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# Converging Cultures: Developments in Philanthropy, Singapore 1867-1919

Philanthropy in Asia: Working Paper No. 9



**Yu-lin Ooi**

*August 2019*

*acsep: knowledge for good*

# ACSEP

The Asia Centre for Social Entrepreneurship and Philanthropy (ACSEP) is an academic research centre at the National University of Singapore (NUS) Business School, staffed by an international multidisciplinary research team. Formally established in April 2011, the Centre has embraced a geographic focus spanning 34 nations and special administrative regions across Asia.

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Traditional giving such as a remittances and *gotong royong* practiced among the backbone of Singapore's prewar migrants are discussed in "Grassroots Giving, Identity, and Philanthropy, Singapore 1919- 1959."

Here she presents new research on how philanthropy evolved in Singapore in its first century under British rule.

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# Executive Summary

## Philanthropy in Asia Working Paper Series

This working paper is a part of the Philanthropy in Asia series of exploratory studies by ACSEP, making a first record of the development of philanthropy in Singapore from its founding in 1819 until 2019.

This particular work examines how philanthropy grew in the second 50 years after Singapore's founding, from 1867 to 1919. It follows Working Paper 8: Singapore's Earliest Philanthropists, 1819-1867, completing an exploration into philanthropy in the first century of Singapore's existence as a British colony.

## Research Aims

This study has two aims:

- The first is to present a record of philanthropists from 1867 to 1919 and their contributions as a cohort. This has been compiled through new research and the aggregation of accounts in secondary data. This record cuts across various race groups to present readers with an account of giving by all major philanthropists at that time in chronological order.
- The second aim is to use this record to identify how philanthropy in Singapore was affected as society and the colony moved into the age of industrialisation and modernisation. Here we consider the correlation between philanthropy and social development, using what contributions were made as a reflection of the changing face of local society and as a reflection of evolving personal convictions by those who gave.

## Historical Context

Singapore's crown colony years were a vibrant time of change and development for the little settlement.

The late 19<sup>th</sup> Century saw much in the way of modernisation and new intellectual discourse, all of which made their way through porous Singapore.

Singapore was growing into a cosmopolitan city, and the field of philanthropy expanded in tandem. A second generation of philanthropists was emerging who were different from their migrant parents in that they were born in the colony, educated, and exposed to English and a totally new social narrative of British imperial rule, its values, and its ideals.

This was the first generation to become acculturated – to varying degrees – and take on concepts from the West as part of themselves, including that of reason and reform. A small cohort of elite Asians became visible as new thought leaders with initiatives to improve life and introduce a civil society ideal to Singapore.

This was also a time of tension when colonialism was most racially divisive and philanthropic money was sometimes derived from vice. Philanthropy was evolving along with society. Contributions now ranged from supporting traditional causes to supporting new causes that would improve the welfare of society and the reform of the position of Asian women.

## Key Findings

### 1. Philanthropists born in Singapore dominated the scene

The most obvious finding is that of the 38 philanthropists recorded, 13 were local-born. While we cannot attribute motive to their contributions, we can confirm that not a few of these new philanthropists considered themselves “the King's Chinese”. What they gave to attested to a plurality of identity – showing a sense of belonging to Singapore, the Empire and the Crown, as well as to traditional Asian cultures. This seems to imply growing vested interest in Singapore as “home” and giving to provide the next generation with a better chance at life in the colony.

## **2. Family philanthropy emerges**

Even though Singapore had only been established for fifty years, there was already a trend emerging of sons and daughters carrying on the philanthropy of their fathers or grandparents. There are three findings of particular note in this area:

- Firstly, children carrying on the work of their parents hailed from across the race groups and included Chinese, Arab/Bugis and Jewish families of note.
- Secondly, while it was in the traditions of Islam and Judaism to have a deeply embedded world view of family benevolence, among the Chinese migrants in Singapore, family giving was now seen as beginning - a new thing altogether, as traditional Chinese culture left giving to the gentry and considered merchants of low estate. In Singapore however, the British recognised all benefactors, encouraging the rise of family philanthropy among successful men of all trades.
- Thirdly, we observed very modern thinking with families now entrusting money to daughters, as in the examples of Wong Ah Fook, Manasseh Meyer and Tan Keong Saik, who gave their daughters both education and funds that empowered them to become Singapore's first Asian women philanthropists to be seen in public.

## **3. Philanthropy was often collaborative and initiated by one cohort in society**

A key finding for this era is that philanthropists in this cohort frequently worked together to realise their aspirations. The greatest focus of such collaborations was in education – both the building of schools and the management, funding, and running of them afterwards.

Behind these collaborations was a particular group who must have had the same aspirations for Singapore and who found commonality and unity in working together. It was a small group, elite and exclusive, and was perhaps a result of that particular time and place – a small community of English-educated peers

separated from most others by social position and separated from the colonial community by racial divide.

## **4. Acculturation and new intellectual discourse now informed giving, and new causes reflected these changes**

This period in Singapore's history epitomised the convergence of cultures in the title of this paper. A new generation of Asian settlers was now fully exposed to "being British" when Britain was at the height of its imperial powers and colonial influence.

Those who lived through this particular period found themselves brought up in traditional Asian cultures, schooled in English, and ruled by a society with completely different values. It was also a time of modernity and new communications.

Philanthropy reflected these tensions and giving now spanned a range of causes beyond the traditional focuses of the first generations to include the modern, alongside the traditional.

## **5. Asian women philanthropists made their first appearance**

As we noted in the emergence of family philanthropy, the 20<sup>th</sup> Century ushered in participation in philanthropy by Asian women previously kept isolated until marriage. The Muslim Bugis and Arab families already enabled women to give, in Singapore Hajjah Fatimah and her daughter led the way. Then there was Mozelle Nissim, who helped the local poor Jews, and Mrs Lee Choon Guan, first among many other society wives who were now coming to prominence.

## **6. Giving was now expressed through multiple mechanisms**

This era also saw the expression of philanthropy in new forms. Direct donation and the actual funding to build a place were still major ways of giving, but other forms had become popular as well. They included:

- Collective giving
- Endowments and bequests, using Muslim and common law instruments

- Trust funds (these were used by the Arab community to ensure perpetual endowments could be made under common law)
- Family funds
- Giving by subscription
- Fundraising through galas, balls, concerts and entertainments
- Fundraising using the “Charity Bazaar” method, and
- Land endowments.

## **Conclusion**

The crown colony era was a richly formative time for philanthropy in Singapore. During this period, there was a shift in mindset from that of transience, to that of being invested in building Singapore into a home, with developing good social infrastructure being the focus of philanthropy.

The landscape of giving was evolving as a next generation of local-born men stepped up with new ideals and ideas for the reform of local society. These men had put down roots in Singapore and their work built superstructure upon the foundations of community in which their parents had invested and created.

Many incremental changes were introduced to society; active participation, decision-making, cooperation, and the initiation and realisation of large dreams that would mould Singapore society into one with syncretised values.

Traditional values were combined with Western values in a way that impacted the world views of many in the next generation, including those who would lead Singapore through nationhood.



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# 1. Introduction

## Philanthropy in Asia Working Paper Series

This paper is a part of ACSEP's Philanthropy in Asia Working Paper Series, a set of exploratory studies intended to provide initial, foundational research on the journey of philanthropy in Singapore as part of the nation's social history over 200 years.

While much economic growth has been achieved at speed, documentation of philanthropy has fallen behind given Singapore's complex migrant narrative. A few family histories have emerged, recording the legacies of some early Asian philanthropists, but many who gave have since been forgotten and those who had little income left few records. Most available accounts were the work of observers and historians.

These studies therefore are a first attempt to redress that gap in information on philanthropy in Singapore by gathering new data and exploring extant documents to construct a picture of how philanthropy evolved.

## Scope of Research and Period of Study

This particular paper looks at key developments in philanthropy in the second 50 years of Singapore's existence as a British colony. The period of study is from 1 April 1867 when Singapore attained crown colony status until 1919 or the end of World War I.

This closes an examination of the journey of philanthropy in Singapore during the nation's first century under British rule; the first 50 years having been covered in Working Paper 8 titled Singapore's Earliest Philanthropists, 1819-1867. That study documented the work of the very first philanthropists in Singapore, concluding that their greatest contribution was to facilitate community creation and growth which were contingent on contributions towards building places of worship where people gathered, direct donations, and developing basic social organisations.

In this second paper we ask how philanthropy was impacted as the world entered a new era of modernity whilst Britain was at the height of its imperial powers.

## Research Aims

This paper has two main goals:

- The first is to present a record of philanthropists from 1867 to 1919 and their contributions as a cohort. This has been compiled through new research and the aggregation of accounts in secondary data. This record cuts across the various race groups to present readers with an account of giving in chronological order. This approach presents contributors not as isolated groups but as members of Singapore society who responded to needs at the time or initiated solutions to existing problems.
- The second goal is to use this record to identify key developments in philanthropy following the initial contributions of the earliest philanthropists as presented in Working Paper 8. A new generation born in Singapore was now active. Our paper traces how their contributions and actions were impacted by modernity, acculturation and newly available education. By tracking their involvement in various causes, we attempt to correlate the growth of philanthropy with social development during this vibrant period in Singapore history.

## Key Research Questions

Our main research question is what were the main developments in philanthropy as Singapore moved into its new phase as a crown colony and became a centre of modern communication?

Supporting questions include (i) how did the second generation contribute compared to their parents, (ii) was their kind of giving similar to that of the first generation, and (iii) if not, where and why did changes occur?

## **Methodology**

Research was done using the historical method where evidence was gathered from both primary and secondary sources to create a fact-based chronology for examination.

## 2. Philanthropy in the Crown Colony of Singapore

### 2.1 Background to this Paper

In this exploratory working paper we document how philanthropy developed in Singapore during the second 50 years after its founding, from 1 April 1867 when it became a crown colony under Britain's administration, to 1919 which closed a century of rule under the British.

#### The Foundational Work of Singapore's Early Philanthropists

In a previous account of the first 50 years of Singapore's existence we discovered the colony enjoyed a vibrant philanthropic scene almost from its founding in 1819. This was uncharacteristic of most pioneer settlements, but Singapore's early population already included men of wealth. Merchants and traders of standing from all races came eagerly to the new port, not just due to its unique tax-free status, but also at the behest of key East India Company men, Sir Thomas Stamford Raffles and Major-General William Farquhar.<sup>1</sup>

These first migrants were men of initiative and ambition. Upon adding Singapore to their network of bases or deciding to settle here, they began to build places of worship for themselves and their fellow countrymen. These were considered a primary need for most travelers at that time. With these established as gathering places, we have suggested in hindsight that these first philanthropists contingently created the foundations of local society in Singapore.

Over the next decades, starting in these common gathering places, these same men and others began early local associations connecting migrants as well as myriad other networks based on lineage, trade, occupation, religion, dialect and ethnicity. Thus early migrants created local community and

strengthened ties with their homelands, funneling money, trade and labour to and from Singapore. Early philanthropists also bought burial grounds for their people, giving peace of mind to those who might die away from home.

Therefore by the time Singapore became a crown colony in 1867, the basic needs of emerging ethnic groups – belonging, security and community among strangers in an alien land – had been established.

Philanthropy created de facto leaders in the emerging local society. Wealth was the new arbiter of power, as was common in most port cities, and benefactors were looked up to for their success and initiative.

#### Becoming a Crown Colony

Colonial policy was deliberately non-interventionist and laissez-faire, with administration by the East India Company weak and underfunded despite the dazzling success of Singapore.

In the early years the newly minted local leaders of all races came naturally together to discuss the port and how to manage the unregulated settlement that was full of promise, but seething with migrants and rife with violence. Economic opportunity was the driver behind migration and the increasingly unsatisfactory governance by the East India Company had begun to be a hindrance.

The journey to oversight by Whitehall itself was protracted and acrimonious with endless petitions to London by a hardy core of Singapore-based merchants. The disastrous Sepoy Mutiny in India in 1857 finally extinguished the East India Company in 1858, but it took a decade more before the War Office decided Singapore was of interest to the Empire and forced a bill through to make it so.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> For an account of the first 50 years of philanthropy in Singapore, see Ooi. 2019. Singapore's earliest philanthropists, 1819-1867, ACSEP Philanthropy in Asia Working Paper No. 6.

<sup>2</sup> For a detailed account of the transfer to Crown Colony, see Turnbull, C.M. 1977, pp. 69-77.

Thus it was that on 1 April 1867, Singapore was made a crown colony directly under the Colonial Office in London and governed as part of the Straits Settlements that included Malacca and Penang.

## 2.2 New Influences and the Development of Singapore Society

The crown colony era ushered in a period of relatively peaceful development and modernisation in Singapore. Constitutional change coincided with an influx of new social, technological and intellectual influences brought on by the Industrial Age and the Age of Reason that were now easily communicated to Singapore by the latest news via steamship and submarine telegraph. Singapore society was affected to varying degrees. In this exploratory paper we can only summarise how late 19<sup>th</sup> Century and modern influences flowed through all levels of society and surmise how the new cohort of philanthropists were affected by them.

It would be convenient if one could say that the first generation of philanthropists were neatly replaced

by their sons in these second 50 years, but of course lives overlapped and new men who would contribute to society were always arriving. Thus change in thought and values were staggered, with each person obviously affected to different degrees by migration, each other, living in the colony, and modernity itself.

What we can confirm is that the older migrants in this second cohort of givers leaned more to the traditional, while the younger set were more “modern” and acculturated, a fact reflected later in the paper when we examine the causes that people gave to. It was during this time that a sense of ownership of Singapore began to appear in the nature of philanthropic contributions. While most of the population, made up of low-wage workers and incoming migrants, surged obliviously through Singapore, a growing elite of wealthy, educated men were emerging whose contributions confirmed a sense of belonging to both the British Empire and the colony of Singapore. Of the many new influences that now filtered into the colony, we highlight three in particular that affected the journey of philanthropy in late 19<sup>th</sup> Century Singapore.



Steamship loading goods, Singapore Harbour, c.1900  
Courtesy of the Singapore National Archives

## 2.2.1 Constitutional Change

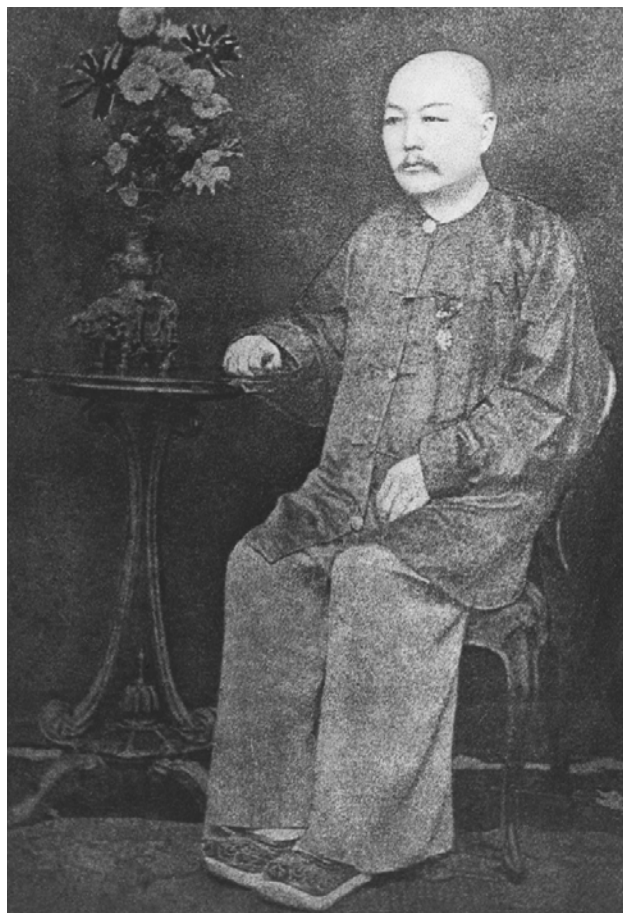
Firstly, the new constitution of the crown colony brought local Asian leaders to prominence and placed some in a position to become a force for change in society.

Philanthropists who had earned the place of de facto leaders in their own communities as well as other successful local men could now, under colonial constitution, enter the circle of informal advisors to the Governor, providing guiding counsel, and eventually gaining formal recognition.

The new constitution dictated that a Crown Governor must now be aided – not just by an executive council, but also a legislative council. It

was in the latter that local Asians became a fixture as non-official members.<sup>3</sup> The Governor had to pay attention to the legislative council on local matters, tax and expenditure. As council debates were public and published, they brought into the public eye matters of the running of Singapore as well as the new Asian legislative councilors. The involvement of resident Asians would increase over the next 50 years until the number of non-officials in the legislative council matched that of its officials in 1924. That period would also see local leaders increasingly included in new local boards or placed in advisory positions.

When Hoo Ah Kay (“Whampoa”)<sup>4</sup> was appointed the first non-Asian member in 1869, it set the tone for Asians leaders to become that force for change.



Hoo Ah Kay “Whampoa” c.1850  
Courtesy of the Singapore National Archives

<sup>3</sup> Singapore as part of the Straits Settlements was granted a normal colonial constitution by Letters Patent dated 4 February 1867 (Singapore Academy of Law, 2019). The Governor was advised by an executive council and a legislative council comprising the Chief Justice, members of the executive council, and four non-official members, most of whom were local Asian leaders. (Turnbull, 1977, p. 79.)

<sup>4</sup> Hoo Ah Kay was a popular and respected Cantonese merchant whose nickname of “Whampoa” was derived from his company name, “Whampoa & Sons.”

From the start, the movements of local Asians – published in various broadsheets including the Straits Times – would garner much attention among the tiny population of 97,000 souls in 1870s Singapore.<sup>5</sup> Their actions – founding a school or raising funds for a new cause – began to bring publicity to the idea that one should give to charity. The notion of public giving and charitable responsibility thus slowly seeped into the consciousness of Singapore society, a concept that flowed from the 19<sup>th</sup> Century British ethos of philanthropy.<sup>6</sup>

Many in the cohort of philanthropists listed in the table in Chapter 4 were made Justices of the Peace, Municipal Commissioners,<sup>7</sup> or board members of institutions for the welfare of the people such as the new Po Leung Kuk, a home for rescued prostitutes and slave girls established in 1870,<sup>8</sup> or the fledgling Welfare Board. Another key body of influence was that of the Chinese Advisory Board, created in 1887 by Governor Sir Cecil Clementi Smith.

Many of the members of these various bodies were also active philanthropists and their names would appear repeatedly in a round robin of reports in the local newspapers, e.g., “Towkays” like Cheang Hong Lim, Tan Jiak Kim, Seah Liang Seah, Tan Keong Saik, Lim Nee Soon, Eu Tong Sen and Dr. Lim Boon Keng; Arab notables including Syed Abdulrahman Taha Alsagoff and Syed ali bin Ali Aljunied; and South Asians like Dr. Veerasamy Naidu and B. P. De Silva. It became familiar for these people to be reported as being guests at dinners with the Governor, hosting fundraisers, or attending the Queen’s, and later, King’s Birthday.

Whether philanthropy earned recognition or vice versa is debatable. Some historians have pointed out that prestige and power motivated many

Chinese in Singapore. We discuss this matter at the end of the paper, along with the ambivalence of money from vice being used to fund charitable works in Box 1.

## 2.2.2 Being British

### The Bane and Blessing of British Rule

Secondly, Singapore was now under a Britain at the height of its imperial powers. The British Empire spanned much of the globe and “being British” went hand in glove with what it meant to be a colony.

Being British was both a bane and a blessing. Until the advent of the steamship the aforesaid group of multiracial leaders had amicably managed Singapore, clubbing together across ethnic divides to shepherd the new port city forward. But the opening of the Suez Canal and the new steamship services, such as that started by Pacific and Orient Lines in 1845, brought a new breed of tourists and colonial wives to Singapore who were less tolerant and had entrenched ideas about society and position. Local society became divided. Accounts of life in Singapore with overtly racist comments became the norm. Some particularly unpleasant descriptions include that of tourist C. D. Mackellar who wrote of his stay at the Raffles Hotel.

“... if I want anything I pull the nearest passing bell-rope – I mean pigtail – and point at something ...<sup>9</sup>”

Lavish entertainments in high society still abounded, but the local Asians now withdrew into their own enclaves afterwards. A “racial league table” inevitably emerged and local Asians were no longer welcome unless their wealth overshadowed the colour bar.

<sup>5</sup> Saw, S. H. (1969, March). Population trends in Singapore, 1819–1967. *Journal of Southeast Asian History*, 10(1), p. 36. Retrieved May 7, 2014, from JSTOR.

<sup>6</sup> Halstead, 1983, p. 18. Halstead argues that there emerged in the late 19<sup>th</sup> century a strong sense of philanthropic duty that was peculiar to the British, an ideal they carried with them to the colonies where they, as the most civilised and enlightened people in the world, were obliged to “do their duty” to civilise the heathen.

<sup>7</sup> In 1887 a Municipal Ordinance was passed that brought the urban development of Singapore under a Municipal Commission whose elected members included many Asian leaders.

<sup>8</sup> The Po Leung Kuk or “Office to Protect Virtue” was established in 1870 to help prostitutes escape their trades.

<sup>9</sup> Frost & Balsingamchow, 2013, p. 135. Who describe the circumscribed life of the colonial tourist and the colour bar in awful detail.





