	President	Vice-president
Fújiàn	27	24
Teochew	12	26
Cantonese	2	2
Méixiàn	1	1
Sānjiāng	0	1
Total	39	48

Sources: Tan 1969:833–834; Singapore Chinese Chamber of Commerce and Industry, 1971–1983: *Directory of the Management Committee Members of the Chinese Chamber of Commerce and Industry.*

between the various dialect groups, their places of origin and bāng structure in the SCCCI in 1983. It will be noted that in the 1983 Management Committee, there were 20 members representing the trade associations. By contrast, there was only one such representative in 1958–59 (Luō, ed. 1968: 337). This shows the growing importance of the trade associations in the past two decades following the expansion of the national economy (see Chapter 7).

As noted earlier, the division of Chinese society along the lines of bāng took shape and was institutionalised during the nineteenth century. It is appropriate at this juncture to ask why the concept of bāng is particularly developed in Singapore. Factors leading to the formation of bāngs were many and complex, and in unravelling some of these factors it is useful to begin by tracing the background of the early settlers and their followers.

Soon after the arrival of the first Chinese junk, the traders and merchants from Malacca and other Southeast Asian trading ports in 1819 were followed by their kin, friends and fellow villagers from China. These early migrants were heterogeneous, comprising mainly peasants, artisans, some traders, the unemployed, casual workers, debtors, political fugitives, and the bad elements such as hooligans, drug addicts and members of secret societies, and their dependents. Among the peasants the majority were illiterate and