Raffles Place, centre of commerce in Singapore, c 1910  
Courtesy of the Singapore National Archives

## The Advantages and Tensions of Acculturation

Enter the new jingoistic colonial administrator with his pith hat, determined that British responsibility was to civilise the heathen and even more

“... convinced of his racial superiority over the massed ‘natives’ and of their desperate need to be organised and set to rights.<sup>10</sup>”

Yet “being British” did in fact also bring the many Asian communities of Singapore a new world view based on western ideals garnered from the Age of Reason with its beliefs in liberty, progress and rational thinking. It gave Singapore a new language, the rule of common law, scientific education, and encouraged the growth of a civil society; all of which ran contrary to the ideals of existing Asian civilisations.

Early missions work had brought English language schools and Christianity to Singapore and forward-thinking men now had their sons educated in

English or established new schools and studied English themselves. Some went on to graduate as professionals from universities and came back to intimidate colonial society – the heathen having become uncomfortably “civilised.”

The impact of acculturation on philanthropy was significant. There was still great value placed on traditional causes, but a new strand to giving – social improvement supported by activism – now emerged evidenced in a focus on higher education, value placed on welfare, and a growing agitation to reform the trammels of traditional social concepts.

This was expressed while writing about how much opposition was faced on the opening of the Singapore Chinese Girls’ School by lawyer Song Ong Siang and Dr. Lim Boon Keng<sup>11</sup> who wrote in 1907 that

“No reasonable man with any modern ideas will dispute the great benefits of female education. It is only the narrow-minded man whose mind ... like the besotted officials

<sup>10</sup> Frost & Balsingamchow, 2013, p. 136.

<sup>11</sup> Song Ong Siang was educated at the University of Cambridge while Dr Lim Boon Keng studied at Edinburgh. They were formidable activists and the first Queen’s Scholars in Singapore.



A group of local men including Dr Lim Boon Keng (second from left, rear) and Tan Boo Liat (seated, centre) in *baju tutup* (local colonial dress) & western clothes, c.1900

Courtesy of the Singapore National Archives

in China who are forever against reform, that will say that female education will be derogatory to the welfare of women. Everybody will admit that it is a pleasure and a profit to ...associate with a man of good education; how much greater would be the pleasure and benefit to have a well educated mother ... the educated woman can attend to the duties of her household with intelligence, thus exercising an enlightening influence in the whole family ...<sup>12</sup>

This extract of the article written by Sir Song Ong Siang, shows both the intellectual form of the writer and the social complexities faced by the acculturated local-born Straits Chinese in colonial Singapore at the turn of the century. Written in English and fluently argued, Sir Song Ong Siang embodied the new man on the philanthropic scene – the professional and the activist.

## 2.2.3 Industrialisation and Modernisation

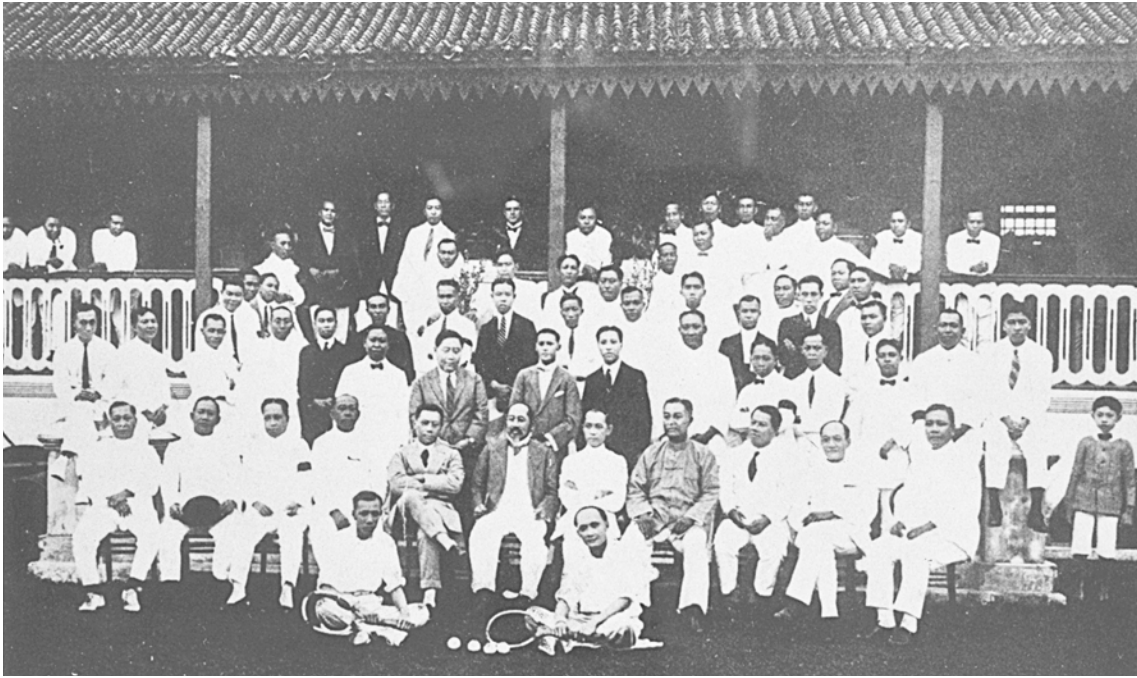
### Modern Ideas and the Start of the Club

Sir Song Ong Siang's words would be shared throughout Singapore through the medium of the printing press and in the many new clubs created after the fashion of local British recreational clubs.

The British could not do without their clubs, but firmly kept the locals out.<sup>13</sup> Undaunted, the locals then set up similar clubs for themselves. Some examples included the wonderfully named "Celestial Reasoning Society," a debating society started by the Straits Chinese in 1882 for the practice of English by rich gentlemen; the "Chinese Philomathic Society," established in 1896 for study on matters Chinese; the Straits Chinese British Association, which had some 800 members in 1900, to introduce social reform in the local Straits

<sup>12</sup> Extracted from Straits Chinese Magazine, 1907, that was published for 10 years by Sir Song Ong Siang and Dr. Lim Boon Keng championing the cause of social reform in local Chinese society. (Ooi, 1999, p. 10)

<sup>13</sup> It was anecdotally recounted that the Tanglin Club in the 1950s still had a sign that said, "No Dogs and Chinamen."



Group photograph of members of the Straits Chinese Association with Dr Lim Boon Keng (seated centre), Tan Boon Liat (seated third from left), Chan Sze Jin (seated fifth from left), and Seow Poh Leng (seated third from right). c.1900

Courtesy of the Singapore National Archives

Chinese community; and the Indian Association, started in 1923 for the "social, physical, intellectual, cultural and the general welfare of its members."<sup>14</sup> The Ceylon Club arising from the Lanka Club was founded by Ceylonese students in 1920.

Many new ideas that were coming down the wire of modern communications also brought new ideas to Singapore and gave the colony a huge economic boost, bringing market news and enabling banking and remittance transfers to be safe and speedy.

Singapore became the location of choice from which to disseminate information and led to her growth as a publishing centre. The Malay-Muslim community in particular circulated news from the colony. The first broadsheet, the *Jawi Peranakan*, was started in 1876 and was influential in intellectual circles of the Malay-Muslim community until its demise in 1895.

The most modernising influence would be the steamship, which connected Singapore to the rest

of the world, speeding information, cargo and travelers through the newly opened Suez Canal in just two weeks. As Singapore was now an essential coaling station in the sea lanes between East and West, there was a continual stream of travelers coming through the island, making it a lively place showcasing all that was new.

### New Economic Opportunities that Funded Philanthropy

Singapore's economy expanded to include all the services attendant with these modern developments. Banking, insurance, financial services and hotels, retail and entertainments sprang up along the new, improved city centre that had been pushed through in the last public works programme by convicts around Empress Place and Boat Quay.

In 1874 a further boost came with the opening of the new Federated Malay States (FMS), which firmly established Singapore as an entrepot.<sup>15</sup> The new

<sup>14</sup> The Indian Association, retrieved from <https://sg-ia.org/our-history/>

<sup>15</sup> The Federated Malay States comprised Selangor, Perak, Negeri Sembilan and Pahang, and were formed into the Malayan Union with the Straits Settlements until 1946. The FMS were administered by Residents rather than Governors.

hinterland brought tin and rubber to Singapore and new demand for both produce and labour. These opportunities made enormous amounts of wealth for both European and Asian entrepreneurs who now diversified into shipping, banking, and the downstream trade of products coming from the Federated Malay States.

Singapore was now a nexus of exchange for myriad services supporting the rich hinterlands around the island. One such service opportunity was the creation of the Straits Steamship Company that served the Malay Peninsular and included amongst its directors Tan Keong Saik, Lee Cheng Yan, and Tan Jiak Kim. The impact on philanthropy was obvious – many of the men in the table below gained immense wealth by moving smartly into the new economy.

### 2.3 Giving in “The Most Cosmopolitan City in Asia”

Philanthropy is a reflection of the social condition. In the case of Singapore, our data shows that contributions were indeed a mirror of the society that was emerging uncertainly and at different speeds under British rule.

Giving reflected the complex and varied nature of Singapore’s residents then - from those who firmly believed in traditional Asian culture to those who were acculturated and idealistic, straddling the old

cultures and the new colonial one. The very varied giving documented is perfectly understandable when one looks at the complex demographics of Singapore.

The population had never been homogenous and was entirely a construct of immigration. The residential profile was literally being reshaped every day as new migrants and different ethnicities stepped onto shore. Even the colonial administration came and went, along with entire sets of staff, sepoy, and camp followers. Diversity, even among the majority Chinese, was the order of the day. Every ethnic group was divided within itself.

Between 1871, when the population stood at 97,000, and 1881, the local population increased by 40 percent. By 1911, Singapore had 185,000 souls. Turnbull (1997) describes Singapore as the most cosmopolitan city in Asia with three quarters of the community being Chinese.

Between 1840 and 1900 more than two-and-a-half million Chinese left South China in search of work. Many would pass through Singapore. However there were also notable

“... sizeable minorities of Peninsular Malays, Sumatrans, Javanese, Bugis, Boyanese, Indians, Ceylonese, Arabs, Jews, Eurasians, and Europeans ... in 1911 men outnumbered women by eight to one.<sup>16</sup>”

**Table 1. Distribution of Population of Singapore by Race, 1867-1921**

Year	Chinese	Malays	Indians	Others	Total
1849	27,988	17,309	6,284	1,580	52,891
1871	54,572	26,141	10,313	3,790	94,816
1881	86,766	33,012	12,086	5,858	137,722
1891	121,906	35,956	16,009	7,727	181,602
1901	164,041	35,988	17,047	9,768	226,842
1911	219,577	41,806	27,755	14,183	303,321
1921	315,151	53,595	32,314	17,298	418,358

Source: Saw, Swee-Hock. (2012). *The population of Singapore*, Singapore: Institute of Southeast Asian Studies, p. 29.

<sup>16</sup> Frost & Balsingamchow, 2013, p. 97.

The vast majority of this growing community were transients and played little, if any part, in philanthropy that we can find. Many worked in rotating systems as casual labour or service providers. There were also many who served the colonial behemoth, coming from the Raj as salaried employees. Few in this community were able to give money to help others and had little interest in improving the welfare of Singapore and its residents.

Increasingly separated from these masses by a vast chasm of social and economic differences was a tiny cohort of those who had found success in Singapore – the new, elite community from which many of the late 19<sup>th</sup> Century philanthropists would come. Giving among them was as varied as their many ethnicities.

### **A New Generation of Local-born Residents**

Of interest to us are those who had put down roots in Singapore. First generations who had arrived before 1867 and made good sometimes chose to stay and make a home on the island (or often had multiple homes, and several families in different countries).

Such wealthy men who settled in Singapore were often also among Singapore's first philanthropists, and were recognised as the first de facto community leaders from across the various ethnic groups. The British included them as much-needed spokesmen and interpreters for the many enclaves now resident in Singapore.

Some of their children were now emerging as a second generation of philanthropists in the late 19<sup>th</sup> Century. They had the advantage of being grounded in the local community and were no longer emigres like their parents but considered Singapore to be their home. Of our documented philanthropists listed in Table 2 in Chapter 4, 13 were born in Singapore. It was now their homeland.

### **The South Asians**

There was no strong sense of community among the highly transient South Asians in Singapore as

the ancient religious and caste systems from home kept migrants apart. There was also an obvious divide between North and South Indians, with Sikhs, Muslims and Hindus keeping to their own mosques and temples, and remaining in their own enclaves. It was a strongly bachelor community, looking homeward where family and children lay.

As in the first cohort of South Asians, we find that those who became philanthropists would be the wealthy who acted as benefactors to the community around them. The early 20<sup>th</sup> Century saw the vital work of Dr. Veerasamy Naidu and B. P. de Silva, renowned Ceylonese jeweler to royalty, who started many charitable institutions.

### **The Malay-Muslims, the Arabs, Bugis and Malay Royalty**

Singapore became a congregation point for the Malay-Muslim community in the last quarter of the 19<sup>th</sup> Century. It was an ideal place to meet before going onward for pilgrimages. In 1901 there were 36,000 in the Malay-Muslim community with many coming from Peninsular Malaya, Riau, Sumatra, Java, Bawean and other islands. Few of these were recorded as being philanthropic.

However it was the Arabs and those of Bugis descent who were most active contributors to local society. They had strong trading and real estate connections in the region, had begun to intermarry locally, becoming part of the local Muslim elite.

At the turn of the century the Singapore Arabs were at the height of their influence in local society. The wealthiest families included the Aljunieds who had come at Raffles' behest, the Alsagoff family and the Alatas family who were dynamic in charity work well up to World War II. A particularly well-known figure of the times was Syed Abdulrahman Taha Alsagoff. These families started by building mosques, then endowed hospitals, started clinics, built schools and hosted many feasts to which all the local elite were welcome. It was even recorded that the Arabs brought Muslims together from all over Singapore for the first-ever Hari Raya celebration.<sup>17</sup>

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<sup>17</sup> "The Hari Raya function at the Arab Club" describes the first time in Singapore history that local Muslims of all nationalities in Singapore enjoyed the celebration of Hari Raya together, brought together by Syed Mohamed bin Omar Alsagoff, J. P. President of the Arab Club. Singapore Free Press and Mercantile Advertiser, p. 13. (1929, March 26).



ALKAFF GARDENS, SINGAPORE

The Japanese-styled Alkaff Gardens, a pleasure garden built for the public, c. 1929  
Courtesy of the Singapore National Archives

They were also generous in creating perpetual endowments for the welfare of society after their deaths, using an Islamic instrument called a wakaf. Women, called wakifs, also endowed local society well before other Asian women could, enabled by the matriarchal structures of some ethnic groups where women owned land and had power.

### The Chinese and the Straits Chinese

Migrants and workers made up the largest group of Chinese in the local population, again often in transit in Singapore or eking out a living in dreadful conditions as the large unseen labour force that drove the port and services surrounding it. There is no data yet on giving among these transients, although this did not mean they did not help each other within their own communities. However no large philanthropic gestures are recorded from them at this point.

Pertinent to our study were those who were in that separate and elite cohort of established migrants with growing local power.

These comprised two discernibly separate groups of Chinese. The first were the China-born whose loyalty lay towards things Chinese and who gave to the building of temples, associations, Chinese schools, and traditional medical care and who would later give great sums to war relief in China as it went through many upheavals. They could also be depended on to fund traditionally valued causes in Singapore such as infrastructure and education.

The second were a new community altogether – the local-born second generation of *both* Chinese and Straits Chinese parentage or those who had married into the group. These saw the colony as home but their loyalties were often mixed - divided between the Crown, and their own ethnic groups. Some were still deeply associated with China, others were increasingly syncretized and acculturated, all to varying degrees in this still unformed social period. They were familiar with British ways, were scholars from the new mission schools, spoke English, and counted amongst themselves some professionals – doctors and lawyers.

This was an active group with multiple interests and appeared to have moved in a small, close-knit community, often working together to fund causes so they might succeed.

Most were prominent members of the local colonial circle, and were featured often in news reports as colonial advisors, board members, fundraisers as well as philanthropists – together and or on their own. They included Tan Jiak Kim, Seah Liang Seah, Tan Keong Saik, Dr. Lim Boon Keng, Lim Nee Soon, Lee Choon Guan, and Eu Tong Sen.

**Note:** While Sir Song Ong Siang worked as a lawyer and actually funded few events, his leadership often activated the others in the group to fund the causes he initiated. As such we include him among our group of persons of note in the philanthropic circle of the day, but more in the position of an activist. In this way he and Dr. Lim Boon Keng started and funded the Singapore Chinese Girls' School, and were able to run the reform-minded Straits Chinese Magazine and the Straits Chinese British Association, which championed charitable causes and educated the group on civil society.

## 3. The “Invisible Hand” of Philanthropy<sup>18</sup>

### 3.1 Social Problems in the Emerging Population

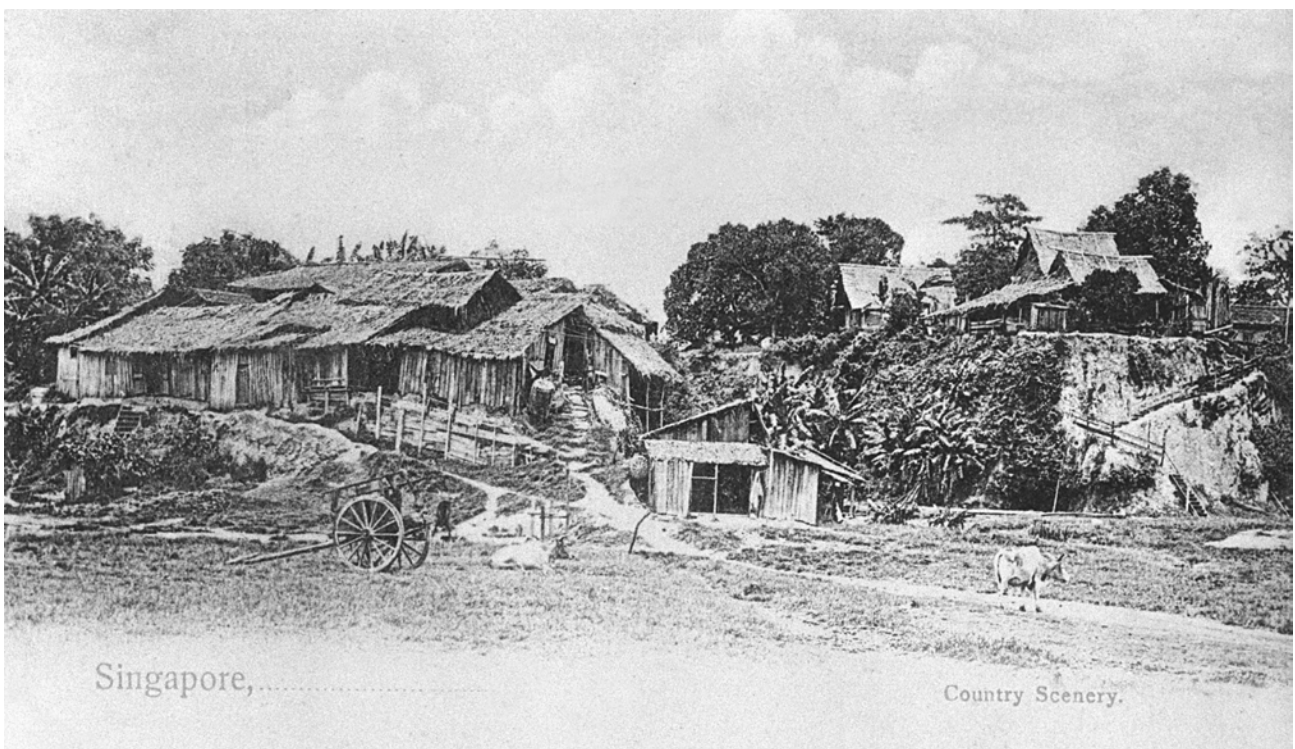
Now we turn to the reality of the world in which our tiny group of philanthropists lived.

Modern as it might have looked with its beautiful Palladian city centre, Singapore was for the person in the street a seamy, dirty, foul place, full of litter, sewage, and stray dogs. There was no proper water supply, no sewage system, not even a fire brigade.<sup>19</sup> Tan Tock Seng’s Pauper Hospital was still under development – a desperately needed institution but continually delayed and eventually unable to cope with the needs of the burgeoning population.

While the economy boomed, social problems were rife. There were people scattered in settlements

everywhere, transient, ill-housed, settling in straggling villages or kampongs along the main arterial roads now running along the coasts and northward to connect Singapore to Malaya.

Migration was unregulated and there was much abuse in the migration chain of the Chinese in particular, with kidnapping and systems of usurious indenture controlled by secret societies. These gangs menaced the streets and were much feared. The colonial administration was quite unable to cope with the many languages and mysteries of the Chinese migrants who were a law unto themselves, and who committed many brutal crimes amongst other Chinese and committed robberies with much bloodshed.



Living Conditions in Singapore, c.1904  
Courtesy of the Singapore National Archives

<sup>18</sup> Frost & Balasingham Chow, 2013, p. 162

<sup>19</sup> Frost & Balasingham Chow, 2013, p. 161



Singapore was also well known for its brothels and – to put it circumspactly – *bachelor* entertainments. Retired police officer Rene Onraet wrote that the four words most people knew of Singapore then were

“Raffles Hotel” and “Malay Street” (the road for brothels).<sup>20</sup>

Prostitution was expected as men outnumbered women eight to one at one point,<sup>21</sup> but the abuse of prostitutes was horrifying and some died in the streets when they were of no more use and thrown out.<sup>22</sup>

Meanwhile vice, gambling and opium addiction were the norm. Opium was openly sold everywhere with the British government itself actively encouraging its sale. It was, ironically, a huge source of revenue for public works. It was also a source of great wealth for many local merchants, who saw no problem with its use or sale, having gained legal rights to “farm” (gain licences) to sell opium. Overall, Singapore was a very sleazy place outside the confines of the city limits.

### 3.2 Colonial Policy and the Lack of Welfare

The new administration of various Governors and their advisory circles struggled with this host of social problems. Foreign policy still dictated the practice of Non-Intervention, Divide and Rule, and laissez-faire. The only policy that everyone agreed on was the prized Free Port principle, which continued to enrich the city.

#### William Pickering and the Chinese Protectorate

Eventually the Colonial Office itself was made aware of the scandalous life in Singapore and a commission headed by Sir Willaim Jervois recommended firmer control in the colony. On becoming Governor, he ignored established policy and *intervened*, creating



William A Pickering, first Protector of Chinese in Singapore, 1875-1887

Courtesy of the Singapore National Archives

a Chinese Protectorate in 1877 to deal with Chinese migration and secret societies, and rescue or help prostitutes.

The first Protector of Chinese, William Pickering, being fluent in many southern Chinese dialects as well as Mandarin, was to make a tremendous impression on the local migrant Chinese. Drawing on his multilingual skills, he enforced the registration of new migrants and finally brought some semblance of regulation to the migration process.

As concurrent Registrar of Societies Pickering also managed to force control over the secret societies through punishments and banishments. He also established the Office to Protect Virtue or Po Leung Kuk in 1878 with local and European missionaries, creating a place of refuge for runaway prostitutes.

<sup>20</sup> Frost & Balasingham Chow, 2013, p. 161

<sup>21</sup> Frost & Balasingham Chow, 2013, p. 97

<sup>22</sup> Coroner's Reports of the Straits Settlements, National Archives of Singapore.

While the social atmosphere improved it was an uphill task and Pickering was thanked for his efforts with an axe blow to the head in 1887 by a local Chinese secret society member furious with his meddling in their affairs. Pickering never recovered. He is remembered though as a doughty fighter for welfare in Singapore and might well be considered as much an activist as Sir Song Ong Siang for his efforts to reform local society.

### Welfare Policy in the British Colonies

As to the general well-being of the public, there was no social welfare policy in place in Singapore until 1946. In its historical context this does not come as a surprise as the concept of social welfare in *Britain* itself did not arise until the 20<sup>th</sup> Century.

The role of welfare in Britain had long been carried by volunteers mobilised by the church, who helped those in the miserable slums that arose from the Industrial Revolution. Thus one cannot fault the colonial administration for leaving the population of Singapore to look out for itself, for it was the way things were done, even “at Home.”

In Singapore, however, there was no such band of hardy church volunteers. Each ethnic group must look out for itself and community leadership was expected to show the way. This had been so since the founding of Singapore and the local population was not surprised. They were all there to make the best of things.

With this pragmatic outlook, the first philanthropists had already come forward in 1820 to provide for their own. In the new crown colony, all help that was provided to community would come from European volunteers, missionaries and local philanthropists.

“Any ‘invisible hand’ that existed ... was to be found in the activities of civic-minded philanthropists and in the numerous local associations ...<sup>23</sup>”

### 3.3 Local Philanthropy, Personal Conviction and New Causes

It was not the role of philanthropy to govern and philanthropists did not attempt to do so, but used their contributions to improve the welfare of society in areas where they were personally convinced they could do the most good. Those who gave contributed to what *they* believed was important to help society at the time. Personal conviction then, much as it always has, played a major role as to where Singapore’s various philanthropists carefully channeled hard-earned money.

Our examination of those who comprised the philanthropic community in the new crown colony era shows that their contributions now ranged over a much wider spectrum of causes than the traditional ones of the first migrants.

Causes still included the traditional religious and cultural constructs, but had expanded to include “modern” reformist ones springing from new influences like suffrage and the hope of a civil society in Singapore.

As the 19<sup>th</sup> Century ushered in the 20<sup>th</sup>, the public eye was now drawn to many new charities for the welfare of local society including causes of British origin like the St. John’s Ambulance Association, St. Andrew’s Mission Hospital, the Child Welfare Society and Children’s Aid Society; the latter two being popular causes across all ethnic groups.

Of particular interest is that while in the 19<sup>th</sup> Century, Malay-Muslim women had already endowed the community of Singapore using the Islamic instrument of the *wakaf*, the late 19<sup>th</sup> century shows that secluded *Chinese* women began to emerge, making their first appearances in public at the turn of the century.

For example, Ms. Wong Bee Ho, daughter of entrepreneur Wong Ah Fook, was the very first to fund a school herself with money bequeathed to her by her father. Other extremely influential

<sup>23</sup> Frost & Balasingham Chow, 2013, p. 162.

women who took the limelight in 1915 included the founders of the Chinese Ladies' Association led by Mrs. Lee Choon Guan, Mrs. Lim Boon Keng and Lady Helen Song. Their participation brought a new idea to Asian women – that women too could play a role in giving.

### 3.4 Philanthropic Causes Supported by Asian Philanthropists, 1867-1919

Below we list just some of the most prominent causes derived from our initial research on the work of Singapore's most prominent Asian philanthropists in these second fifty years under British rule. A full accounting of each person's key contributions can be found in Chapter 4.

The causes most contributed to were:

1. Community Creation
2. Education
3. Medical Development
4. Infrastructure
5. Diasporic Causes
6. Spontaneous Single Causes

Here we provide some examples of giving in each category:

#### 3.4.1 Community Creation

Looking after one's own remained an important focus of philanthropy. During these years we see the continuation of community care and creation, with a new generation adding to and improving on the work of their parents.

#### Places of Worship and Burial Sites

Cheang Hong Lim built the Geok Hong Tian (玉皇殿) in 1887 in Havelock Road. In the Jewish community, Sir Manasseh Meyer built the Chesed-el Synagogue in Killiney Road in 1905 to provide the growing enclave with a larger space for worship; he also led Torah readings with three other men.

Meanwhile, B. P. de Silva contributed to the building of religious sites in Singapore and Galle, his hometown in Ceylon, and also paid for burial sites for the poor in Galle.

#### Community Networks

Philanthropic efforts continued to be directed towards the creation of networks among the local, dislocated migrants. Seah Liang Seah, local-born son of Teochew patriarch Seah Eu Chin, took over the running of Ngee Ann Kongsi, formed in 1845 to enable the Teochew community to practise their rites and religion, as well as to provide welfare. Lim Nee Soon, also of the Teochew community, bought another burial ground for their use.

In the same vein, Tan Boo Liat great grandson of Hokkien leader Tan Tock Seng, and Goh Siew Tin took over the running of the Thian Hock Keng temple, which was now the main gathering place for the Hokkien community. Tan Boo Liat's grandfather Tan Kim Ching and Tan Tock Seng had first established both the temple and the administration of it, and he continued to bear responsibility for the wellbeing of its patrons. Hokkiens still flocked to the temple not just for spiritual comfort, but to hear news of home from new migrants, network for jobs, find housing and community.

#### Endowments

The Malay-Muslim community continued to be small but influential, with the wealthy taking their leadership responsibilities seriously as dictated in traditional Malay-Muslim social structures.

Two of Singapore's earliest women philanthropists were Muslim. One was Raja Siti Kraeng Chanda Pulih who endowed the Malay-Muslims as a *wakif* in 1883. She bequeathed half the income from her property for charitable use in the local community. She was also a second-generation local-born philanthropist; her mother Hajjah Fatimah had earlier on built one of Singapore's first mosques, which is still in use today.

## Welfare and Schooling for the Poor and Orphaned

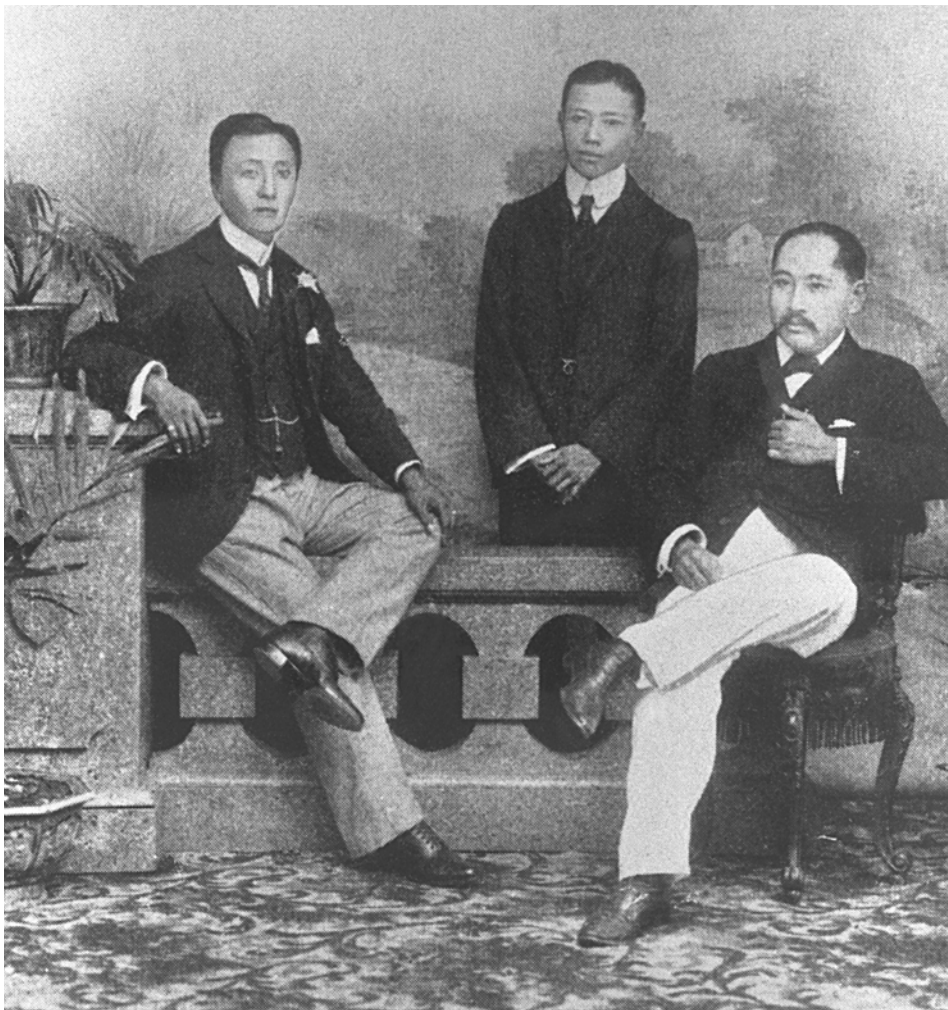
Mosques also received support in the form of leadership and donations from key Arab families such as the Alkaffs and Alsagoffs. Syed Abdulrahman Taha Alsagoff was a trustee of the endowments of the Syed Mohamed bin Ahmed Alsagoff *wakaf* funds, and gave part of these funds to start the Alsagoff Arab School in 1912 to teach local children their faith.

In later years the same fund provided money for a dispensary and orphanages for Muslim children, one for boys, and one for girls. The Arabs would play a prominent part in providing help for the distressed community after the Great Depression of 1932.

## Media and Information

Some philanthropists poured sums into connecting society through media. In 1904 Lim Nee Soon started a newspaper called Thoe Lam Jit Poh. Khoo Seok Wan, an associate of the group who started the Singapore Chinese Girls' School, was highly interested in media; in 1897 he co-founded and edited the Thein Nan Shin Pao with Lim Boon Keng. It was of course reformist and progressive, reflecting the perspective of this group of friends.

Khoo went on to be the chief editor of the Cheng Nam Jit Poh and in 1929 became editor of the Sin Chew Jit Poh, founded by Hakka magnate Aw Boon Haw. This would later merge with another paper to become one of Singapore's biggest Chinese newspapers.



Sir Song Ong Siang (seated left), and Dr Lim Boon Keng (seated right), co-founders of the Singapore Chinese Girls' School, pictured here with fellow editor of the Straits Chinese Magazine, Goh Lean Tuck. c. 1900

Courtesy of the Singapore National Archives

### 3.4.2 Education

The second 50 years reveal a rising and passionate belief in the value of education. This was evidenced in the founding of at least 15 new schools, the establishment of traditional schools, and the daring founding of two schools just for girls by the Straits Chinese reformists and Ms. Wong Bee Ho.

What seems most evident is the belief in the need for local children to not only gain an education, but be allowed the chance at tertiary education. This was evidenced in the giving of staggering sums of money in support of the initiative to start Raffles College (the forerunner of the National University of Singapore) and the push to start a medical college – the King Edward VII College, now the Yong Loo Lin School of Medicine in Singapore.

#### Collaborations in Forming New Schools

Our data reveals that in starting schools few went it alone; a sturdy core of men with strong beliefs would come together to co-found and co-fund schools of all kinds. Some of these have since closed, but others have gone on to contribute significantly to Singapore scholarship. We highlight below some of the schools started during this period.

Girls' schools were begun, to the outrage of local society mothers. A Straits Chinese group comprising Sir Song Ong Siang, Dr. Lim Boon Keng, Tan Boo Liat and Khoo Seok Wan donated \$3,000 towards the founding of the Singapore Chinese Girls' School in 1899 where girls were taught English.

A radical idea, it advocated the reform of local Straits Chinese society and its views on the limited, Confucian position of women. That school still stands today and boasts significant alumni. Ms. Wong Bee Ho then founded the first Chinese school for girls in 1906, a daring move in a society that was still largely Confucian.

Another Chinese school for girls – Chung Hua Girls' School – followed in 1911, founded by S. C. Yin and Phua Choon Hiang. The latter was deeply persuaded by Dr. Lim Boon Keng of the need to educate girls and assiduously sought suitable teaching material in the form of translations of foreign texts into Chinese.

Chinese schools of fine standing were also founded during this time. Tan Boo Liat and Tan Kah Kee co-founded two schools – Tao Nan School in 1906 and Ai Tong School in 1912 – with the help of other funders. Subsequently in 1919, Tan Kah Kee founded with Lim Nee Soon the Chinese High School, which was the first to offer secondary education in Singapore and was the premier Chinese school for many years. Tan Kah Kee had a personal passion for education and went on to start Amoy University in China, providing hundreds of thousands of dollars in donations and scholarships himself.

The Alsagoff Arab School was opened in 1912 for Muslim children by Syed Abdulrahman Taha Alsagoff who took a deep interest in the matter. He oversaw its construction and ran the school for 43 years until 1955.

#### Free Schooling and Scholarships

One indicator of the passion for education for others was shown in the many offers of free schooling and scholarships that were made to whomever wanted to study.

Small schools were started where students could study for free with their fees paid for by patrons. One such patron was Cheang Hong Lim who started free schools in 1875 and 1890. Cheang Jim Hean Free School was named after Hong Lim's son, who faithfully maintained it as a free school until his own death in 1901. It cost the Cheangs \$1,200 a year to school a hundred boys for free, which they appeared to have done gladly.

In 1902 Eu Tong Sen gave out the immense amount of \$100,000 worth of scholarships to students. He was almost matched by Lim Peng Siang who donated \$60,000 in scholarships. Meanwhile Tan Jiak Kim gave out medical scholarships in 1917 of \$1,500 each for poor students to allow them to study abroad.

#### Inclusiveness

Of note is that some schools were heartily inclusive. The school founded by Cheang Hong Lim in 1875 was open to children of all creeds and ages, free of

charge. Ai Tong School invited Chinese children of all dialects to attend even though it was opened by the Hokkien community.

### The Anglo-Chinese School and the Methodist Girls' School

The founding of the Anglo-Chinese School (ACS) in Singapore involved Singapore philanthropists in a roundabout way. William F. Oldham, a Methodist missionary sent to Singapore, chanced upon the debating club, the Celestial Reasoning Society, one evening soon after landing in Singapore in 1885 and invited himself to speak to them about astronomy. According to anecdotal accounts, club members in attendance included Tan Keong Saik who soon secured Oldham as a private tutor. His improved English at speeches so impressed the other members that Oldham was provided with funds to start the Anglo-Chinese School for the sons of members of the society.

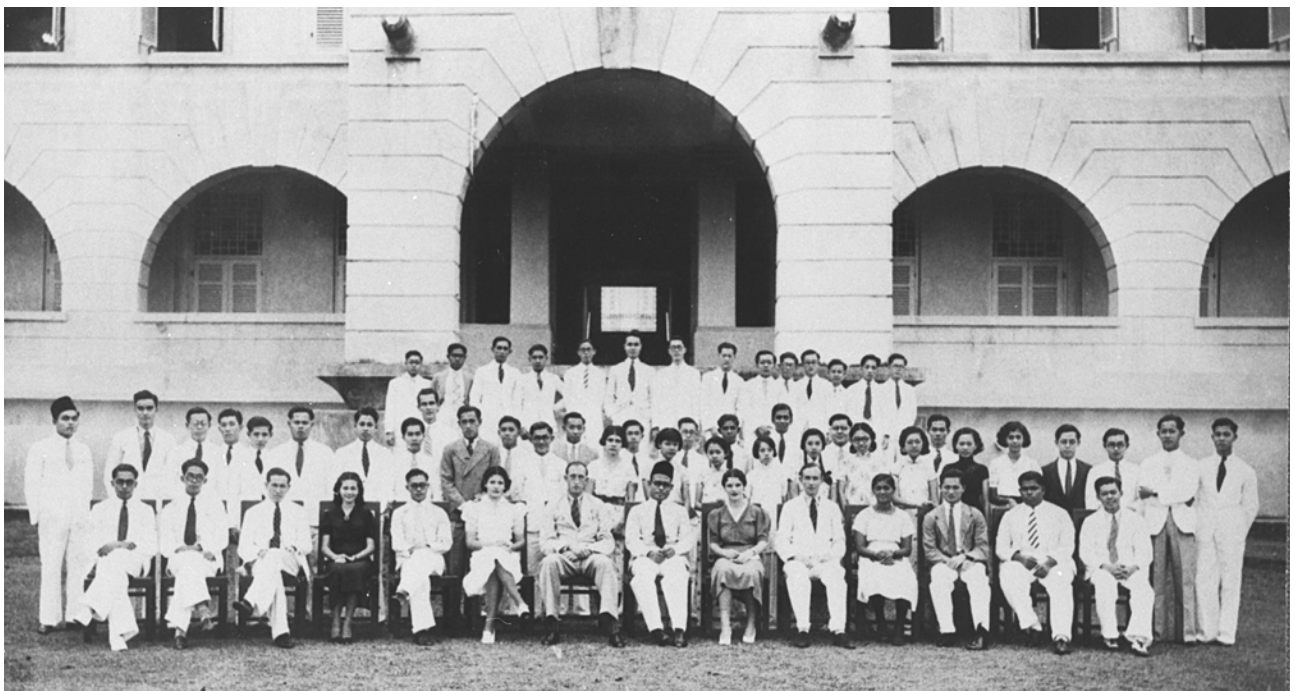
Soon after, Methodist missionary Sophia Blackmore who was staying with the Oldhams, was invited to tutor the daughters of Tan Keong Saik in English.

This was so successful that Sophia Blackmore went on to be helped to found what is now the Methodist Girls' School. One of her charges, Tan Teck Neo, would marry Lee Choon Guan and become one of Singapore's prominent women philanthropists from 1915.

### Raffles College

Singapore's first college for higher education was an initiative to commemorate the founding of Singapore on its centenary.<sup>24</sup> It was proposed by the Centenary Committee headed by Sir George Maxwell and was very well received by the local population.

Among the eye-watering donations that went towards the establishment of Raffles College were \$60,000 from Lee Choon Guan, \$50,000 from Loke Yew, and \$150,000 from Sir Manasseh Meyer, which was matched by Oei Tiong Ham for construction of the central hall of the college. The enormous support for Raffles College gives us some indication as to how valued a good education was for the local population.



Group Photograph on Raffles College Grounds, c. 1936  
Courtesy of the Singapore National Archives

<sup>24</sup> [Raffles College opened](#). (1929, July 23). *The Straits Times*, p. 11. Retrieved 4 January 2019 from NewspaperSG, National Heritage Board (2015, December 8).

### 3.4.3 Medical Development

#### Thong Chai Medical Institution

This venerable traditional Chinese medical hall was an initiative of seven local businessmen, one of whom was Gan Eng Seng. It was started in a shophouse in 1867 and was called Thong Chai Yee Say (同济医社, 'Thong Chai Medical Institution). It gave herbal medicines to all and sundry, ignoring race, religion and social standing.<sup>25</sup>

Over the decades, this one institution proved invaluable to the local Chinese community and was granted a parcel of land in a better location by Governor Sir Cecil Clementi Smith in 1891 for its charitable work for so many. The new building was completed in 1892, funded by generous donations including those of Ong Pang Kiat and subscriptions from the public in the new British way of raising funds.

Singapore being a small place, the Singapore Chinese Chamber of Commerce was later founded in the Thong Chai Medical Institution building in 1906. The building still stands today as a preserved heritage site and monument to the architecture of the times

#### King Edward VII Medical School

Up until the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> Century, Tan Tock Seng Pauper Hospital and Thong Chai Medical Hall were the only recourse for the local population for serious ailments.

In 1904 Tan Jiak Kim successfully petitioned the colonial government to start a medical college to train local medical practitioners.<sup>26</sup> The government agreed on condition that a sum of \$71,000 be raised. There was an overwhelming response from both local philanthropists and the European community and the amount demanded was outmatched.