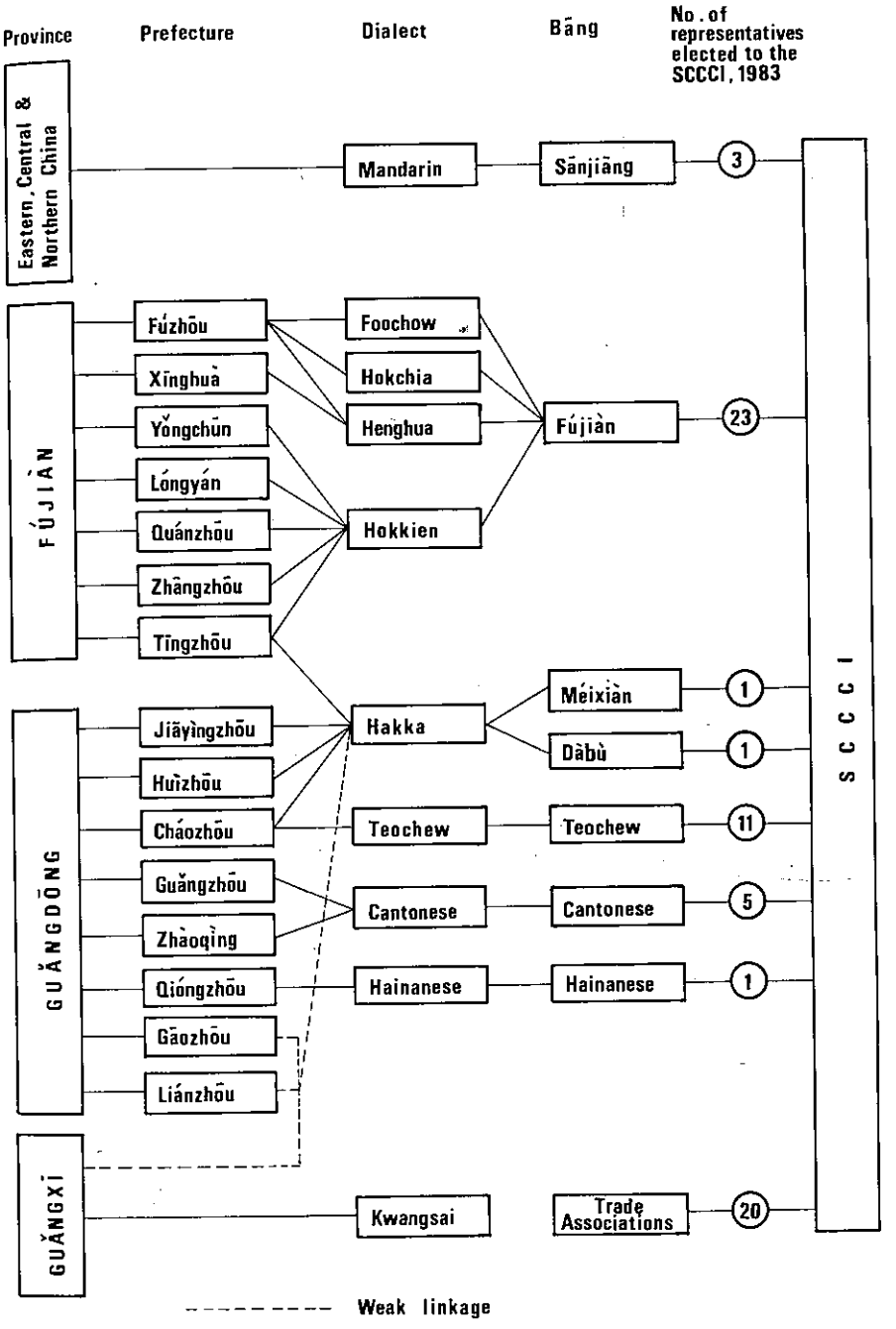

Fig. 2.4 Relationships between Dialect Groups and Bāng Structure in the Singapore Chinese Chamber of Commerce and Industry, 1983

uprooted because of poverty resulting from overpopulation, wars, feuds and natural disasters (Chen 1923:5–10).

Prior to their migration to Singapore, the migrants in Fújiàn and Gǔangdōng were largely living in self-contained subsistence villages where capitalism was still at its infancy. Crops were grown and handicrafts were produced mainly for self-consumption. Any little surplus was exchanged at periodic fairs (see also Skinner 1964). Most of the emigrant villages were homogeneous linguistically and were populated by one or a few related clans (see 1976:205; Freedman 1958). Even where there were different dialect groups and clans in the same village, territorially they were segregated and little interaction occurred between them. Strong ancestor cult and kin ties gave rise to clannish rule which was controlled by the gentry and strongest clan (Ng 1972; Liang 1971). The rural gentry were the "landlords of landlords, a privileged class" (Liang 1971). The control of ancestral hall (religious and clannish) and its communal land and properties (economic) coupled with the alignment with the government officials (political) formed the power base of gentry rule in the villages. Although the number of the gentry was insignificant in early migration, the institutions, customs and behaviour that prevailed in the villages were, nevertheless, carried over and transplanted by the rural migrants in Singapore.

Faced with a new environment in which different dialects prevailed and constituted a formidable communication barrier, the early migrants tended to group together on the basis of lineage, clan, dialect spoken, home village, district, prefecture, province and occupation. In Singapore, this tendency towards territorial concentration was facilitated by Raffles' plan to segregate the different groups (Braddell 1854). Dialect feuds and quarrels and different customs and ways of life seemed to be some of the considerations that prompted Raffles to segregate them. In his instructions to a Committee appointed by him in 1822, Raffles noted:

> In establishing the Chinese campong [kampong] on a proper footing, it will be necessary to advert to the provincial and other distinctions among this peculiar people. It is well known that the people of one province are more quarrelsome than another, and that continued disputes and disturbances take place between people of different provinces; it will also be necessary to distinguish between the fixed residents and the traders who only resort to the port for a time . . . . The concentration of the different descriptions of artificers, such as blacksmiths, carpenters, etc. in particular quarters should also be attended to.

It is not clear whether the Raffles' Committee of 1822 did work out a plan for dialect concentration in the city area. But judging from the subsequent concentration of the Hokkiens centred on the Telok Ayer Street in the Old Chinatown, it largely conforms to the plan as envisaged by Raffles. By

contrast, the Cantonese are concentrated in the Kreta Ayer area. From what the Cantonese informants in the area say, their concentration there was due to two reasons. First, among the early Cantonese migrants most of them were artisans and there was no need for locations near the waterfront which were set aside for commercial use. Second, the Cantonese preferred elevated areas inland to the then swampy waterfront. The Teochews' occupation of both the banks of the middle reach of the Singapore River was the result of their occupations. Up to the first decade of this century, the Teochews on the right bank of the River, so it is claimed, had virtual control of trades in sundry goods and textiles, while on the left bank they had a dominant share in gambier, pepper and other tropical produce (Phua 1950:41). Fort Canning Hill which is only a stone's throw from the left bank was an important base for Teochew gambier planting in the early decades. In addition, the Teochews were active in the boat trade dealing with Siam, Hong Kong, Shàntóu, Vietnam and West Borneo (Hodder 1953:34).