King Edward VII Medical School built in 1926, c.1970  
Courtesy of the Singapore National Archives

<sup>25</sup> Former Thong Chai Medical Institution. Retrieved 28 February 2019 from <https://roots.sg/Content/Places/national-monuments/former-thong-chai-medical-institution>

<sup>26</sup> National University of Singapore. (n.d.). *Our history*. Retrieved 2019 March 21 from Yong Loo Lin School of Medicine website: <http://nusmedicine.nus.edu.sg/about-the-school/our-history>

The medical college was established in 1905, first bearing the name Straits and Federated Malay States Government Medical School, then renamed King Edward VII Medical School in 1912 after a donation of \$125,000 was sent to the school from the King Edward VII Memorial Fund.<sup>27</sup> Significant contributions also came from Tan Kim Jiak Kim and Seah Liang Seah who garnered a collective donation of an astonishing \$120,000 from the local Chinese community to expand the school.

### St Andrew's Medical Mission

The St Andrew's Medical Mission was set up in 1913 by Anglican missionary Dr. Charlotte Ferguson-Davie after she arrived in Singapore where her husband was posted as a clergyman with the Anglican Diocese.

Having been a medical missionary in India and Malacca, Dr. Ferguson-Davie decided to start a much-needed dispensary on the edge of Chinatown. Donations in support poured in from the Anglican community that attended St Andrew's Cathedral. Contributions from local philanthropists included \$5,000 from Mr. and Mrs. Lee Choon Guan. The dispensary met a desperate need, and expanded and moved several times, culminating in Dr. Ferguson-Davie starting the St Andrew's Mission Hospital in 1925, whose founding stone was laid by Mrs. Lee Choon Guan.<sup>28</sup>

### St John's Island Leper Colony

Singapore had a leper colony on a nearby island for many years. Magnate Loke Yew donated \$50,000 to improve the conditions for those on the island, bringing welcome relief to the small group isolated there.

#### 3.4.4 Infrastructure

Not much was given to the building of infrastructure during this period. In a tropical island most made do with dirt roads and built their own houses as they could afford it. It was left to the administration

to finally put in sanitation, electricity and gas lights in the early 20<sup>th</sup> Century.

One man proved the exception. Cheang Hong Lim put a great deal of effort into improving the area around his premises. In 1882, he built brick houses along Kim Seng Road (built by Tan Kim Seng). He then converted a mangrove swamp into a market and reconstructed a stream nearby that he named Hong Lim Creek to allow boats to sail upstream with fish for the market.

In 1884 he filled in another swampy area nearby and called it Hong Lim Green, which is now called "Speaker's Corner" on the edge of Chinatown in Singapore. He then fenced in the area so the Singapore Chinese Recreational Club could play sports in it.

We do not know his motivations for such construction and ingenuity except his actions seem to speak of a practical man with an eye to making the best he could of the swampy land on Singapore.

#### 3.4.5 Diasporic Causes

Giving back to their homelands was a natural part of traditional Asian culture, but we observed much giving by wealthy settlers in Singapore during this period to causes from each others' homelands as well.

Some examples of such generosity included the actions of Seah Liang Seah who, when Krakatoa erupted in 1883, worked on a relief committee and unusually collected substantial donations from the general public to alleviate the suffering of the victims of the volcanic eruption.

Cheang Hong Lim, that man of many hats, received an award from the French Government for his acts of charity in Saigon, was noted as having given \$100 to the 1874 Bengal Famine, and was mentioned in the Daily Times of November 8, 1876, as having given \$3,000 to the Penang Free School.

<sup>27</sup> Song, O. S. (1984). p. 455.

<sup>28</sup> Ooi, 2015. pg 74.



In 1918 Eu Tong Seng gave \$50,000 to Hong Kong University and Tan Kah Kee was recorded as having given to causes in China amounting to millions of dollars. In 1911, he raised \$120,000 for the Hokkien Protection Fund, which would be far outmatched in 1925 by his donation of \$1.34 million to the Shandong Relief Fund, a cause that elicited donations from philanthropists all over the island.

### 3.4.6 Single Causes

This category is rather vague in that philanthropists were recorded as giving with apparent spontaneity to many causes at single events and fundraisers throughout the era.

Some examples of such contributions included the collection of funds for the Red Cross and other local charities by B. P. de Silva. Cheang Hong Lim was known for his "benefactions to the poor" which amounted to well over \$100,000.<sup>29</sup> Members of

the elite circle who were not immediately obvious as philanthropists played significant roles as fundraisers.

They included Seow Poh Leng and the Arabs who hosted many magnificent charity events to which all of local society were invited and gave generously. One example is the "Centenary Arab Community's Celebration, where the elite and the Governor were guests of Syed Omar Alsagoff, Syed Mohammed Alsagoff, Syed Abdlurahman Aljunid and Syed Always Alkaff.<sup>30</sup> News reports were full of gala dinners, teas with the Governors' wives, and "At Homes" with the wealthy where money was collected for causes such as the Po Leung Kuk.

Society being small, such events were both entertaining and for a good cause. Not all giving was dour and earnest and the amounts collected were considerable at many happy events.

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<sup>29</sup> Reference from Table 4

<sup>30</sup> This celebration was an "exceptionally great success, being attended by a very large concourse of Singaporeans of all nationalities... [including] their Excellencies the Governor with the Lady Evelyn Young...Mr and Mrs Lee Choon Guan..." *Centenary Day*. Malaya Tribune, 10 February 1919, p. 4.

## 4. Table Of Philanthropists in Singapore and their Contributions, 1867-1920s<sup>31</sup>

This table of philanthropists and their contributions is the first document of its kind for the period 1867-1919. It covers philanthropy across the race groups. Presented in table format, it provides readers with an overview of giving and the evolution of causes and needs during this period.

**Note:** Footnotes refer to sources cited in the Bibliography.

**Table 2. Singapore Philanthropists and their Contributions, 1867-1920s**

	YEAR OF CONTRIBUTION	NAME	ORIGIN/ETHNICITY	OCCUPATION	CONTRIBUTIONS	REMARKS
1	1869	<b>Cheang Hong Lim</b> 章芳琳 (1841-1893)  <i>Son of Cheang Sam Teo</i>	Hokkien, Singapore	Licensed opium and spirit merchant, ship-owner, racehouse owner, property owner.  Opium & spirit farming licenses: Singapore, Johor, Melaka and Riau. Formed the 'Great Opium Syndicate' with Tan Seng Poh and Tan Hiok (Yeok) Nee <sup>32</sup> monopolised the opium and spirit farms there. <sup>33</sup>	<b>COMMUNITY CREATION</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 1869: Financed the renovation of Fuk Tak Chi Temple.<sup>34</sup></li> <li>• 1874: Donated \$100 to the Bengal Famine.<sup>35</sup></li> <li>• 1876: Gave \$900 to the Portuguese Church of St Jose for the alterations of gas chandeliers.<sup>36</sup></li> <li>• 1876: Gave \$3,000 for converting the space in front of the Police Office into a public garden, Hong</li> </ul>	<b>ADVISORY &amp; RECOGNITION</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Well known in Saigon, received a medal from the French Government for his acts of charity.<sup>37</sup></li> <li>• Member of the committee of the Po Leung Kok.<sup>38</sup></li> <li>• Member of the Made Justice of the Peace in 1873. Recognised as the leader of the</li> </ul>

<sup>31</sup> Table researched and compiled by Tan Jun Ping Kimberley and Koh Yu Qi with additional material from Tedd Jong Wei and Ng Jie Kang Eric.

<sup>32</sup> Trocki, 1987; Yen, 2016.

<sup>33</sup> Tan, B. H. (1977, October 14). Cheang Hong Lim: The big property owner and philanthropist. *The Straits Times*, p. 8.

<sup>34</sup> Fuk Tak Chi Temple was built in 1825 by Hakka and Cantonese communities to offer thanksgiving for their safe passage to Singapore. See Thulaja, 2017.

<sup>35</sup> Unverified, Anecdotal. Retrieved from Overseas Chinese in the British Empire, <https://overseaschineseinthebritishempire.blogspot.com/2012/04/cheang-hong-lim.html>

<sup>36</sup> Unverified, Anecdotal. Retrieved from Overseas Chinese in the British Empire, <https://overseaschineseinthebritishempire.blogspot.com/2012/04/cheang-hong-lim.html>; Unverified, Anecdotal. Retrieved from Rojak Librarian, <https://mymindisrojak.blogspot.com/2011/11/cheang-hong-lim-bukit-brown.html>

<sup>37</sup> Song, 2016, p. 236.

<sup>38</sup> Song, 2016, p. 236.

	YEAR OF CONTRIBUTION	NAME	ORIGIN/ ETHNICITY	OCCUPATION	CONTRIBUTIONS	REMARKS
		<p><b>Cheang Hong Lim</b> 章芳琳 <b>(1841-1893)</b></p> <p><i>Son of Cheang Sam Teo</i></p>			<p>Lim Green (now popularly known as Hong Lim Park).<sup>39</sup></p> <p><b>INFRASTRUCTURE</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 1882: Built brick houses along Kim Seng and Havelock Roads.<sup>40</sup></li> <li>• 1882: Converted a mangrove swamp into a market, Cheang Hong Lim Market. Beside the main market was fish market and Hong Lim Creek. He financed its reconstruction to allow boats to enter the creek and arranged for a supply of fish by getting some fifteen fishing prahus of his own. He next built, all around the market and on both sides of the road leading to it, long rows of substantial and elegant-looking tenements until the place resembled a miniature city.<sup>41</sup></li> <li>• 1884: Spent his money to fence Hong Lim Green with iron rails so that the Straits Chinese</li> </ul>	<p>Hokkien community in 1891.<sup>42</sup></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• "He often readily advanced generous amounts of money towards stall-holders and fishermen. ... His benefactions to the poor amounted to \$100,000. At his death it was found that the enormous sum of \$400,000 had been lent by him to so-called friends and that these debts were all statute-barred."<sup>43</sup></li> <li>• "Another event worthy of mention was his effort in persuading the mother of Lim Boon Keng to let her brilliant son continue his study at Raffles Institution ... Hong Lim succeeded and Boon Keng continued his study and later became the first Chinese to win the Queen's Scholarship to pursue his medical</li> </ul>

<sup>39</sup> Song, O. S. (1923). Tan, Devi & Kua (Eds.). (2016). p. 235; Tan, B. H. (1977, October 14). Cheang Hong Lim: The big property owner and philanthropist. *The Straits Times*, p. 8.

<sup>40</sup> Song, 2016, pp. 235-236, 295; Tan, B. H. (1977, October 14). Cheang Hong Lim: The big property owner and philanthropist. *The Straits Times*, p. 8.

<sup>41</sup> Song, 2016, p. 295.

<sup>42</sup> "Cheang Hong Lim - The big property owner and philanthropist by Tan Ban Huat". (1977, October 14). *The Straits Times*, p. 8. Retrieved from Newspapersg.

<sup>43</sup> Song, 2016, pp. 235-236.

	YEAR OF CONTRIBUTION	NAME	ORIGIN/ ETHNICITY	OCCUPATION	CONTRIBUTIONS	REMARKS
		<p><b>Cheang Hong Lim</b> 章芳琳 (1841-1893)</p> <p><i>Son of Cheang Sam Teo</i></p>			<p>Recreational Club could use this space.<sup>44</sup></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 1886: Established his own fire brigade of 37 men.<sup>45</sup></li> <li>• 1887: Funded the reconstruction of the Tiang Thye Temple, where his father, Cheang Sam Teo, set up Tiang Thye clan association in 1849.<sup>46</sup></li> <li>• 1887: Built a Chinese temple, Geok Hong Tian (玉皇殿), at Havelock Road. He also contributed much to the erection and repair of many temples put up by other clans though he belonged to Tiang Thye (or Teang Thai) clan.<sup>47</sup></li> <li>• 1889: Donated \$2500 to purchase Maxim guns for the Singapore Volunteer Artillery.<sup>48</sup></li> </ul>	<p>studies at Edinburgh University.<sup>49</sup></p> <p><b>DIASPORIC GIVING</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 1887: The <i>Daily Times</i> of the 8th November 1876 mentions that an appeal for assistance towards the Penang Free School had been met by the liberal donation of \$3,000 by Mr Hong Lim.<sup>50</sup></li> </ul>

<sup>44</sup> ibid. p. 235.

<sup>45</sup> Song, 2016, p. 307; In 1886, a fire broke out at Drummond Hodges and Co. Wan Seng Brigade was summoned and successfully put out the fire. See Tan, B. H. (1977, October 14). Cheang Hong Lim: The big property owner and philanthropist. *The Straits Times*, p. 8.

<sup>46</sup> Thulaja, N. R. (2018, September). Hokien Street.

<sup>47</sup> Song, 2016, p. 235; Tan, B. H. (1977, October 14). Cheang Hong Lim: The big property owner and philanthropist. *The Straits Times*, p. 8.

<sup>48</sup> Song, 2016, pp. 236, 352; Tan, B. H. (1977, October 14). Cheang Hong Lim: The big property owner and philanthropist. *The Straits Times*, p. 8.

<sup>49</sup> "Cheang Hong Lim - The big property owner and philanthropist by Tan Ban Huat". (1977, October 14). *The Straits Times*, p. 8. Retrieved from Newspaper.

<sup>50</sup> Song, 2016, p. 255. ; "Cheang Hong Lim - The big property owner and philanthropist by Tan Ban Huat". (1977, October 14). *The Straits Times*, p. 8. Retrieved from Newspapersg.

	YEAR OF CONTRIBUTION	NAME	ORIGIN/ ETHNICITY	OCCUPATION	CONTRIBUTIONS	REMARKS
		<p><b>Cheang Hong Lim</b> 章芳琳 (1841-1893)</p> <p><i>Son of Cheang Sam Teo</i></p>			<p><b>EDUCATION</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 1875: Founded Cheang Hong Lim Free School at Cheang Wan Seng Place to teach English and ensured lads of all ages and creeds would be admitted free of charge.<sup>51</sup></li> <li>• 1890: Donated \$3000 (1/10 of the cost) towards the erection of a building of the southern boundary of the Convent Infant Jesus School premises.<sup>52</sup></li> <li>• 1890s: Set up Cheang Jim Hean Free School<sup>53</sup> at Havelock Road, named after his eldest son, who faithfully carried out the work entrusted to him and maintained it as a free school for poor boys until his own death in 1901. In 1897, more than 100 poor children attended this school, which cost their benefactors \$1,200 a year in upkeep.<sup>54</sup></li> </ul>	

<sup>51</sup> Song, 2016, p. 247; Tan, B. H. (1977, October 14). Cheang Hong Lim: The big property owner and philanthropist. *The Straits Times*, p. 8.

<sup>52</sup> This refers to the new Convent of the Holy Infant Jesus. Song, 2016, p. 236; Tan, B. H. (1977, October 14). Cheang Hong Lim: The big property owner and philanthropist. *The Straits Times*, p. 8.

<sup>53</sup> Later Telok Ayer Grammar School.

<sup>54</sup> Song, 2016, pp. 468-469; Tan, B. H. (1977, October 14). Cheang Hong Lim: The big property owner and philanthropist. *The Straits Times*, p. 8.

	YEAR OF CONTRIBUTION	NAME	ORIGIN/ ETHNICITY	OCCUPATION	CONTRIBUTIONS	REMARKS
2	1876	Tan Tye 陈泰 (1839-1898)  <i>Year of Arrival: 1860s</i>	Hokkien, Fujian, China	In timber, real estate, shipping.  Also owned a pineapple plantation at the 6th and 8 <sup>th</sup> milestones of Upper Thomson Road that exceeded 600 acres. At the close of 19th century he was one of the two largest pineapple plantation owners in Singapore.	<p><b>EDUCATION</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Donated to Chongwen Ker (崇文阁) in Thian Hock Keng Temple and Cui Ying School.<sup>55</sup></li> </ul> <p><b>COMMUNITY CREATION:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1876: Co-founded Wu Jiang Fu Ji Miao temple.<sup>56</sup></li> <li>1878: Director of Po Chiang Kek (保赤宫)/ Tan Si Chong Su temple.<sup>57</sup></li> <li>1879: Donated to the reconstruction of Heng San Ting temple.<sup>58</sup></li> </ul> <p><b>INFRASTRUCTURE</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Donated part of his land for the construction of Pierce reservoir. 20% of Pierce Reservoir is built on land formerly owned by Tan Tye.<sup>59</sup></li> </ul>	

<sup>55</sup> Unverified, Anecdotal. Retrieved from <http://www.beokeng.com/pioneers.php>

<sup>56</sup> Unverified, Anecdotal. Retrieved from <http://www.beokeng.com/pioneers.php>

<sup>57</sup> Unverified, Anecdotal. Retrieved from <http://www.beokeng.com/pioneers.php>

<sup>58</sup> Unverified, Anecdotal. Retrieved from <http://www.beokeng.com/pioneers.php>

<sup>59</sup> Savage & Yeoh, 2013, p. 370.

	YEAR OF CONTRIBUTION	NAME	ORIGIN/ ETHNICITY	OCCUPATION	CONTRIBUTIONS	REMARKS
3	1880	<b>Tan Jiak Kim</b> 陈若锦 <b>(1859-1917)</b>  <i>Grandson of Tan Kim Seng</i>  <i>Son of Tan Beng Swee</i>	Straits Chinese, Singapore	Merchant, political activist, banking and insurance. <sup>60</sup>  One of the founders/ directors of the Straits Steamship Company Ltd for over 20 years with Tan Keong Saik and Lee Cheng Yan. <sup>61</sup>	<b>COMMUNITY CREATION</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Donated \$18,000 to the Prince of Wales' Relief Fund, (and \$19,200, the cost of an aeroplane fighter bearing his name).<sup>62</sup></li> <li>1882: Tan Jiak Kim was a trustee of the Hiap Guan Sun Burial Ground in Telok Blangah acquired by Tan Geok Hup and it was declared that all Hokkiens with the surname 'Yeo' should be allowed to be buried in these grounds free of cost.<sup>63</sup></li> <li>He emphasised the need to help the authorities in their efforts to improve the unsanitary conditions under which the lower classes of the community lived.<sup>64</sup></li> </ul>	<b>ADVISORY &amp; RECOGNITION</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1890: Was one of four Hokkien representatives who attended the first meeting of the newly created Chinese Advisory Board.<sup>65</sup></li> <li>1900: A co-founder of the Straits Chinese British Association.<sup>65</sup></li> <li>1890-1916: Member of the Po Leung Kuk, Chinese Advisory Board.<sup>67</sup></li> <li>1886, 1890-1893, 1903-1915: Member of Legislative Council and Municipal Commissioner.<sup>68</sup></li> <li>1891: Justice of Peace (Served on several commissions of inquiry and on the Opium Commission).</li> <li>Member of the Committee of Management of</li> </ul>

<sup>60</sup> Tan Jiak Kim participated in consortiums that established the Chinese Commercial Bank, Ho Hong Bank and Overseas Chinese Bank with Tan Cheng Lock, Lee Cheng Yan, Lee Choon Guan and Lim Boon Keng. See Chong, 2015, p. 21.

<sup>61</sup> Song, 2016, p. 278.

<sup>62</sup> *ibid.* p. 276.

<sup>63</sup> Song, 2016, p. 427.

<sup>64</sup> *ibid.* p. 651.

<sup>65</sup> Song, 2016, p. 362.

<sup>66</sup> Straits Chinese British Association is established. (2011). <http://eresources.nlb.gov.sg/history/events>

<sup>67</sup> Death Of Tan Jiak Kim C.M.G. (1917, October 22), *The Straits Times*, p. 10. , <http://eresources.nlb.gov.sg/newspapers/Digitised/Article/straitstimes19171022-1.2.43?ST=1&AT=search&k=the%20late%20tan%20jiak%20kim&P=2&Display=0&filterS=0&QT=the,late,tan,jiak,kim&oref=article>

<sup>68</sup> Death of Tan Jiak Kim C.M.G. (1917, October 22), *The Straits Times*, p. 10. Retrieved from Newspapersg.

YEAR OF CONTRIBUTION	NAME	ORIGIN/ ETHNICITY	OCCUPATION	CONTRIBUTIONS	REMARKS
	<p><b>Tan Jiak Kim</b> 陈若锦 <b>(1859-1917)</b></p> <p><i>Grandson of Tan Kim Seng</i></p> <p><i>Son of Tan Beng Swee</i></p>			<p><b>FUND RAISING</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Dr Lim Boon Keng, Tan Jiak Kim and Seah Liang Seah formed a Chinese deputation to the Governor, to whom they intimated that the Chinese people would subscribe at least \$30,000 for a proposed "Victoria Institute" to be established as a Home for the aged and infirm poor.<sup>69</sup></li> <li>• 1912: Tan and Seah Liang Seah went on to collect \$120,000 from the Chinese community in an effort to improve the new King Edward VII Medical School.<sup>70</sup></li> </ul> <p><b>EDUCATION</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 1904-05: Petitioned for and donated to the founding of King Edward VII Medical School,<sup>71</sup> heading the</li> </ul>	<p>the Tan Tock Seng Hospital.<sup>72</sup></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Member of The Celestial Reasoning Society.<sup>73</sup></li> </ul> <p><b>ACTIVISM</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 1889: Advocated the enforcement of ordinances to protect the public from the spread of contagious diseases through prostitution.</li> <li>• Worked to improve the position of the young girls who formed the bulk of Singapore's prostitutes.<sup>74</sup></li> </ul> <p><b>DIASPORIC GIVING</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To honour his father Tan Beng Swee's charitable works in Malacca, Tan built a clock tower in the middle of Malacca town, fulfilling his father's wishes.<sup>75</sup></li> </ul>

<sup>69</sup> *ibid.* p. 419.