It seemed that once an initial colony of a dialect group was formed, the continued influx of fellow dialect migrants to the area tended to consolidate the trend of concentration. Within each concentration there existed a strong xenophobia which lasted until about the outbreak of the Second World War.

Until the formation of the Chinese Protectorate in 1877, renamed the Chinese Secretariat in 1934, (Yong 1977a:177) and later the establishment of the Chinese Advisory Board in 1889, the Chinese were largely left to their own devices. A policy of divide and indirect rule was followed. Although founded first as a trading port in 1819, it was not until 1824 that Singapore was ceded in perpetuity to the East India Company by the Sultan of Johore. By then the number of Chinese had already increased to 3,317 (Saw 1970:57). It was towards the provision of shelter, food, clothing, jobs, and other needs such as places for religious and ancestor worship, cemeteries, social gathering, law and order that had led to the mushrooming of various forms of Chinese associations. As such, the basis upon which a dialect group formed its colony also acted as the principle for forming their associations.

In his instructions to the Committee of 1822, Raffles divided the Chinese into three different classes: merchant, artisan and cultivator (Braddell 1854:102). The merchants were the "respectable" and privileged class. Raffles further advised that "the Chinese population in a great measure [be placed] under the immediate control of their chiefs". These instructions, in retrospect, appeared to be conducive to the formation of bāngs. Indeed, as the various dialect groups settled in different quarters, the provision of social, religious and economic services and political control within each dialect group could only be met by those who were economically strong and

public-spirited. This laid the conditions for the emergence of leading merchants as dialect leaders who could through the formation of associations cater for the needs of their fellow dialect members.

Insofar as the initiation and crystallization of bāngs were concerned, the character and the "openness" of the associations that first emerged were of crucial importance. It is the author's contention that it was the establishment of one or more xenophobic and exclusive associations that eventually led to their keen competition and to the crystallization of bāngs.

Development of Dialect Associations

Among the early associations that had shown a strong xenophobic character, Héngshāntíng was perhaps the most important. Héngshāntíng was, and still is, a temple situated on a cemetery of the same name in Tiong Bahru. The cemetery had already been in existence for some years before the founding of the temple in c. 1828. Judging from the stone inscriptions erected in 1836 (Chen and Tan 1972:225), the cemetery was initially intended for the Hokkiens from the Zhāngzhōu and Quánzhōu Prefectures. A calculation of the funds raised for the building of the temple as recorded in the stone inscriptions erected in 1830 shows that no less than 5,336 Spanish dollars was collected, a large sum at that time for such a project and about six times that of the funds raised by the Hakkas and Cantonese for the Lùyètíng cemetery established in 1838. This indicates that, by the second half of the 1820s, the Zhāngzhōu and Quánzhōu Hokkiens had already emerged as the most wealthy and influential merchant class among the Chinese. Further, the stone inscriptions also show that the Hokkiens as a group had worked out sets of rules and regulations to govern the group.

The Héngshāntíng was governed by a ten-man management committee headed by Xuē Fújì (Si Hoo Keh), a Malacca-born Hokkien. Apart from providing a place for religious and ancestor worship, the temple also served as a venue for "serious gatherings and meetings" (Tan 1972:8). It was, in addition, a Hokkien charity institution. The proceeds of the temple were mainly derived from three sources. First, annual taxes were levied on local junks and those owned by the Zhāngzhōu and Quánzhōu Hokkiens arriving in Singapore from China, Siam, Vietnam and other places. Secondly, voluntary donations were received from the passengers and crews of the above junks. Thirdly, there were contributions collected by the monk of the temple who approached prospective donors in person twice a month (Chen and Tan 1972:225). The funds collected were spent on welfare services for the Hokkiens.