<sup>70</sup> *ibid.* p. 652.

<sup>71</sup> The King Edward VII College of Medicine was established in 1905 as the Straits and Federated Malay States government medical school. It was renamed King Edward VII Medical School in 1912, and then King Edward VII College of Medicine in 1921. See Tan, J. H. S. (2005). King Edward VII College of Medicine.

<sup>72</sup> Song, 2016, p. 273.

<sup>73</sup> Tan, Bonny. (2008). Celestial Reasoning. Retrieved from Infopedia, [http://eresources.nlb.gov.sg/infopedia/articles/SIP\\_1366\\_2009-11-25.html](http://eresources.nlb.gov.sg/infopedia/articles/SIP_1366_2009-11-25.html)

<sup>74</sup> Song, 2016, p. 353.

<sup>75</sup> Song, 2016, p. 130. See: Phyllis Chew, *Tan Jiak Kim (1859-1917): A Straits Chinese Leader*, Academic Exercise, Department of History (Singapore: University of Singapore, 1976)



	YEAR OF CONTRIBUTION	NAME	ORIGIN/ ETHNICITY	OCCUPATION	CONTRIBUTIONS	REMARKS
		<p><b>Tan Jiak Kim</b> 陈若锦 (1859-1917)</p> <p><i>Grandson of Tan Kim Seng</i></p> <p><i>Son of Tan Beng Swee</i></p>			<p>subscription list with \$12,000.<sup>76</sup></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 1917: Disbursed two medical scholarships worth \$750 each (total \$1500), giving poorer students the opportunity to further their studies abroad.<sup>77</sup></li> <li>• A trustee of Raffles Institution until it was taken over by Government.<sup>78</sup></li> </ul>	
4	1880s	<p><b>Seah Liang Seah</b> 余连城 (1850-1925)</p>	Teochew, Singapore	Trader of gambier and pepper and manufactured the cans for the new pineapple canning industry.	<p><b>COMMUNITY CREATION</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 1890: He was one of three Teochew representatives who attended the first meeting of the newly created Chinese Advisory Board.<sup>79</sup></li> <li>• August 1900: a co-founder of the Straits Chinese British Association.<sup>80</sup></li> <li>• 1906: Did a good deal of preliminary work for setting up the Chinese Chamber of Commerce.<sup>81</sup></li> </ul>	<p><b>LEADERSHIP</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 1885: Succeeded his elder brother as chairman of Ngee Ann Kongs, looking after the welfare of the Teochew community.<sup>82</sup></li> <li>• 1883-1890, 1894-1895: was second Chinese to become a Member of Legislative Council of the Straits Settlements.<sup>83</sup></li> </ul> <p><b>ACTIVISM</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• He resigned in 1895 to protest against a tax imposed by the British government</li> </ul>

<sup>76</sup> The Hon Tan Jiak Kim headed the list with the handsome donation of \$12,000, and when the list closed with a total subscription of \$87,077 it was found that the Singapore Chinese had contributed \$53,700, Penang Chinese \$20,000, the Selangor General Farm by Mr Loke Yew \$9,000 and Mr E Chin Seng (of Saigon) \$3,000. See Song, 2016, pp. 528-530; Death Of Tan Jiak Kim C.M.G. (1917, October 22), *The Straits Times*, p. 10.

<sup>77</sup> Song, 2016, p. 531.

<sup>78</sup> *ibid.* p. 273.

<sup>79</sup> *ibid.* p. 362.

<sup>80</sup> Yen, 2002, p. 296.

<sup>81</sup> Song, 2016, p. 559; Seah Liang Seah. (1978, 17 February). *The Straits Times*, p. 7.

<sup>82</sup> Yen, 2002, p. 295.

<sup>83</sup> Song, 2016, p. 298.

	YEAR OF CONTRIBUTION	NAME	ORIGIN/ ETHNICITY	OCCUPATION	CONTRIBUTIONS	REMARKS
		<p><b>Seah Liang Seah</b> 余连城 <b>(1850-1925)</b></p> <p><i>Son of Seah Eu Chin</i></p>			<p><b>FUND RAISING</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 1883: During the disaster after Krakatoa erupted Seah and several other influential Chinese merchants served on a Relief Committee collecting large subscriptions from the generous public.<sup>84</sup></li> <li>• 1910: Key organiser of the King Edward VII Medical Fund to commemorate the reign of England's late monarch. Proceeds went to the Straits and Federated Malay States Government Medical School.<sup>85</sup></li> <li>• 1912: Seah and Tan Jiak Kim collected \$120,000 from the Chinese community for the medical school.<sup>86</sup></li> <li>• Dr Lim Boon Keng, Tan Jiak Kim and Seah Liang Seah formed a deputation to the Governor, intimating that the Chinese</li> </ul>	<p>to increase the Straits Settlements' contributions towards British military expenditure.<sup>87</sup></p> <p><b>ADVISORY &amp; RECOGNITION</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Member of the Municipal Commission.<sup>88</sup></li> <li>• Key in promoting a Chinese plan to place a statue of Queen Victoria in front of Government House and took a prominent part in proposals for commemorating the Diamond Jubilee of Queen Victoria.<sup>89</sup></li> <li>• "He was an enthusiast in all moral, social and educational reforms among the Chinese in the Colony, and in 1899 was one of the promoters of the Singapore Chinese Girls' School, and in 1900 of the Straits</li> </ul>

<sup>84</sup> *ibid.* p. 300.

<sup>85</sup> The King Edward VII College of Medicine was established in 1905 as the Straits and Federated Malay States Government Medical School. It was renamed King Edward VII Medical School in 1912, and then King Edward VII College of Medicine in 1921.

<sup>86</sup> Song, 2016, p. 652.

<sup>87</sup> Mr. Seah Liang Seah. (1925, September 14). *The Straits Times*, p. 9; The military contribution. (1895, January 12) Straits Mail, p. 2; The military contribution. (1895, January 12). Straits Mail, p. 2; Mr. Seah Liang Seah, <http://eresources.nlb.gov.sg/newspapers/Digitised/Article/straitmail18950112-1.2.5>

<sup>88</sup> Mr. Seah Liang Seah. (1925, September 14) *The Straits Times*, p. 9. Retrieved from Newspaper

<sup>89</sup> Mr. Seah Liang Seah. (1925, September 14) *The Straits Times*, p. 9. Retrieved from Newspapersg.

	YEAR OF CONTRIBUTION	NAME	ORIGIN/ ETHNICITY	OCCUPATION	CONTRIBUTIONS	REMARKS
		<b>Seah Liang Seah</b> 余连城 <b>(1850-1925)</b>  <i>Son of Seah Eu Chin</i>			would subscribe at least \$30,000 for a proposed "Victoria Institute" to be established as a Home for the aged and infirm poor. <sup>90</sup> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Donated to the Prince of Wales War Relief Fund in 1914<sup>91</sup> &amp; King George's Fund for Sailors in 1918.<sup>92</sup></li> </ul>	Chinese British Association. <sup>93</sup> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1897: Contributed to The Straits Chinese Magazine.<sup>94</sup></li> </ul> <b>DIASPORIC GIVING</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1889: Gave 400 silver taels to a drought relief fund in central China.<sup>95</sup></li> </ul>
5	1880s (?)	<b>B.P. de Silva (1850 - 1926)</b>	Ceylonese, Ceylon	Set up a jewellery shop along High Street in 1872, named B.P. de Silva and Co.	<b>COMMUNITY CREATION</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Provided lodging for immigrants in his shop, which was set up in 1872.<sup>96</sup></li> </ul> <b>DONOR</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Collected significant amounts of relief fund for the Red Cross and other charities, with him heading the lists.<sup>97</sup></li> </ul> <b>DIASPORIC GIVING</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1919 gave to relief during the influenza pandemic; took charge of feeding the poor in Galle; Distributed clothes to poor and orphans.<sup>98</sup></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>"Remained almost entirely apolitical": Main concern in life seems to have been to "succeed in business, engage in philanthropy and then return to his home village in Ceylon to retire."<sup>99</sup></li> </ul> <b>RECOGNITION</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Created pieces for the King of Siam and Queen Victoria on her diamond jubilee in 1897.<sup>100</sup></li> <li>Involvement in royal visit to Singapore: 1901 created the gem-studded caskets presented as</li> </ul>

<sup>90</sup> Ibid. p. 419.

<sup>91</sup> Mr. Seah Liang Seah. (1925, September 14). *The Straits Times*, p. 9.

<sup>92</sup> King George's fund for sailors. (1918, June 19). *The Singapore Free Press and Mercantile Advertiser*, p. 5.

<sup>93</sup> Song, 2016, p. 328.

<sup>94</sup> Song, 2016, p. 328.

<sup>95</sup> Yong, C. Y. (2013, 14 May). *Seah Liang Seah*.

<sup>96</sup> Rai, R., & Mani, A. (2017). p. 340.

<sup>97</sup> Boyle, 1989, p. 87.

<sup>98</sup> *ibid.*

<sup>99</sup> Frost & Balasingamchow, 2009, p. 145.

<sup>100</sup> Frost & Balasingamchow, 2009, p. 148.

	YEAR OF CONTRIBUTION	NAME	ORIGIN/ ETHNICITY	OCCUPATION	CONTRIBUTIONS	REMARKS
		<b>B.P. de Silva (1850 - 1926)</b>			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Contributed money to build town halls: on Galle Municipal Council in 1920, de Silva offered around 15,000 rupees for building the town hall.<sup>101</sup></li> <li>Donated land for a burial site for the poor in Magalle.<sup>102</sup></li> <li>Contributed to building of religious sites in both Singapore and his hometown Galle.<sup>103</sup></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>official gifts to the visiting royal couple, the Duke and Duchess of Cornwall and York.<sup>104</sup></li> <li>Elevated to rank of honorary Mudaliyar in 1901 by Governor of Ceylon, Sir West Ridgeway.<sup>105</sup></li> </ul>
<b>6</b>	<b>1883</b>	<b>Raja Siti Kraeng Chanda Pulih (date of birth unknown - 1891)</b>	Bugis, Singapore	Daughter of the Sultan of Gowa (present day Sulawesi) Kraeng Chanda Pulih and Hajjah Fatimah. Took over her mother's spice-trading business.	<b>DONOR/ COMMUNITY CREATION</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>29 Nov 1883: Raja Siti created a will/<i>wakaf</i> to bequeath half of the income derived from her property to charity and the other half to her next-of-kin.<sup>106</sup> Benefitted many in Yemen, Saudi Arabia, Malaysia and Singapore.<sup>107</sup></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Married Syed Ahmed bin Abdul Rahman Alsagoff of the Alsagoff family.</li> </ul>

<sup>101</sup> *ibid.* p. 63.

<sup>102</sup> *ibid.* p. 85.

<sup>103</sup> *ibid.* pp. 83-84; Blackburn, 2012, pp. 6-7.

<sup>104</sup> *ibid.* p. 147.

<sup>105</sup> Reeves, 2013, p. 63.

<sup>106</sup> Po, 2018, pp. 475-476.

<sup>107</sup> Ibrahim Ariff & Andik Marinah Ibrahim, 2015, p. 37.

	YEAR OF CONTRIBUTION	NAME	ORIGIN/ ETHNICITY	OCCUPATION	CONTRIBUTIONS	REMARKS
7	1885	<b>Tan Keong Saik</b> 陈恭锡 <b>(1850-1909)</b>  <i>Father of Mrs Lee Choon Guan</i>	Straits Chinese, Malacca	Ship owner.  1890-1909: Founder and on Board of Directors of the Straits Steamship Co Ltd, and director of Tanjong Pagar Dock Co Ltd.  Later on was a member of the Tanjong Pagar Dock Board. <sup>108</sup>	<b>EDUCATION</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 1885: rendered Bishop Oldham much assistance in the establishment of the Anglo-Chinese School and development of schools such as St. Joseph's Institution.<sup>109</sup></li> <li>• Promoted education for Chinese girls in non-Christian homes.<sup>110</sup></li> </ul> <b>COMMUNITY CREATION</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 1906: Helped set up the Chinese Chamber of Commerce.<sup>111</sup></li> <li>• Helped in suppressing secret societies.<sup>112</sup></li> </ul>	<b>ADVISORY &amp; RECOGNITION</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Committee member of the Straits Settlements Association.</li> <li>• 1887: Singapore Municipal Commissioner and on retirement appointed Justice of the Peace.<sup>113</sup></li> <li>• Pioneer member of Chinese Advisory Board and Po Leung Kuk.<sup>114</sup></li> <li>• Member of the Celestial Reasoning Society (1882-1885).<sup>115</sup></li> <li>• "Open-hearted, generous man who at one time took a considerable part in public affairs and whose opinion in matters of policy was frequently sought, and highly valued by the Government."<sup>116</sup></li> </ul>

<sup>108</sup> Song, 2016, pp. 310-313.

<sup>109</sup> *ibid.* p. 163.

<sup>110</sup> *ibid.* p. 313

<sup>111</sup> Tan, B. H. (1978, January 3). Tan Keong Saik. *The Straits Times*, p. 6.

<sup>112</sup> Death of Mr. Keong Saik. (1909, September 30). *The Straits Times*, p. 7.

<sup>113</sup> *ibid.*

<sup>114</sup> *ibid.*

<sup>115</sup> Song, 2016, p. 350.

<sup>116</sup> Death of Mr. Keong Saik. (1909, 30 September). *The Straits Times*, p. 7.

	YEAR OF CONTRIBUTION	NAME	ORIGIN/ ETHNICITY	OCCUPATION	CONTRIBUTIONS	REMARKS
8	1890	<b>Ong Kim Wee</b> 王锦威 (1851-1913)  <i>Cousin of Ong Tek Lim</i>	Malacca	Rubber, Rice.	<p><b>EDUCATION</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Contributed to scholarship funds for the Anglo-Chinese School and St. Joseph's Institution.<sup>117</sup></li> </ul> <p><b>MEDICAL</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1909: Donated \$12,000 to the reconstruction of Tan Tock Seng Hospital.<sup>118</sup></li> <li>\$10,000 to Tan Tock Seng Hospital in aid of the blind.<sup>119</sup></li> </ul>	<p><b>DIASPORIC CONTRIBUTIONS</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Contributed to scholarship funds for St. Francis' School in Malacca.<sup>120</sup></li> <li>Made Justice of Peace of Malacca in 1897, member of the Malacca Municipal Council.<sup>121</sup></li> <li>First Hon. Treasurer of Straits Chinese British Association, Malacca Branch.<sup>122</sup></li> </ul>
9	1894	<b>Song Ong Siang</b> 宋旺相 (1871-1941)	Straits Chinese, Singapore	Legislator, educator, activist.	<p><b>EDUCATION &amp; COMMUNITY CREATION</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Leader of the Chinese Christian Association and the association's Straits Chinese Reading Club where he taught the underprivileged.<sup>123</sup></li> <li>1894: started the first Romanised Malay-language newspaper, <i>Bintang Timor</i>, to create interest in world news among</li> </ul>	<p><b>SOCIAL CONTRIBUTIONS</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1894-1899: Assistant editor of the Straits Settlements Law Report.<sup>124</sup></li> <li>1915: contributed several short articles to the brochure <i>Duty to the British Empire (being an elementary guide for Straits Chinese) during the Great War</i>, and <i>The Straits Chinese and a local Patriotic League</i>.<sup>125</sup></li> </ul>

<sup>117</sup> Song, 2016, p. 97.

<sup>118</sup> *ibid.* pp. 96-97.

<sup>119</sup> *Ibid.* p. 705.

<sup>120</sup> *ibid.*

<sup>121</sup> *ibid.* p. 97.

<sup>122</sup> *ibid.* pp. 457-458.

<sup>123</sup> *ibid.* pp. 356-357.

<sup>124</sup> Song, 2016, p. 345; Death of Sir Ong Siang Song In Singapore. (1941, September 29). *The Straits Times*, p. 8.

<sup>125</sup> Song, 2016, pp. 346, 754.

	YEAR OF CONTRIBUTION	NAME	ORIGIN/ ETHNICITY	OCCUPATION	CONTRIBUTIONS	REMARKS
		<p><b>Song Ong Siang</b> 宋旺相 (1871-1941)</p>			<p>Straits Chinese who knew only a little English.<sup>126</sup></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 1899: Co-founded Singapore Chinese Girls' School.<sup>127</sup></li> <li>• 1923: Compiled <i>One Hundred Years of Singapore</i>.</li> <li>• 1901: enlisted in and contributed significantly to the Chinese company of the Singapore Volunteer Infantry.<sup>128</sup></li> </ul>	<p><b>SOCIAL CONTRIBUTIONS &amp; RECOGNITION</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 1896: Formed the Chinese Philomathic Society, a platform for literary expression and discussions on issues ranging from education and politics to history and science.<sup>129</sup></li> <li>• 1900: A founder of the Straits Chinese British Association (now, the Peranakan Association)<sup>130</sup></li> <li>• 1919 - 1927: member of the Legislative Council.</li> <li>• 1927: first Chinese honoured with the title of Knight Commander of the Most Excellent Order of the British Empire (KBE).<sup>131</sup></li> <li>• "During World War I, Song was a key promoter in the call for support for the British Empire. Song was awarded the Volunteer Long Service Medal in 1922 and the Volunteer Officer's Decoration in 1924.</li> <li>• He was conferred knighthood in January 1936 with</li> </ul>

<sup>126</sup> *ibid.* pp. 344, 397.

<sup>127</sup> *ibid.* p. 345.

<sup>128</sup> *ibid.*; Death of Sir Ong Siang Song in Singapore. (1941, September 29). *The Straits Times*, p. 8.

<sup>129</sup> Song, 2016, p. 345; Straits Chinese British Association is established. (2011). Retrieved from HistorySG.

<sup>130</sup> Song, 2016, p. 345; Straits Chinese British Association is established. (2011). Retrieved from HistorySG.

<sup>131</sup> Knighthood for Song Ong Siang. (1936, January 1). *The Singapore Free Press and Mercantile Advertiser*, p. 1.

	YEAR OF CONTRIBUTION	NAME	ORIGIN/ ETHNICITY	OCCUPATION	CONTRIBUTIONS	REMARKS
		<b>Song Ong Siang</b> 宋旺相 <b>(1871-1941)</b>				<p>the title of Knight Commander of the Most Excellent Order of the British Empire (KBE), in recognition of his varied contributions as a legislator, community leader, church elder and scholar.<sup>132</sup></p> <p><b>ACTIVISM</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 1897-1907: He and Lim Boon Keng co-founded and edited the <i>Straits Chinese Magazine</i> to improve the status of the Straits Chinese community.<sup>133</sup></li> <li>• Advocated a fairer position for women in society and education for women.<sup>134</sup></li> <li>• Member of the Governor's Straits Chinese Consultative Committee and oversaw the enactment of the Civil Marriage Ordinance in 1941, which imposed monogamy on non-Muslim marriages registered under the law.<sup>135</sup></li> </ul>

<sup>132</sup> Infopedia on Song Ong Siang.

<sup>133</sup> Song, 2016, p. 418; Death of Sir Ong Siang Song in Singapore. (1941, September 29). *The Straits Times*, p. 8.

<sup>134</sup> One of greatest Straits Chinese. (1941, September 30). *The Straits Times*, p. 14.

<sup>135</sup> *ibid.*



	YEAR OF CONTRIBUTION	NAME	ORIGIN/ ETHNICITY	OCCUPATION	CONTRIBUTIONS	REMARKS
10	1895	<b>Lim Boon Keng</b> 林文庆 (1869-1957)	Straits Chinese, Singapore	Physician, banker, educator, reformist, legislator, and entrepreneur in timber, tin-mining, shipping, and rubber.  1909: Opened Serangoon Rubber Plantations with Tan Chay Yan. <sup>136</sup>  1912: Founded the Chinese Commercial Bank Ltd.  1919: Co-founder of the Oversea-Chinese Bank Ltd.	<b>EDUCATION</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1899: Co-founded the Singapore Chinese Girls' School with Song Ong Siang and other Straits Chinese - the first English school for Chinese girls.<sup>137</sup></li> <li>1898: He organised Mandarin classes at his home for Straits Chinese students.<sup>138</sup></li> <li>1897: co-founded with Song Ong Siang the Chinese Philomathic Society, which brought together young and old for the regular study of English literature, Western music and the Chinese language.<sup>139</sup></li> </ul> <b>COMMUNITY CREATION</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1900: He and other pro-British elites founded the Straits Chinese British Association.<sup>140</sup></li> <li>1901: He founded the Chinese company of</li> </ul>	<b>ACTIVISM</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Lim was a public intellectual and writer who championed Confucianism and supported Sun Yat-sen's revolution in China.<sup>141</sup></li> <li>One of the only two Chinese members of the influential gentlemen's debating club known as the Straits Philosophical Society (1893-1916).<sup>142</sup></li> </ul> <b>ACTIVISM</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1897-1907: Co-founded <i>The Straits Chinese Magazine</i> presenting his Confucianist and reformist ideologies &amp; to discuss the social ills of opium and importance of female education.<sup>143</sup></li> <li>1906: Co-founded Singapore Anti-Opium Society, for the rehabilitation of opium smokers with SC Yin,<sup>144</sup> even though his grandfather and</li> </ul>

<sup>136</sup> Serangoon rubber. (1909, August 2). *The Straits Times*, p. 7.

<sup>137</sup> Song, 2016, p. 345, 430; 《李元瑾》 Lee, G. K., 1990, pp. 61-66.

<sup>138</sup> 《李元瑾》 Lee, G. K., 1990, p. 65; Song, 2016, pp. 150-151.