By 1839, the Hokkiens had started to build another huge temple, the Thian Hok Keng, in Telok Ayer Street. It was built on a site where there was already a make-shift temple housing the "Goddess of the Sea" (Zhāng

1975:49) who was widely revered and prayed to by southern Chinese seafarers as a protector. The Thian Hok Keng temple was completed in 1842. Records show that a total of over 31,400 Spanish dollars for the building was collected with Tan Tock Seng and Xuè Fújì heading the list of contributors. Tan Tock Seng, a Malacca-born Hokkien, donated 3,074.76 dollars while Xuè contributed 2,400 dollars (Chen and Tan 1972:58). With its completion, the Thian Hok Keng replaced the Héngshāntíng to become the headquarters of the Hokkiens whose leadership by then had already been passed from Xuè to Tan. Tan remained the leader of the Hokkiens until his death in 1850 when he was succeeded by his son Tan Kim Ching. In c. 1860 the Hokkien Huay Kuan, the main association of the Fújiàn people was established and Tan Kim Ching became its first president, a post which he held until he passed away in 1892 (Lín 1975:17). It is said that, prior to 1860, all marriages of the Hokkiens had to be registered with the Hokkien Huay Kuan which was then located in the Thian Hok Keng. All marriage certificates issued by the Hokkien Huay Kuan were sealed by Tan Kim Ching (Ngow 1975, Vol. I:58).

It is clear, then, that by the 1850s, the Hokkiens had been consolidated under a strong leadership. The establishment of the Hokkien Huay Kuan indicates the consolidation of the Fújiàn people. This paved the way for the later alignment of the Foochows, Henghuas and Hokchias with the Hokkiens under the banner of Hokkien Huay Kuan. Nevertheless, the Hakkas from the Yǒngdìng district of Tīngzhōu Prefecture in southwest Fújiàn chose to join the Hakkas of Dàbù and Fēngshùn to form the Fong-Yung-Thai power league.

Compared with the Hokkiens, the Teochews were not only numerically smaller, but also economically weaker. The Teochews' economic power was primarily based on the planting of gambier and pepper which, after 1850, was shifted to Johore. Such a dispersed agricultural base appears to have weakened the Teochews' cohesiveness. The Wak Hai Cheng Bio, a make-shift temple founded in c. 1820 in Philip Street and housing the "Goddess of the Sea", is known to be the first Teochew association (Phua 1950:351). Proceeds of the Bio were managed by a Ban See Soon Kongsi of which the early history remains obscure although it was the first Teochew charity association. By c. 1830 the Ngee Ann Kongsi was already in operation under the leadership of Seah U Chin, but it was not formally established until 1845 (Phua 1969:205). Right from the beginning, the Hakkas from Dàbù and Fēngshùn seemed to have been excluded from the management of the Ngee Ann Kongsi. Apparently this must have led the Dàbù and Fēngshùn Hakkas to form their own associations.

The objectives of the early Ngee Ann Kongsi were to manage cemeteries and temples for the Teochews. It is not clear how the management of the Wak Hai Cheng Bio was passed over from the Ban See Soon Kongsi to the

Ngee Ann Kongsi but, after the takeover, the Bio had undergone several renovations and extensions between 1852 and 1896, during which it emerged as one of the largest temples in Singapore, covering an area rivalling that of the Hokkiens' Thian Hok Keng (Phua 1950:350–351). Though established by the Teochews, the Bio was open to all dialect groups from Guǎngdōng. In the Bio there are tablets donated by the Cantonese, Hakkas and Hainanese during the period 1892 to 1899, a phenomenon which was absent at Thian Hok Keng (Lín 1975:28). All this shows that relationships between the various groups from Guǎngdōng were cordial as compared to their relationship with the Hokkiens.

Although established as a Teochew institution, the management of the Ngee Ann Kongsi, from c. 1830 to 1929, was in fact under the firm control of the Seah family which never published statements of accounts on the Kongsi (Phua 1950:331). This led to the birth of the Teo Chew Poit Ip Huay Kuan in 1929 which laid claim to the management of the Teochew properties then managed by the Ngee Ann Kongsi. It was through the arbitration of the Chinese Secretariat that an agreement was reached whereby the Ngee Ann Kongsi was reorganised to be the charity institution of the Teo Chew Poit Ip Huay Kuan.