<sup>139</sup> Song, 2016, p. 331.

<sup>140</sup> *ibid.* p. 345.

<sup>141</sup> Singapore's grand old man dies. (1957, January 2). *The Straits Times*, p. 1.

<sup>142</sup> Song, 2016, p. 137.

<sup>143</sup> Ang & Lim. (2015, December 31). *Lim Boon Keng*.

<sup>144</sup> Song, 2016, p. 530.

	YEAR OF CONTRIBUTION	NAME	ORIGIN/ ETHNICITY	OCCUPATION	CONTRIBUTIONS	REMARKS
		<p><b>Lim Boon Keng</b> 林文庆 (1869-1957)</p>			<p>the Singapore Volunteer Infantry.<sup>145</sup></p>	<p>father were opium and spirit farmers working under Cheang Hong Lim.<sup>146</sup></p> <p><b>ADVISORY &amp; RECOGNITION</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 1895-1903, 1915-1921: served as a member of the Straits Settlements Legislative Council for 14 years, and pushed for social reforms such as female education and regulations on opium consumption, with the aim of improving the lives of the Chinese community.<sup>147</sup></li> <li>• 1896: Member of Chinese Advisory Board.<sup>148</sup></li> <li>• 1905-1906: Municipal Commissioner.<sup>149</sup></li> <li>• 1906: Founding member of Singapore Chamber of Commerce.</li> <li>• 1918: Awarded Order of the British Empire (O.B.E) in recognition of his public service. Decorated with the Commander Crown of Italy and the</li> </ul>

<sup>145</sup> Ibid. p. 331.

<sup>146</sup> Ibid. p. 235.

<sup>147</sup> Babas who did much for education. (1983, November 13). *The Straits Times*, p. 21.

<sup>148</sup> Song, 2016, p 331.

<sup>149</sup> Ibid. p. 331.

	YEAR OF CONTRIBUTION	NAME	ORIGIN/ ETHNICITY	OCCUPATION	CONTRIBUTIONS	REMARKS
		<b>Lim Boon Keng</b> 林文庆 (1869-1957)				Albertus Medal of Saxony. <sup>150</sup> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1919: Received an honorary doctorate L.L.D.(Doctor of Laws) from Hong Kong University.<sup>151</sup></li> </ul>
11	1896?	<b>Tan Chay Yan</b> 陈齐贤 (1871-1916)  <i>Son of Tan Teck Guan, Grandson of Tan Tock Seng</i>	Straits Chinese, Malacca	Co-founded Sembawang Rubber Plantations in Singapore in 1898 comprising 3,800 acres of rubber estates. <sup>152</sup>  1896: A pioneer Chinese rubber planter in Malacca. <sup>153</sup>  Director of Serangoon Rubber Plantations. <sup>154</sup>  In 1907, helped revive Tan Kah Kee's fortunes by selling 180,000 rubber seeds to him. <sup>155</sup>	<b>(DIASPORIC) COMMUNITY CREATION</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Committee Member of the Malacca Branch of the Straits Chinese British Association in 1900. Became first President.<sup>156</sup></li> </ul> <b>MEDICAL &amp; EDUCATION</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1911: Tan contributed \$15,000 towards the building of the Straits and Federated Malay States Government Medical School's Tan Teck Guan Building, an annexe to the Medical School.<sup>157</sup></li> </ul>	<b>ADVISORY &amp; RECOGNITION</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Justice of the Peace at 24 years of age, Municipal Commissioner.<sup>158</sup></li> <li>President of Malacca Chinese Club, Malacca Chinese Lawn Tennis Club.</li> <li>Chairman of Malacca Chinese Chamber of Commerce.<sup>159</sup></li> <li>Founding committee member of the Straits Chinese British Association in 1900.<sup>160</sup></li> </ul>

<sup>150</sup> Singapore's grand old man dies. (1957, 2 January). *The Straits Times*, p. 1.

<sup>151</sup> *ibid.*

<sup>152</sup> Coates, 1987, pp. 119–120.

<sup>153</sup> Mr. Tan Chay Yan dead. (1916, March 7). *The Straits Times*, p. 7.

<sup>154</sup> Serangoon rubber. (1909, August 2). *The Straits Times*, p. 7.

<sup>155</sup> Yong, 2014, p. 45.

<sup>156</sup> Song, 2016, p. 417; Lim, K. T. (1978, July 25). Follow the leader. *The Business Times*, p. 7.

<sup>157</sup> The King Edward VII College of Medicine was established in 1905 as the Straits and Federated Malay States Government Medical School. It was renamed King Edward VII Medical School in 1912, and then King Edward VII College of Medicine in 1921.

<sup>158</sup> Lim, K. T. (1978, July 25). Follow the leader. *The Business Times*, p. 7.

<sup>159</sup> Mr. Tan Chay Yan dead. (1916, March 7). *The Straits Times*, p. 7.

<sup>160</sup> Straits Chinese British Association. (1900, August 18). *The Straits Times*, p. 2; Straits Chinese British Association. (1900, October 22). *The Straits Times*, p. 2.

	YEAR OF CONTRIBUTION	NAME	ORIGIN/ ETHNICITY	OCCUPATION	CONTRIBUTIONS	REMARKS
		<p><b>Tan Chay Yan</b> 陈齐贤 (1871-1916)</p> <p><i>Son of Tan Teck Guan, Grandson of Tan Tock Seng</i></p>			<p>which housed offices, a library, museum and lecture room.<sup>161</sup> Named after Tan's father, the annexe opened in 1911 and is today part of the Singapore General Hospital. He influenced Lee Choon Guan and Tan Soo Guan regarding endowments to Raffles College.</p> <p><b>WAR EFFORTS</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• During World War I, he collected contributions from Malacca businessmen for British war loans and for a fund to purchase a warplane. He contributed some \$800 of the \$12,820 raised for the latter purpose.<sup>162</sup></li> </ul>	
12	1898	<p><b>Yin Suat Chuan (SC Yin)</b> 殷雪村 (1877-1958)</p> <p><b>Age of Arrival: 21</b></p> <p><i>Brother of Mrs Lim Boon Keng</i></p>	Amoy, China	<p>Physician &amp; banker. Founder director of the Oversea-Chinese Banking Corporation (OCBC)</p> <p>1899: studied medicine at University of Michigan.</p>	<p><b>EDUCATION</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• March 1911: In the committee of the first Chinese (Chung Hua) Girls' School.<sup>163</sup></li> </ul>	<p><b>ACTIVISM</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Founded the Anti-Opium Society with Lim Boon Keng.<sup>164</sup></li> <li>• 1906: Was in charge of the Home for the Cure of Opium Habitues known as</li> </ul>

<sup>161</sup> Song, 2016, p. 531; Lim, K. T. (1978, July 25). Follow the leader. *The Business Times*, p. 7; Koh. G. (2002, December 6). Tan Teck Guan Building (left) 16A College Road, Singapore 169854. *The Straits Times*, p. 13.

<sup>162</sup> Untitled. (1915, October 15). *The Straits Times*, p. 6; Malacca Chinese aircraft fund. (1916, February 17). *The Straits Times*, p. 8.

<sup>163</sup> Song, 2016, pp. 656-657.

<sup>164</sup> Song, 2016, *ibid.* pp. 530, 606.

	YEAR OF CONTRIBUTION	NAME	ORIGIN/ ETHNICITY	OCCUPATION	CONTRIBUTIONS	REMARKS
		<p><b>Yin Suat Chuan (SC Yin)</b> 殷雪村 (1877-1958)</p> <p><b>Age of Arrival: 21</b></p> <p>Brother of Mrs Lim Boon Keng</p>				<p>'Khai Eng Soh' – the Opium Refuge).<sup>165</sup></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1906: Played a prominent role in Anti-Opium Movement,<sup>166</sup> working with Christian churches of Singapore.</li> </ul> <p><b>ADVISORY &amp; RECOGNITION</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1925: Justice of the Peace.<sup>167</sup> Served the Municipal Commission and helped the less fortunate in the Chinese community.<sup>168</sup></li> <li>May 1911: Helped form and became president of the Straits Chinese Football Association.<sup>169</sup></li> </ul>
13	1899	<p><b>Khoo Seok Wan/Khoo Teck Him</b> 邱菽园 (1874-1941)</p> <p><b>Age of Arrival: 7 years old</b></p>	Fujian, China	<p>Literary scholar, and poet.</p> <p>Inherited a considerable estate from his father.</p>	<p><b>EDUCATION</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1899: Co-founded Singapore Chinese Girls' School with Lim Boon Keng and Song Ong Siang, and donated \$3,000 towards the fund to start this girls' school.<sup>170</sup></li> <li>1902: Promoted Confucianism among youth in</li> </ul>	<p><b>SOCIAL CONTRIBUTIONS</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1897: Co-founder and editor of <i>Thien Nan Shin Pao</i> (天南新报), a progressive newspaper advocating reforms in China, with Lim Boon Keng.<sup>171</sup></li> </ul>

<sup>165</sup> ibid. pp. 525-526.

<sup>166</sup> Author's father is buried in colony. (1958, April 5). *The Straits Times*, p. 9.

<sup>167</sup> National Library Singapore. (2018, October 5). *Yin Suat Chuan*.

<sup>168</sup> Song, 2016, p. 606.

<sup>169</sup> ibid. p. 664.

<sup>170</sup> Ibid. p. 430.

<sup>171</sup> Song, 2016, p. 430; Turnbull, 2009, p. 121.

	YEAR OF CONTRIBUTION	NAME	ORIGIN/ ETHNICITY	OCCUPATION	CONTRIBUTIONS	REMARKS
		<p><b>Khoo Seok Wan/Khoo Teck Him</b> 邱菽园 (1874-1941)</p> <p><i>Age of Arrival: 7 years old</i></p>			<p>Singapore by publishing a textbook for Chinese students.<sup>172</sup></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 1913-1920: Chief editor for Cheng Nam Jit Poh (振南日报).<sup>173</sup></li> <li>• 1926: Secretary of the Singapore Chinese Chamber of Commerce.<sup>174</sup></li> <li>• 1929: Editor of <i>Sin Chew Jit Poh</i> (星洲日报).<sup>175</sup></li> <li>• 1930: clerk for Chang Chow Association (漳州十属旅星同乡会).<sup>176</sup></li> </ul> <p><b>ACTIVISM</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• “One of the earliest Chinese-educated men to promote education for girls in Singapore” and “encouraged the setting up of modern Chinese-medium schools in Singapore.”<sup>177</sup></li> </ul> <p><b>DIASPORIC GIVING</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 10,000 silver taels to disaster relief in China.<sup>178</sup></li> <li>• 1900: Donated \$1,100 to Indian Famine Fund, Straits &amp; Malayan South African War Relief Funds.<sup>179</sup></li> </ul>

<sup>172</sup> 《邱菽园》 Qiu, S., 1902.

<sup>173</sup> 《李元瑾》 Li, Y., 2001, p. 42.

<sup>174</sup> *ibid.*

<sup>175</sup> *ibid.*

<sup>176</sup> *ibid.*

<sup>177</sup> 《邱新民》 Qiu, X., 1993, p. 47.

<sup>178</sup> Yen, 2016, pp. 72-73.

<sup>179</sup> Song, 2016, p. 444.

	YEAR OF CONTRIBUTION	NAME	ORIGIN/ ETHNICITY	OCCUPATION	CONTRIBUTIONS	REMARKS
14	1899	<p><b>Tan Boo Liat</b> 陈武烈 (1875 - 1934)</p> <p><i>Great-Grandson of Tan Tock Seng</i></p> <p><i>Grand-father: Tan Kim Ching</i></p> <p><i>Father: Tan Soon Toh</i></p>	Straits Chinese, Singapore	Businessman.	<p><b>EDUCATION</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1899: Co-founder of the Singapore Chinese Girls' School and took the position of Honorary Treasurer.<sup>180</sup></li> <li>Raised funds for the establishment of Tao Nan (1906) and Ai Tong Schools (1912) to promote Chinese education in Singapore with<sup>181</sup> first inclusive admission policy, admitting students not only from the Hokkien community, but also other dialect groups.<sup>182</sup></li> <li>1896: was one of the trustees of the Anglo-Chinese Boarding School.<sup>183</sup></li> </ul> <p><b>COMMUNITY:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1897-1916: President of Thian Hock Keng Temple.</li> <li>Chairman of Pok Chek Kiong Temple's Committee of Management.<sup>184</sup></li> <li>Renovated it in 1906.<sup>185</sup></li> <li>He stopped the</li> </ul>	<p><b>ACTIVISM</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1906: President and co-founder with Lim Boon Keng and SC Yin of the Zhenwu Jieyan Shanse (Anti-opium Society), a charitable organisation for the rehabilitation of opium smokers.<sup>186</sup></li> </ul> <p><b>ADVISORY &amp; RECOGNITION</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Was <i>persona grata</i> at the Siamese Court, and had conferred on him the title of Phra Anukul Siamkitch by the King of Siam.<sup>187</sup></li> <li>Statutory member of the Management Committee of the Tan Tock Seng Hospital.<sup>188</sup></li> <li>Served on the committee of the Straits Chinese British Association and was an active volunteer for several years.</li> <li>Was one of the Chinese representatives in the Straits</li> </ul>

<sup>180</sup> Singapore Hokkien Huay Kuan (1<sup>st</sup> ed.). (2016). pp. 41-43; Song, 2016, pp. 430, 447.

<sup>181</sup> Singapore Hokkien Huay Kuan (1<sup>st</sup> ed.). (2016). pp. 41-43.

<sup>182</sup> *ibid.*

<sup>183</sup> Song, 2016, p. 447.

<sup>184</sup> National Library Singapore. (2018, October 5). *Tan Boo Liat*.

<sup>185</sup> Singapore Hokkien Huay Kuan (1<sup>st</sup> ed.). (2016). pp. 41-43

<sup>186</sup> Singapore Hokkien Huay Kuan (1<sup>st</sup> ed.). (2016). p. 44.

<sup>187</sup> Song, 2016, p. 447.

<sup>188</sup> Singapore Hokkien Huay Kuan, 2016, pp. 41-43; Song, 2016, p. 447.

	YEAR OF CONTRIBUTION	NAME	ORIGIN/ ETHNICITY	OCCUPATION	CONTRIBUTIONS	REMARKS
		<p><b>Tan Boo Liat</b> 陈武烈 (1875 - 1934)</p> <p><i>Great-Grandson of Tan Tock Seng</i></p> <p><i>Grand-father: Tan Kim Ching</i></p> <p><i>Father: Tan Soon Toh</i></p>			<p>practice of setting up elaborate ceremonies in temples and saved some \$40,000 to \$50,000 for each event, urging that the funds so saved might be devoted to educational purposes.<sup>189</sup></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 1911: Led the Fukien Protection Fund and collected \$130,000 from the Hokkien <i>pangs</i> with Tan Kah Kee.<sup>190</sup></li> <li>• 1920: A member of Rice Distributing Board. Any profits accrued from the sale of rice was, after the payment of all expenses, devoted to charitable purposes.<sup>191</sup></li> </ul>	<p>contingent at the Coronation of King Edward VII in England.<sup>192</sup></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Part of the Chinese Company Singapore Volunteer Infantry.<sup>193</sup></li> </ul>
15	1902	<p><b>Eu Tong Sen</b> 余東旋 (1877-1941)</p>	Cantonese, Penang	<p>Traditional Chinese medicine, the "King of Tin", owned rubber estate property.</p> <p>1920: set up Lee Wah Bank with two businessmen to cater mainly to the Cantonese community.<sup>194</sup></p>	<p><b>COMMUNITY CREATION</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• During his time in the FMS Council, he resolved 3 key problems: opium, gambling and prostitution.<sup>195</sup></li> </ul> <p><b>INFRASTRUCTURE</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The British Government</li> </ul>	<p><b>ADVISORY &amp; RECOGNITION</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Member of Po Leung Kuk and Chinese Advisory Board.<sup>196</sup></li> <li>• Unofficial Chinese representative of the FMS's Legislative Council,</li> </ul>

<sup>189</sup> Song, 2016, pp. 587-588; Singapore Hokkien Huay Kuan (1<sup>st</sup> ed.). (2016). pp. 41-43.

<sup>190</sup> Singapore Hokkien Huay Kuan (1<sup>st</sup> ed.). (2016). p. 45.

<sup>191</sup> Rice Distributing Board. (1920, July 1). *Malaya Tribune*, p. 4.

<sup>192</sup> Song, 2016, p. 447.

<sup>193</sup> *ibid.* p. 483.

<sup>194</sup> Savage & Yeoh, 2013, p. 119.

<sup>195</sup> The Federated Malay States (FMS) were created in 1874 providing the British rich tin and rubber lands. Sharp, 2009, p. 80.

<sup>196</sup> Sharp, 2009, p. 29.



	YEAR OF CONTRIBUTION	NAME	ORIGIN/ ETHNICITY	OCCUPATION	CONTRIBUTIONS	REMARKS
		<p><b>Eu Tong Sen</b> 余東旋 <b>(1877-1941)</b></p>			<p>named the street he rebuilt after him, his having also bought over two existing Chinese opera theatres (Heng Seng Peng and Heng Wai Sun).<sup>197</sup></p> <p><b>EDUCATION</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1902: Contributed to the establishment of scholarships with a \$100,000 donation to Raffles College, alongside other Chinese leaders.<sup>198</sup></li> </ul>	<p>served for 9 years (1911-1920).<sup>199</sup></p> <p><b>WAR EFFORTS</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1914: donated to the Prince of Wales' Fund and other relief funds.<sup>200</sup></li> <li>1914: Donated an airplane, an aircraft and a tank to the British war effort. Helped solve food shortage issues when World War I ended.<sup>201</sup></li> </ul> <p><b>DIASPORIC GIVING</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1918: Donated \$55,000 towards Hong Kong University.<sup>202</sup></li> <li>Gave generously to good causes in Britain, Singapore, Hong Kong and China.<sup>203</sup></li> </ul> <p><b>RECOGNITION</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1919: Conferred the Order of the British Empire (O.B.E).<sup>204</sup></li> </ul>

<sup>197</sup> Savage & Yeoh, 2013, pp. 119-120.

<sup>198</sup> Song, 2016, pp. 477, 479.

<sup>199</sup> *ibid.* p. 79.

<sup>200</sup> Song, 2016, p. 481.

<sup>201</sup> Sharp, 2009, p. 88.

<sup>202</sup> Song, 2016, p. 481.

<sup>203</sup> Savage & Yeoh, B. S. A., 2013, p. 119.

<sup>204</sup> Song, 2016, p. 481.

	YEAR OF CONTRIBUTION	NAME	ORIGIN/ ETHNICITY	OCCUPATION	CONTRIBUTIONS	REMARKS
16	1902	<b>Lim Peng Siang</b> 林秉祥 (1872-1944)	Hokkien, Amoy, China	1912: Managing director of Chinese Commercial Bank. <sup>205</sup>  In shipping, oil, rice and cement businesses - the Ho Hong Steamship Co Ltd, Ho Hong Oil Mills Ltd, Ho Hong Parboiled Rice Mill, Ho Hong Bank Ltd, and Ho Hong Portland Cement Works Ltd).  Director of Central Engine Works Ltd and the Central Motors Ltd (public companies).	<b>EDUCATION</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 1902: Donated \$60,000 as funds towards future scholarships for better secondary education.</li> <li>• 1919: Gave \$60,000 as scholarships to Raffles College.<sup>206</sup></li> <li>• Gave to the YMCA Building Fund.<sup>207</sup></li> </ul>	<b>WAR EFFORTS</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• During World War I, he engaged in fundraising activities and contributed to like funds.<sup>208</sup></li> <li>• 1915: Donated an airplane with Lee Choon Guan as well.<sup>209</sup></li> </ul> <b>ADVISORY &amp; RECOGNITION</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 1913, 1915-16: involved in the formation of Singapore Chinese Chamber of Commerce and served as its President.<sup>210</sup></li> <li>• Member of Chinese Advisory Board and a Justice of the Peace.<sup>211</sup></li> <li>• Like his father, was a naturalised British subject after 1902.<sup>212</sup></li> <li>• "Mr Lim Peng Siang utilised practically every cent of his money in various industrial developments, thereby giving employment to several thousand people."<sup>213</sup></li> </ul>

<sup>205</sup> *ibid.* p. 716.

<sup>206</sup> *ibid.* p. 477.

<sup>207</sup> *ibid.* p. 779; Y.W.C.A. Building Fund. (1917, August 18). *The Singapore Free Press and Mercantile Advertiser*.

<sup>208</sup> Song, 2016, p. 172.

<sup>209</sup> *ibid.* p. 734.

<sup>210</sup> *Ibid.* p. 171.

<sup>211</sup> *Ibid.* p. 171.

<sup>212</sup> Song, 2016, p. 171.

<sup>213</sup> *ibid.* p. 171.

	YEAR OF CONTRIBUTION	NAME	ORIGIN/ ETHNICITY	OCCUPATION	CONTRIBUTIONS	REMARKS
		Lim Peng Siang 林秉祥 (1872-1944)				<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• “He has never been known to refuse help to a deserving cause, and innumerable are the charities to which he has liberally contributed. He has set an example worthy of being followed by the rising members of the Chinese community.<sup>214</sup>”</li> </ul>
17	1902	Seow Poh Leng (1883-1942)	Straits Chinese, Singapore	Banker.	<p><b>COMMUNITY CREATION</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Concerned with public welfare and organised numerous “charity and social concerts” to raise funds for various causes. He also contributed articles to <i>The Straits Chinese Magazine</i> on issues relating to education and social reform.<sup>215</sup></li> <li>• 1902: Raised funds to repair the roof of the Straits Chinese Recreation Club on Hong Lim Green.<sup>216</sup></li> </ul>	<p><b>ADVISORY</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 1905: Honorary secretary of the Straits Chinese Recreation Club.</li> <li>• Honorary Secretary and Treasurer of the South Malaya Boy Scouts Association.</li> <li>• Vice-President of Tanjong Katong Swimming Party (now the Chinese Swimming Club).<sup>217</sup></li> </ul>

<sup>214</sup> *ibid.* p. 172.