Within the Cantonese and Hakka dialect groups, several associations were formed at the district and prefecture levels during the period c. 1819–c. 1900. As shown in Table 2.3, seven district associations were established by the Cantonese from the Guǎngzhōu Prefecture and until today there has been no association at the prefecture level to unite the Cantonese from the Guǎngzhōu Prefecture. By contrast, the Cantonese from the Zhàoqìng Prefecture were united under the Siu Heng Wui Kun. The large number of Cantonese associations formed in the nineteenth century at the district level indicates the prevalence of "small-group consciousness" among the Cantonese during the period.

The Hakkas, like the Cantonese, were split on account of territoriality. The Hakkas from the Jiāyìngzhōu Prefecture organised themselves as a group. So did the Hakkas from the Huìzhōu Prefecture. Being excluded by the Teochews and the two Hakka associations mentioned earlier, the Hakkas from the Dàbù (i.e., Cháyáng) and Fēngshùn districts were forced to form their own respective associations. However, lack of a resource base resulted in co-operation between the Cantonese and Hakkas to provide cemeteries and temples for the two dialect groups. Furthermore, the establishment of a temple in the nineteenth century also guaranteed an important resource base for raising funds needed for welfare services.

The strong position of the Hokkiens in the early decades seems to have prompted the dialect groups from Guǎngdōng to form a united front. In c. 1824 the Guǎngzhōu and Zhaòqìng Cantonese joined hands with the

TABLE 2.3 THE CANTONESE AND HAKKA ASSOCIATIONS BY YEAR AND LEVEL OF ESTABLISHMENT, c. 1819–c. 1900

Name of Association	Year	Level*	Original Prefecture
CANTONESE			
1. Ning Yeung Wui Kuan, Singapore	1822	D	Guǎngzhōu
2. Chung Shan Wui Kun	1838	D	Guǎngzhōu
3. Nam Sun Wui Kun	1839	D	Guǎngzhōu
4. Kong Chou Wui Koon	1843	D	Guǎngzhōu
5. Tung On Wui Kun	1876	D	Guǎngzhōu
6. Singapore Poon Yue Association	1879	D	Guǎngzhōu
7. Siu Heng Wui Kun	1879	P	Zhàoqìng
8. Sam Sui Wui Kun	1887	D	Guǎngzhōu
HAKKA			
1. Wui Chiu Fui Kun	1822	P	Huìzhōu
2. Ying Fo Fui Kun	1823	P	Jiāyìngzhōu
3. Char Yang Association, Singapore	1857	D	Chaózhōu
4. Foong Shoon Fui Kun	1873	D	Chaózhōu
5. Fong Yun Thai Association	1883	P	Chaózhōu and Tīngzhōu
CANTONESE AND HAKKA			
1. Singapore Kwong Wui Siew Peck San Theng	1890	P	Guangzhou Huìzhōu Zhàoqîng

Notes: *D = District
P = Prefecture

Sources: Ngow 1975, Vol. I;
Republic of Singapore, *Government Gazette*, Vol. XVIII, No. 45, June 25, 1976.

Huìzhōu Hakkas (collectively known as Kwong-Wui-Siew) to establish the Fuk Tak Ch'i (temple) in Telok Ayer Street. The Hakkas were split into two groups: the Jiāyīngzhōu and Fong-Yun-Thai (representing Fēngshùn, Yǒngdìng and Dàbù. Prior to 1838, the Jiāyingzhōu and Fong-Yun-Thai Hakkas had already established a cemetery at Ang Siang Hill (Li 1975:201). By c. 1844 they jointly set up the Fúdéci (commonly known as Tua Pekong Temple) in Palmer Road.

In 1838, the Kwong-Wui-Siew, Jīayìngzhōu, and Fong-Yun-Thai formed a grand united front to establish the Lǔyètíng cemetery in Tiong Bahru (Lín 1975:27). According to the stone inscriptions erected in 1840 to commemorate the founding of the joint cemetery, they had previously owned a joint cemetery (Chen and Tan 1972:231). A count of the donations collected for the Lǔyètíng cemetery as recorded in the inscriptions gives a total of 920.35 Spanish dollars, with the largest single donation of 35 Spanish dollars contributed by the Cantonese leader, Hooh Ah Kay. This shows that by the 1830s very few Cantonese and Hakkas were really rich as compared to the Hokkiens.