<sup>215</sup> Song, 2016, p. 677.

<sup>216</sup> *ibid.* p. 519.

<sup>217</sup> *ibid.*

	YEAR OF CONTRIBUTION	NAME	ORIGIN/ ETHNICITY	OCCUPATION	CONTRIBUTIONS	REMARKS
18	1903	Loke Yew 陆佑 (1845-1917)  <i>Age of Arrival:</i> 11	Hokkien, Guangdong, China	Mining.	<p><b>HEALTHCARE</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1903: Donated \$50,000 to the Government of Singapore for the building of Tan Tock Seng Hospital.<sup>218</sup></li> <li>Donated \$50,000 to Raffles Hospital and another \$50,000 to the government either to improve the conditions for patients quarantined on St. John's Island or to build a new pauper's hospital.<sup>219</sup></li> </ul> <p><b>EDUCATION</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1905: Donated \$9,000 towards King Edward VII Medical School.<sup>220</sup></li> </ul>	<p><b>ADVISORY &amp; RECOGNITION</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Played a prominent role in the formation of Singapore Chinese Chamber of Commerce.<sup>221</sup></li> <li>1917: Awarded honorary degree L.L.D (Doctor of Laws) from University of Hong Kong.<sup>222</sup></li> <li>Conferred the Companion of the Order of St Michael and St George (C.M.G.) on 1 May 1915.<sup>223</sup></li> <li>A naturalised British subject since 1903.<sup>224</sup></li> <li>In support of British war efforts, Loke invested \$1.5 million dollars in a 1916 war loan arranged by the FMS Government.<sup>225</sup></li> </ul> <p><b>DIASPORIC LEADERSHIP &amp; GIVING</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Served as the inaugural president of the Selangor Chinese Chamber of Commerce, which was</li> </ul>

<sup>218</sup> *ibid.* p. 96.

<sup>219</sup> *ibid.* pp. 96, 498.

<sup>220</sup> *ibid.* pp. 529-530.

<sup>221</sup> *ibid.* p. 561.

<sup>222</sup> Towkay Loke Yew, C.M.G., L.L.D. (1917, January 5). *The Straits Times*, p. 9.

<sup>223</sup> Towkay Loke Yew honoured. (1915, May 3). *The Singapore Free Press and Mercantile Advertiser*, p. 4.

<sup>224</sup> Untitled. (1903, May 21). *The Straits Times*, p. 4.

<sup>225</sup> F.M.S. war loan. (1916, May 17). *The Straits Times*, p. 9.

	YEAR OF CONTRIBUTION	NAME	ORIGIN/ ETHNICITY	OCCUPATION	CONTRIBUTIONS	REMARKS
		<p><b>Loke Yew</b> 陆佑 (1845-1917)</p> <p><i>Age of Arrival:</i> 11</p>				<p>established in 1904 to represent Chinese business interests in the state.<sup>226</sup></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Built a food distribution centre in Kuala Lumpur, where he dispensed free rice to the poor when World War I broke out.<sup>227</sup></li> <li>• 1912: Gifted \$50,000 to University of Hong Kong, on top of granting the school a \$500,000 interest-free loan.<sup>228</sup></li> <li>• 1916: Established a scholarship to sponsor poor Chinese students from Malaya for studies at University of Hong Kong.<sup>229</sup></li> </ul>
19	1904	<p><b>Lim Nee Soon</b> 林义顺/林峇顺 (1879-1936)</p>	Teochew, Singapore	Timber merchant, with estates in rubber and pineapples.	<p><b>EDUCATION</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 1919: Co-founded Chinese High School, Singapore's first Chinese Secondary School with Tan Kah Kee, becoming Treasurer. Donated \$10,000 for the opening of the school and helped in raising funds for it.<sup>230</sup></li> </ul>	<p><b>ADVISORY &amp; RECOGNITION</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 1913-1921: member of Singapore Rural Board.</li> <li>• 1917: member of the Welfare Board.</li> <li>• 1918: Justice of the Peace.</li> <li>• 1919: President of Thong Chai Yi Yuen Hospital.<sup>231</sup></li> </ul>

<sup>226</sup> Selangor Chamber of Commerce. (1904, March 30). *The Straits Times*, p. 4.

<sup>227</sup> Untitled. (1914, August 29). *The Straits Times*, p. 8.

<sup>228</sup> Godley, 1981, p. 14.

<sup>229</sup> Treasure was buried in the files. (1955, September 23). *The Straits Times*, p. 1.

<sup>230</sup> Song, 2016, p. 732.

<sup>231</sup> Who's who in Malaya, 1925, p. 120.

	YEAR OF CONTRIBUTION	NAME	ORIGIN/ ETHNICITY	OCCUPATION	CONTRIBUTIONS	REMARKS
		<b>Lim Nee Soon</b> 林义顺/林峇顺 (1879-1936)			<b>COMMUNITY CREATION</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Donated a burial ground for the Chinese community in Seletar.<sup>232</sup></li> <li>1904: Contributed \$50,000 to start a revolutionary newspaper called <i>Thoe Lam Jit Poh</i>.<sup>233</sup></li> <li>1929: Formed a new Teochew Association called the Singapore Teochew Poit Ip Huay Kuan.<sup>234</sup></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Member of the Raffles College Committee.</li> <li>Member of St. Andrew Medical Mission Hospital.<sup>235</sup></li> <li>President of Singapore Chinese Chamber of Commerce twice.</li> <li>1924: Member of British Malaya Opium Committee to restrict opium use.<sup>236</sup></li> <li>1925: Became honorary adviser to the Chinese president and to the Ministry of Agriculture and Commerce in Peking.<sup>237</sup> The Peking Government awarded him the 2nd Class Order of Chiaho Decoration (Excellent Crop).<sup>238</sup></li> </ul>
20	1905	<b>Manasseh Meyer</b> (1846-1930)	Baghdadi Jew Born in Baghdad and educated in Calcutta	Most prominent Sephardic Jewish leader in colonial Singapore.	<b>EDUCATION</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1928: Contributed \$150,000 to Raffles College, a huge sum at that time.<sup>239</sup></li> </ul>	<b>BRITISH RECOGNITION</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1929: Knighted by George V of Great Britain "in recognition of his public services and benevolence."<sup>240</sup></li> </ul>

<sup>232</sup> *ibid.* p. 731.

<sup>233</sup> Turnbull, 2009, p. 122; Chew & Lee (Eds.). (1991). p. 69; Lim Nee Soon to be buried in Nanking. (1936, April 12). *The Straits Times*, p. 1.

<sup>234</sup> Koh, J. (2016, February 6). *The Straits Times*; Yen, 2016, pp. 84-85.

<sup>235</sup> Song, 2016, p. 729.

<sup>236</sup> *Who's who in Malaya*, 1925, p. 120.

<sup>237</sup> *ibid.*

<sup>238</sup> Song, 2016, p. 731.

<sup>239</sup> Lim & Kho, 2005, p. 30.

<sup>240</sup> *ibid.* p. 34.

	YEAR OF CONTRIBUTION	NAME	ORIGIN/ ETHNICITY	OCCUPATION	CONTRIBUTIONS	REMARKS
		<b>Manasseh Meyer (1846-1930)</b>		Founded import-export business known as Meyer Brothers involved in opium trade. Came to Singapore 1861, educated at St Joseph's Institution.	<p><b>COMMUNITY CREATION</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To meet the need for a larger house of worship, he built the Chesed-El Synagogue on private property neighboring his home at Oxley Rise in 1905.<sup>241</sup></li> <li>• Led the congregation with thanksgiving, Torah readings and prayers.<sup>242</sup></li> <li>• Meyer and 3 other local Jews purchased large plot of land along Moulmein Road as a cemetery for local Jews.<sup>243</sup></li> </ul>	<p>Only person in Malaya knighted that year given rank: Knight Bachelor.<sup>244</sup></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 1922: Meyer hosted Einstein and his wife at his Belle Vue estate and pledged a large donation towards the Zionist cause.<sup>245</sup></li> </ul>
21	1906	<b>Goh Siew Tin 吴寿珍 (1854-1909)</b>	Hokkien, Singapore	Merchant, ship owner, tin and timber merchant.	<p><b>EDUCATION</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 1906: One of the founders of Tao Nan School (道南学堂).<sup>246</sup></li> </ul> <p><b>COMMUNITY CREATION</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 1897-1915: Leader of Thian Hock Keng temple.<sup>247</sup></li> </ul>	<p><b>ADVISORY</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 1906, 1908: First president of Singapore Chinese Chamber of Commerce.<sup>248</sup></li> <li>• 1898: Committee of Po Leung Kuk.<sup>249</sup></li> </ul>

<sup>241</sup> *ibid.* p. 27.

<sup>242</sup> *ibid.* p. 27.

<sup>243</sup> *ibid.* p. 34.

<sup>244</sup> Bieder, 2007, p. 84.

<sup>245</sup> *ibid.* p. 61.

<sup>246</sup> Singapore Hokkien Huay Kuan (1<sup>st</sup> ed.). (2016). pp. 46-47; National Library Singapore. (2018, October 5). *Goh Siew Tin*.

<sup>247</sup> Singapore Hokkien Huay Kuan (1<sup>st</sup> ed.). (2016). pp. 46-47.

<sup>248</sup> National Library Singapore. (2018, October 5). *Goh Siew Tin*.

<sup>249</sup> *ibid.*

	YEAR OF CONTRIBUTION	NAME	ORIGIN/ ETHNICITY	OCCUPATION	CONTRIBUTIONS	REMARKS
22	1906	Lim Chwee Chian (1864-1923)	Fujian, China	Bumboat worker, shipping services in Singapore and Malaya, wolfram mining – the “Wolfram King of Malaya.”  1917: Co-founded Ho Hong Bank with Lim Peng Siang, Lim Boon Keng and Lim Ho Puah. <sup>250</sup>	<p><b>COMMUNITY CREATION</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1919: On board of directors for the restoration of Siong Lim Temple (Lian Shan Shuang Lin Monastery).<sup>251</sup></li> <li>Leader of Ngee Heng Kongs, a Chinese secret society in Singapore.<sup>252 253</sup></li> <li>A community leader in Lim’s clan association Kiu Leong Tong, chaired the board of Thong Chai Hospital.<sup>254</sup></li> </ul> <p><b>EDUCATION</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Supported Tao Nan, Ai Tong, Nanyang Girls’ High, Chung Hwa Girls’ &amp; Chinese High Schools. Chairman of many school boards.<sup>255</sup></li> </ul>	<p><b>ADVISORY &amp; RECOGNITION</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1906: helped form the Singapore Chinese Chamber of Commerce.<sup>256</sup></li> <li>1912: Member of the Po Leung Kuk.</li> <li>1918: Justice of the Peace.</li> <li>1919: Member of Chinese Advisory Board.</li> <li>Co-founded the Ee Hoe Hean Club.<sup>257</sup></li> <li>“...on his death was president of the Chinese Chamber of Commerce, Kiew Long Tong Kongsee, Ai Tong &amp; Chinese High Schools, Ee Ho Hean Club.<sup>258</sup>”</li> </ul>

<sup>250</sup> Savage & Yeoh, 2013, p. 82.

<sup>251</sup> 《柯木林 (主编)》Ke, M. L. (Ed.). (1995). p. 134.

<sup>252</sup> Savage & Yeoh, 2013, p. 82.

<sup>253</sup> Lim’s birthday fell on the first day of the Chinese New Year. Each year, he would pawn a chest of his wife’s jewellery for \$20,000 a few days before his birthday and distribute the money among members of his secret society. Then for the 15 days of Chinese New Year, Lim would hold banquets at Ee Hoe Hean Club and put up a street opera to celebrate his birthday. With the gratuities he received from guests at his birthday celebration, he would then redeem his wife’s jewellery on the fifth day of Chinese New Year. See 彭松涛 [Peng, S. T.]. (1986). 〈林推迁〉 [Lim Chwee Chian]. In 黄溢华 (主编) [Huang, Y. H. (Ed.)], 《怡和轩九十周年纪念特刊: 1895-1985》 [Ee Hoe Hean Club 90th anniversary commemorative book: 1895-1985] (pp. 45-48). 新加坡: 大水牛出版机构, p. 46.

<sup>254</sup> 杨进发 [Yang, J. F.]. (1988). 〈战前星华社会热心家 - 林推迁〉 [Lim Chwee Chian: A social enthusiast in pre-war Singapore]. In 《陈嘉庚研究文集》 [Collected papers on the studies of Tan Kah Kee] (pp. 18-23). 北京: 中国友谊出版公司, p. 22.; 柯木林 (主编). [Ke, M. L. (Ed.)] (1995). 《新华历史人物列传》 [Who’s who in the Chinese community of Singapore]. 新加坡: 教育出版社, p. 134.

<sup>255</sup> *ibid.* pp. 20-21.

<sup>256</sup> Song, 2016, p. 561.

<sup>257</sup> Savage & Yeoh, 2013, p. 82.

<sup>258</sup> Song, 2016, p. 763.



	YEAR OF CONTRIBUTION	NAME	ORIGIN/ ETHNICITY	OCCUPATION	CONTRIBUTIONS	REMARKS
23	1906	<b>Ong Tek Lim (1875-1911)</b>  <i>Son of Ong Kew Ho</i>	Straits Chinese, Singapore	Tapioca farms.	<b>EDUCATION</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provided 'Ong Tek Lim' scholarship at the Anglo-Chinese School.<sup>259</sup></li> <li>• 1913: To perpetuate his memory, his widow, Chia Lim Neo, gave \$3,000 to establish three scholarships bearing his name in the Senior Cambridge and 7th Standard classes at the Anglo-Chinese School, and 'Ong Tek Lim' Scholarships in both Raffles and St Joseph's Institutions.<sup>260</sup></li> </ul>	<b>ADVISORY &amp; RECOGNITION</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Justice of the Peace.</li> <li>• 1906: Municipal Commissioner for the Central Ward for 3 years.<sup>261</sup></li> <li>• Took a keen interest in the affairs both of the Chinese Company Singapore Volunteer Infantry (being an honorary member of the Singapore Volunteer Company until his death) and of the Straits Chinese British Association.<sup>262</sup></li> </ul>
24	1906	<b>Tan Kah Kee (1874-1961)</b>  <b>Age of Arrival: 16 years old</b>	Fujian, China	Owned businesses in rice, shipping, pineapple, and rubber. <sup>263</sup>	<b>EDUCATION</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Primary Schools: Helped to set up schools like Tao Nan (1906), Ai Tong(1912), Nanyang Normal School/Nan Chiau Girls'(1941/1947), Kong Hwa (1951) and Chong Hock Girls'/Chongwen Ge (1949).<sup>264</sup></li> <li>• Secondary School: Founded and donated \$30,000 to Singapore Chinese High School (1919),</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• He "was charitable in temperament and donated a sum of \$0.5million towards charities between 1904 and 1931. He led 5 major fundraising campaigns between 1917 and 1934 for charities."<sup>265</sup></li> <li>• "A sound economic base allowed Tan Kah Kee to be more charitable and generous in his social, educational</li> </ul>

<sup>259</sup> Song, 2016, p. 684.

<sup>260</sup> Song, 2016, p. 684; Local school benefactions. (1913, April 28). *The Straits Times*, p. 8.

<sup>261</sup> Song, 2016, pp. 581-583, 684.

<sup>262</sup> *ibid.* p. 684.

<sup>263</sup> *ibid.* p. 617.

<sup>264</sup> Tan Kah Kee: A Chinese patriot. (1987, December 22). *Unknown*, p. 8; Gacek, 2016, p. 176.

<sup>265</sup> Yong, 1986, p. 166.

	YEAR OF CONTRIBUTION	NAME	ORIGIN/ ETHNICITY	OCCUPATION	CONTRIBUTIONS	REMARKS
		<p><b>Tan Kah Kee (1874-1961)</b></p> <p><b>Age of Arrival: 16 years old</b></p>			<p>the first Chinese secondary school.<sup>266</sup></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Helped to establish Nanyang Girls' School (1918), Nanyang Fishery and Marine School (1939).<sup>267</sup></li> <li>One of the founders of Nanyang University.<sup>268</sup></li> <li>English-medium Schools: donated generously to Anglo-Chinese School (\$30,000) and to Raffles College(\$10,000).<sup>269</sup></li> <li>1961: Set up a \$5 million Tan Kah Kee Foundation for scholarships.<sup>270</sup></li> <li>Subsidised schools like Chong Cheng and Chiang Teck.<sup>271</sup></li> <li>1917: Donated \$3,700 to 'Our Day' Fund, for British War casualties.<sup>272</sup></li> </ul> <p><b>COMMUNITY CREATION</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Led the Hokkien Huay Kuan in 1929.<sup>273</sup></li> </ul>	<p>and community works.<sup>274</sup></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Life Maxim: "what is taken from the society is to be used in the interests of the society."<sup>275</sup></li> <li>In 1933 said, "A willingness to serve society is an unequivocal aim of my life; social and community work should be done... according to one's ability."<sup>276</sup></li> <li>1918: Justice of the Peace.</li> </ul> <p><b>LEADERSHIP</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>President of the Ee Hoe Hean (Millionaires') Club in 1923, the Singapore Chinese Rubber Dealers' Association and the Tung Meng Hui.<sup>277</sup></li> <li>Established Singapore Chinese Chamber of Commerce.</li> </ul>

<sup>266</sup> Song, 2016, p. 732.

<sup>267</sup> *ibid.* p. 617.

<sup>268</sup> Gacek, 2016, p. 176.

<sup>269</sup> Tan Kah Kee: A Chinese patriot. (1987, December 22). *Unknown*, p. 8.

<sup>270</sup> *ibid.*

<sup>271</sup> Singapore Hokkien Huay Kuan (1<sup>st</sup> ed.). (2016). p. 53.

<sup>272</sup> Song, 2016, p. 778.

<sup>273</sup> *ibid.* p. 617.

<sup>274</sup> *ibid.* p. 165.

<sup>275</sup> Singapore Hokkien Huay Kuan (1<sup>st</sup> ed.). (2016). p. 53.

<sup>276</sup> Tan Kah Kee: A Chinese patriot. (1987, December 22). *Unknown*, p. 8.

<sup>277</sup> Yong, 1986, p. 166.

	YEAR OF CONTRIBUTION	NAME	ORIGIN/ ETHNICITY	OCCUPATION	CONTRIBUTIONS	REMARKS
		<p><b>Tan Kah Kee (1874-1961)</b></p> <p><b>Age of Arrival: 16 years old</b></p>			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Executed community reforms such as eradicating opium addiction, improving housing and personal hygiene, and shortening the duration of funeral wakes.<sup>278</sup></li> </ul>	<p><b>DIASPORIC GIVING</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1939(?): Donated \$500 towards the Malaya Patriotic Fund.<sup>279</sup></li> <li>Spent more than \$8million on education in China.<sup>280</sup></li> <li>Spent the most on Chip Bee Schools and Amoy University founded in 1921 (\$15million) &amp; some \$20million on educational donations over his lifetime.<sup>281</sup></li> <li>1894: Set up Ti Chai Hsueh Shu Chinese tuition school.<sup>282</sup></li> <li>1913: Set up Chip Bee Primary School.</li> <li>1918: Chip Bee Normal School and Chip Bee Secondary School.<sup>283</sup></li> <li>1919: Chip Bee Kindergarten.</li> <li>1920: Founded Jimei Marine School and Commercial School.<sup>284</sup></li> <li>1921: established Xiamen (Amoy) University in Fujian.<sup>285</sup></li> </ul>

<sup>278</sup> Yong, 1987, pp. 144, 147, 166, 172; Yang, 1987, p. 16.

<sup>279</sup> Yong, 1986, p. 176.

<sup>280</sup> Tan Kah Kee: A Chinese patriot. (1987, 22 December). *Unknown*, p. 8.

<sup>281</sup> Yong, 1986, p. 166.

<sup>282</sup> Yong, 1987, p. 86.

<sup>283</sup> Ward, Chu, & Salaff, 1994, p. 15.

<sup>284</sup> Gacek, 2016, p. 176.

<sup>285</sup> Song, 2016, p. 617; Yong, 2012, pp. 1075-1079.

	YEAR OF CONTRIBUTION	NAME	ORIGIN/ ETHNICITY	OCCUPATION	CONTRIBUTIONS	REMARKS
		<p>Tan Kah Kee (1874-1961)</p> <p>Age of Arrival: 16 years old</p>				<p><b>FUND RAISING FOR CHINA</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 1911: Hokkien Protection Fund - \$120,000 raised.<sup>286</sup></li> <li>• 1912: Nanqiao Huiyi Lu - raised \$50,000 for Sun Yat Sen.<sup>287</sup></li> <li>• 1928: Shandong Relief Fund - raised \$1.34million.<sup>288</sup></li> <li>• 1936: Raised \$1.3million from the Chinese in British Malaya for the Nanking Government to purchase thirteen fighter planes.<sup>289</sup></li> <li>• When Japan invaded China in 1937, headed the China Relief Fund to raise money for various relief projects – the Fujian Protection Fund (1912); Shandong Relief Fund (1928-1929); Singapore China Relief Fund (1937-1946); and the South Seas China Relief Fund Union (1938–1949).<sup>290</sup></li> </ul>

<sup>286</sup> Yong, 1986, pp. 169-170.