In 1854, when the Fuk Tak Ch'i of the Kwong-Wui-Siew was renovated, donations were received from the Jiāyìngzhōu and Fong-Yun-Thai Hakkas as well as from the Teochews (Chen and Tan 1972:71–84), indicating the emergence of the Guǎngdōng bāng. As a result, the renovated Fuk Tak Ch'i has since become the joint property of Kwong-Wui-Siew, Jiāyìngzhōu and Fong-Yun-Thai. The absence of Teochews on the 1854 management committee of the Fuk Tak Ch'i means that they only played a supporting role in the joint venture. On the other hand, apart from the strong position of the Hokkiens as mentioned earlier, the principle of a common territorial background (Guǎngdōng) was utilised as a basis for their cooperation.

Finally, there were the Hainanese, who set up their own association (The Singapore Kiung Chou Hwee Kuan) and temple (the Kheng Chiu Tin Hou Kong housing the "Goddess of the Sea") in 1857. The Hainanese specialization in domestic service; their areal concentration around Beach Road in New Chinatown; and the unintelligibility to other groups of their dialect seem to have isolated them from other dialect groups.

Needless to say, the various dialect associations provided the institutional base for the emergence of dialect "headmen". This, coupled with the small number of police, which numbered only eighteen in 1831 (Song 1923:29), helped maintain law and order in the early decades and strengthened the headmen's rule leading to the crystallization of bāngs. The headmen of each dialect group were *de facto* bāng leaders. In times of dialect clashes, such as the 1854 riots, "headmen of the different Hoeys" (i.e., associations) were called in "to use their influence in restoring peace" (Song 1923:88).

When the Chinese Advisory Board was set up in 1889 the appointment of the Board's members was based on bāngs. Though the number of members from each bāng varied from time to time, the bāng structure remained unchanged until 1942 (Yong 1977a:78–85). Appointment to the Board meant the official confirmation of bāng leadership. It is obvious that by the 1880s the bāng structure had been formally institutionalised. That the Singapore Chinese Chamber of Commerce and Industry should be organised along the lines of bāng in 1906 was merely a recognition and a further confirmation of the entrenched bāng power structure of Chinese society.

3
The Mosaic of Chinese Associations

The Emergence and Proliferation of Chinese Associations

During the colonial era, the Chinese in Singapore were largely left to their own devices. In a situation where Chinese society was divided along the lines of bāng, the need for social control, mediation, religious worship and welfare services was largely met by voluntary organisations within each bāng. Chinese voluntary organisations are of many types and each type assumes various names. However, for the purpose of this discussion, all the voluntary organisations will be known as associations.

Since the early days, many Chinese associations have survived, changed and developed, while an unknown, but believed to be a large number of associations have disappeared. As of 1 April 1976 there were 1,004 registered societies (*Government Gazette* Vol. XVIII, No. 45, June 25, 1976). In addition, there are many other Chinese associations which are either exempted from registration under the Societies Act or are under the jurisdiction of other government departments. These include, the most powerful financial provincial association — the Hokkien Huay Kuan, charity organisations (e.g., the Ngee Ann Kongsi), clubs (e.g., the Ee Hoe Hean Club), religious institutions, mutual benefit organisations, hospitals and school boards. The large number of these associations is in part a function of the bang-structured society.

As discussed in Chapter Two, once an association based on bāng was established, it tended to induce other bāngs to follow suit. As the population increased and society became more complex, new associations came into being to cater for the increasing needs of the people. The various types of associations reflect the ingenuity and capacity of the Chinese for organisations in order to ensure survival in a new land.

Broadly, the Chinese associations can be classified into six main types, namely, locality/dialect; clan/surname; trade/occupational; mutual help; recreational/cultural/athletic/alumni; and religious. Of these six types, the locality/dialect associations appear to be the most enduring and most closely concerned with bāng structure. Trade/occupational associations and temples established and controlled by people from a particular bāng formed the economic power base of that bāng. Indeed, locality/dialect, clan/surname and trade/occupational associations have long been considered as the three major types of Chinese traditional associations. However, in a strict sense,