<sup>287</sup> *ibid.* p. 173.

<sup>288</sup> *ibid.* p. 171.

<sup>289</sup> *ibid.* pp. 169-170.

<sup>290</sup> Song, 2016, p. 617. Yong, 2012, pp. 1075–1079.

	YEAR OF CONTRIBUTION	NAME	ORIGIN/ ETHNICITY	OCCUPATION	CONTRIBUTIONS	REMARKS
25	1909	<b>Wee Boon Teck</b> 黄文德 (1850-1888)	Hokkien, Singapore	Businessman.	<b>HEALTHCARE</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1909: Bequest of \$4000 to Tan Tock Seng Hospital, which was invested by Government for some twenty years and was then applied towards the cost of building one ward bearing his name in the present Hospital in Moulmein Road.<sup>291</sup></li> </ul>	<b>ADVISORY &amp; RECOGNITION</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>On the Committee of Tan Tock Seng Hospital and Po Leung Kuk.<sup>292</sup></li> <li>"He was a man of a kindly and charitable disposition..."<sup>293</sup></li> </ul>
26	1900-10	<b>Lee Choon Guan</b> 李浚源 (1868-1928)  <i>Son of Lee Cheng Yan</i>	Hokkien, Singapore	Trader, also dealt in property, rubber, and tin.  A Director of the Straits Steamship Company Ltd.  1912: Director of Chinese Commercial Bank. <sup>294</sup>	<b>EDUCATION</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Before 1918: gave \$50,000 to Methodist College, \$60,000 to the endowment fund of Raffles College and another \$60,000 for scholarships.<sup>295</sup></li> </ul> <b>HEALTHCARE</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Before 1918: He and his wife each gave \$5000 to the building of St Andrew's Hospital for Women and Children..<sup>296</sup></li> </ul>	<b>ADVISORY &amp; RECOGNITION</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>In the absence of Dr Lim Boon Keng in China towards in 1918, Mr Lee was acting Chinese member of the Legislative Council.<sup>297</sup></li> <li>1915: He and Lim Peng-siang jointly contributed a war plane, codenamed 'Malaya No. 6' for the British war effort.<sup>298</sup></li> <li>On the Singapore Housing Commission &amp; Board of Food Control.<sup>299</sup></li> </ul>

<sup>291</sup> Song, 2016, p. 168.

<sup>292</sup> *ibid.*

<sup>293</sup> *ibid.*

<sup>294</sup> *ibid.* p. 163.

<sup>295</sup> *ibid.* pp. 164, 477.

<sup>296</sup> Song, 2016, p. 164.

<sup>297</sup> Song, 2016, p. 164.

<sup>298</sup> Yong, 1992, pp. 57-58; Song, 2016, p. 734.

<sup>299</sup> *ibid.* p. 163.

	YEAR OF CONTRIBUTION	NAME	ORIGIN/ ETHNICITY	OCCUPATION	CONTRIBUTIONS	REMARKS
		<p><b>Lee Choon Guan</b> 李浚源 (1868-1928)</p> <p><i>Son of Lee Cheng Yan</i></p>			<p><b>DONOR</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Donated \$200 to Tientsin Flood Relief Fund.<sup>300</sup></li> <li>• He and his wife gave \$50 each to Child's Welfare Association.<sup>301</sup></li> <li>• 1917: raised funds for the Halifax Relief Fund, gave \$500 in donations towards the fund.<sup>302</sup></li> <li>• Gave to the YMCA Building Fund.<sup>303</sup></li> <li>• 1917: Gave \$5,500 to "Our Day" Fund for British War casualties.<sup>304</sup></li> <li>• Gave generously to numerous single causes.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 1885: President of the Straits Chinese Recreational Club.<sup>305</sup></li> <li>• 1891: President of the Weekly Entertainment Club.<sup>306</sup></li> <li>• On the Municipal Board for 5 years.<sup>307</sup></li> <li>• Justice of the Peace.</li> <li>• Member of the Chinese Advisory Board, the Straits Chinese British Association, and the management committee of Tan Tock Seng Hospital.<sup>308</sup></li> </ul> <p>"Following in his father's footsteps, he has taken a great interest in public affairs and in all movements for the social and educational advancement of the Straits Chinese community.<sup>309</sup>"</p>

<sup>300</sup> Tientsin flood relief fund. (1917, December 29). *The Singapore Free Press and Mercantile Advertiser*.

<sup>301</sup> Ball. (1922, January 27). *The Singapore Free Press and Mercantile Advertiser*.

<sup>302</sup> Chinese help for Halifax. (1917, December 27). *Malaya Tribune*; Local efforts. (1918, January 8). *Malaya Tribune*.

<sup>303</sup> Song, 2016, p. 779; Y.W.C.A. Building Fund. (1917, August 18). *The Singapore Free Press and Mercantile Advertiser*.

<sup>304</sup> Song, 2016, p. 778.

<sup>305</sup> *ibid.* p. 163.

<sup>306</sup> *ibid.* p. 414.

<sup>307</sup> *ibid.* p. 163.

<sup>308</sup> *ibid.* p. 162.

<sup>309</sup> Song, 2016, p. 163.

	YEAR OF CONTRIBUTION	NAME	ORIGIN/ ETHNICITY	OCCUPATION	CONTRIBUTIONS	REMARKS
27	1900s	<p><b>Mrs Lee Choon Guan nee Tan Teck Neo (1877-1978)</b></p> <p><i>Daughter of Tan Keong Saik</i></p>	Straits Chinese, Malacca	Activist, fundraiser, and philanthropist.	<p><b>COMMUNITY CREATION - WOMEN'S ACTIVISM</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 1915: Founded the Chinese Women's Association.<sup>310</sup></li> <li>• She was among the first to give scholarships for the training of midwives, and those so assisted could earn a livelihood, and be benefactors as well, saving hundreds of lives using modern treatment.<sup>311</sup></li> <li>• She and her husband gave \$50 each to the Child Welfare Association.<sup>312</sup></li> <li>• 1917: Mrs Lee Choon Guan and other ladies of note spearheaded the organization of the Ladies' Committee for Halifax Relief Fund.<sup>313</sup></li> </ul> <p><b>HEALTHCARE</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Gave \$100 to King Albert's Civilian Hospital Fund.<sup>314</sup></li> <li>• She and her husband each gave \$5,000 to the building fund of</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Mr and Mrs Lee Choon Guan travelled extensively and made more than one trip round the world, in the course of which China, Japan, Java, Siam, the United States, Canada and various countries in Europe were visited.<sup>315</sup></li> </ul> <p><b>ACTIVISM</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 1916: Canvassed the Singapore Chinese women for contributions towards a 'Women of Malaya' Fighter plane.<sup>316</sup></li> <li>• 1924: Involved in the Women and Children's Protection Ordinance and had oversight of maternity care at Kandang Kerbau (now KK Women's and Children's Hospital) and Sepoy Lines (now Singapore General Hospital).<sup>317</sup></li> </ul>

<sup>310</sup> *ibid.* pp. 162, 767.

<sup>311</sup> *ibid.* p. 770.

<sup>312</sup> Ball (1922, January 27). *The Singapore Free Press and Mercantile Advertiser*.

<sup>313</sup> Chinese help for Halifax. (1917, December 27). *Malaya Tribune*.

<sup>314</sup> King Albert's civilian hospital fund. (1916, April 28). *The Singapore Free Press and Mercantile Advertiser*.

<sup>315</sup> *ibid.* pp. 164, 770.

<sup>316</sup> *Ibid.* pp. 755, 757.

<sup>317</sup> Ooi, 2016, p. 75.

	YEAR OF CONTRIBUTION	NAME	ORIGIN/ ETHNICITY	OCCUPATION	CONTRIBUTIONS	REMARKS
		<p><b>Mrs Lee Choon Guan nee Tan Teck Neo (1877-1978)</b></p> <p><i>Daughter of Tan Keong Saik</i></p>			<p>St. Andrew's Hospital for Women and Children.<sup>318</sup></p> <p><b>EDUCATION</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Numerous prizes were awarded in her name from the income of her endowment fund to the Singapore Chinese Girls' School.<sup>319</sup></li> </ul>	<p><b>ADVISORY &amp; RECOGNITION</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Member of the Chinese Advisory Board, and the Po Leung Kuk,<sup>320</sup> where she not only funded activities but also invited girls from the home to visit Mandalay Villa.<sup>321</sup></li> <li>1918: Was conferred the Member of the Order of the British Empire (MBE) for her charity work and contributions to the British Red Cross during the First World War.<sup>322</sup></li> </ul>
28	1910	<p><b>Mrs Kwan Seen Chor nee Wong Bee Ho (1875-1942)</b></p> <p><i>Daughter of Wong Ah Fook</i></p>	Rubber, mining	Headmistress of her own school, the first Chinese girls' school, fundraiser, anti-Japanese activist, member of the Chinese Ladies' Association and influential in Buddhist circles.	<p><b>MEDICAL</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Assisted her father and the Cantonese in setting up the Kwong Wai Shiu Hospital; which was founded for the poor in 1910.<sup>323</sup></li> </ul> <p><b>EDUCATION</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Single-handedly established a Chinese school for girls in 1905. Hua Qiao Nu Xiao (华侨女校) in New Bridge Road, the second Chinese</li> </ul>	<p><b>ACTIVISM FOR WOMEN</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1915: Established the Chinese Ladies' Association with Mrs Lee Choon Guan in Singapore<sup>324</sup> to improve the social status of women by providing them with opportunities for self-improvement, promoting interaction and the exchange of knowledge among them, and</li> </ul>

<sup>318</sup> Song, 2016, p. 164; Yong, 1992, pp. 58-61 & 70-72.

<sup>319</sup> Song, 2016, p. 770.

<sup>320</sup> Song, 2016, p. 313.

<sup>321</sup> Ooi, 2016, p. 75.

<sup>322</sup> Song, 2016, p. 162.

<sup>323</sup> Chinese Women's Association, 2015, p. 58.

<sup>324</sup> *ibid.*



	YEAR OF CONTRIBUTION	NAME	ORIGIN/ ETHNICITY	OCCUPATION	CONTRIBUTIONS	REMARKS
					girls' school outside China after the Singapore Chinese Girls' School. She was its headmistress for more than 10 years, and drafted the curriculum for hundreds of her students. <sup>325</sup>	<p>supporting charitable work.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>An activist for women's rights in China as well.</li> </ul> <p><b>WAR FUNDS</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1937 onwards: raised funds in support of the Anti-Japanese Relief Movement.<sup>326</sup></li> </ul>
29	1911	<p><b>Phua Choon Hiang/Phua Choon Yang (1850-1912)</b></p> <p><i>Age of Arrival: 16</i></p>	Teochew Swatow, China	Trader.	<p><b>EDUCATION</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1911: Assisted in the founding of first Chinese Girls' School (Chung Hua) Which was rent-free for the purposes of a school.<sup>327</sup></li> <li>Dr Lim Boon Keng succeeded in getting him to become greatly interested in education for Chinese girls, and he read and "studied assiduously" Chinese translations of foreign books on education. After the Chung Hua Girls' School came into existence, he worked hard to make the institution popular.<sup>328</sup></li> </ul>	

<sup>325</sup> Ooi, 2016, p. 61.

<sup>326</sup> *ibid.*, p. 62.

<sup>327</sup> Song, 2016, p. 656.

<sup>328</sup> *ibid.* pp. 657-658.

	YEAR OF CONTRIBUTION	NAME	ORIGIN/ ETHNICITY	OCCUPATION	CONTRIBUTIONS	REMARKS
30	1919	<b>Tan Soo Guan</b> (1881-1939)  <i>Eldest son of Tan Jiak Chuan and grandson of Tan Beng Gum</i>	Straits Chinese	Trading, banking.	<b>EDUCATION</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1919: He donated \$120,000 to Raffles College. Half this amount was for the building fund while the remaining half was to endow a scholarship for Chinese students to be named after his grandfather, Tan Beng Gum, and his father, Tan Jiak Chuan.<sup>329</sup></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1922: Appointed a Municipal Commissioner.<sup>330</sup></li> </ul>
31	1912	<b>Syed Abdulrahman Taha Alsagoff</b> (1880-1955)	Bugis/Arab Singapore	Property owner, estate developer.	<b>COMMUNITY CREATION</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>One of the first two trustees of the S.M.A (Syed Mohamed bin Ahmed) Alsagoff <i>Wakaf</i> Funds, founded by his uncle.<sup>331</sup></li> <li>A third of these funds were set aside for charity, and maintenance of the Alsagoff Arab School, Alsagoff Outdoor Dispensary and Muslim orphanages; the Darul Ihsan (for boys) and the Darul Ihsan Lilbanat (for girls).<sup>332</sup></li> <li>Oversaw building of the Alsagoff Arab School in Jalan</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Served three terms as President of the Muslimin Trust Fund Association – the first body to cater to spiritual and welfare needs of Muslim Singaporeans.<sup>333</sup></li> </ul>

<sup>329</sup> *ibid.* p. 479; See Raffles College scholarships. (1919, May 6). *The Straits Times*, p. 6.

<sup>330</sup> Municipal Commission. (1922, May 27). *Singapore Free Press*, p. 16.

<sup>331</sup> *Singapore days of old: A special commemorative history of Singapore published on the 10th anniversary of Singapore Tatler.* (1992). Hong Kong: Illustrated Magazine Pub., pp. 56-57.

<sup>332</sup> The ex-Geylang resident with a road named after him. (1994, September 4). *The Straits Times*, p. 5.

<sup>333</sup> *ibid.*

	YEAR OF CONTRIBUTION	NAME	ORIGIN/ ETHNICITY	OCCUPATION	CONTRIBUTIONS	REMARKS
		<b>Syed Abdulrahman Taha Alsagoff (1880-1955)</b>			<p>Sultan in 1912, and served as its supervisor for 43 years from 1912 to 1955.<sup>334</sup></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Every Thursday he held a feast for the villagers at his bungalow in Geylang, and often invited orphans to his resort bungalow in Pasir Panjang for a treat.<sup>335</sup></li> </ul>	
32	1914 (?)	<b>N.Veerasamy Naidu (1864 - 1926)</b>	Hindu, Born in Singapore (?)	Physician. One of Singapore's first local Indian doctors given license to practice, with a clinic at Rochor Road. <sup>336</sup>	<p><b>LEADERSHIP</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 1914: Chaired a meeting of Hindus, instrumental in helping choose Deepavali over Thaipusam as the first Hindu public holiday to secure interests of community.<sup>337</sup></li> </ul>	<p><b>ADVISORY &amp; RECOGNITION</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Became Municipal Commissioner (for over 6 years) and Justice of the Peace.<sup>338</sup></li> <li>• Served 11 years on the Municipal Board.</li> <li>• Held in high esteem by the poor especially those living in Kampong Kapur.<sup>339</sup></li> <li>• Was president of Hindu Advisory Board; member of Indian Association and the Straits Settlement Association.<sup>340</sup></li> <li>• 1927: Jalan Tambah renamed</li> </ul>

<sup>334</sup> Lim, L. H. (1994, August 16). New street in Geylang named after man who once lived there. *The Straits Times*, p. 27.

<sup>335</sup> *ibid.*

<sup>336</sup> National Heritage Board. (2018). *Little India Heritage Trail Booklet*.

<sup>337</sup> 50FACES Facebook Page. (2014). Did you know? - Veerasamy Road.

<sup>338</sup> Savage & Yeoh, 2013, pp. 394-395.

<sup>339</sup> *ibid.*

<sup>340</sup> *ibid.*

	YEAR OF CONTRIBUTION	NAME	ORIGIN/ ETHNICITY	OCCUPATION	CONTRIBUTIONS	REMARKS
		<b>N.Veerasamy Naidu</b> (1864 - 1926)				Veerasamy Road for his association with various public activities in Singapore for 35 years. <sup>341</sup>
33	1919	<b>Lim Loh / Lim Chee Ghee</b> 林路 (1851-1929)  <i>Father of Lim Bo Seng</i>	Fujian, China	Building contractor, architect, businessman.	<b>COMMUNITY CREATION - TEMPLES</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 1919: Founded Kai Hock Tong (开福堂).</li> <li>• Responsible for the construction of Chwee Long Tow Hong San See (水廊头凤山寺) in Mohamed Sultan Road and the founding of Lim See Tai Chong Soo (林氏大宗祠九龙堂).<sup>342</sup></li> </ul>	
34	1920	<b>Oei Tiong Ham</b> (1866-1924)	Indonesian Chinese	Businesses in sugar, rubber, coffee, postal services, pawnshops, logging and opium (Oei Tiong Ham Concern), Heap Eng Moh Steamship Co. Limited., Kian Gwan Kongsu.	<b>EDUCATION</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Gifted a three-storey building for Toh Lam School in Armenian Street.<sup>343</sup></li> <li>• Donated \$150,000 for the construction of a central hall for Raffles College.<sup>344</sup></li> </ul>	
35	1922	<b>Tan Kheam Hock</b> 陈谦福 (1862-1922)  <i>Year of Arrival: 1889</i>	Penang	Banker and joined the syndicate which held the monopoly of opium and spirit farms until 1906. Contractor for labor at the Tanjong Pagar Dock Company.	<b>COMMUNITY CREATION</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Jan 1922: Actively called for the establishment of Bukit Brown Chinese Cemetery, where Chinese of all dialect groups could be</li> </ul>	<b>ADVISORY &amp; RECOGNITION</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 1910 - 1922: Municipal Commissioner.</li> <li>• 1912: Justice of the Peace.</li> <li>• In 1910 he received the special thanks of the Governor for his advice and assistance</li> </ul>

<sup>341</sup> *ibid.*

<sup>342</sup> Unverified, Anecdotal. Retrieved from Beokeng, <http://www.beokeng.com/pioneers.php>

<sup>343</sup> Song, 2016, p. 287.

<sup>344</sup> *ibid.* 477.

	YEAR OF CONTRIBUTION	NAME	ORIGIN/ ETHNICITY	OCCUPATION	CONTRIBUTIONS	REMARKS
		<p><b>Tan Kheam Hock</b> 陈谦福 (1862-1922)</p> <p><i>Year of Arrival: 1889</i></p>		<p>Supplied coolies to Singapore Harbour Board in 1913. Chairman of the Eastern United Assurance Corporation Ltd. Director of an array of rubber, tin and industrial companies.<sup>345</sup></p>	<p>buried at the same site.<sup>346</sup></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• In the 1890s, Tan helped translate some Chinese works into Baba Malay.<sup>347</sup></li> <li>• Helped solicit funds for Prince of Wales' Relief Fund.<sup>348</sup></li> </ul>	<p>in connection with the establishment of the Government Monopolies Department.<sup>349</sup></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Committee/Council member of Chinese Advisory Board, Po Leung Kuk, Straits Chinese British Association, the King Edward VII Medical School and the Board of Licensing Justices, of the Hospital Board.<sup>350</sup></li> </ul> <p><b>ACTIVISM</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Advocate of education for Chinese girls.<sup>351</sup></li> <li>• "For a period of thirty years he identified himself with all movements for the welfare of the Chinese community here and was always ready to assist with his purse and sound advice in every good cause."<sup>352</sup></li> </ul>

<sup>345</sup> *ibid.* pp. 358-360.

<sup>346</sup> Savage & Yeoh, 2013, p. 212; National Library Singapore. (2018, October, 5). *Tan Kheam Hock*.

<sup>347</sup> National Library Singapore. (2018, October 5). *Tan Kheam Hock*.

<sup>348</sup> Song, 2016, p. 718.

<sup>349</sup> *ibid.* p. 360.

<sup>350</sup> *ibid.*

<sup>351</sup> *ibid.*; National Library Singapore. (2018, October 5). *Tan Kheam Hock*.

<sup>352</sup> Song, 1923, p. 360.

	YEAR OF CONTRIBUTION	NAME	ORIGIN/ ETHNICITY	OCCUPATION	CONTRIBUTIONS	REMARKS
36	1920s	<b>The Alkaff Family, headed by Syed Abdul Rahman bin Shaikh Alkaff (1880 - 1948)</b>	Arab Wadi Hadhramaut, (Yemen)	Investors in real estate/property owners.	<p><b>COMMUNITY CREATION</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Opened mansion to all Muslims who wanted to go through the tradition of "mandi safar" in large lake near Bukit Tunggul in Thomson Road.</li> <li>• By 1929: Constructed the now defunct Alkaff Lake Gardens (a public park with a Japanese theme).<sup>353</sup></li> <li>• First Japanese landscape garden in Singapore with a lake for rowing boats, provision for picnic parties which became a prominent attraction for local residents and visitors<sup>354</sup> in the mansion grounds.<sup>355</sup></li> <li>• Built two mosques: Alkaff Upper Serangoon Mosque (opened 1932) and Alkaff Kampong Melayu Mosque in Jalan Eunos.<sup>356</sup></li> </ul>	
37	1920s	<b>Omar Bamadhaj (? - ?)</b>	Arab	Merchant; family ran a hostel near Kandahar street.	<p><b>DONOR</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Donated to mosques and madrasahs during the 1920s and 1930s from the money he collected from Arab migrants</li> </ul>	

<sup>353</sup> Devi, U. G., 2002 p. 118.

<sup>354</sup> Mydin, 2006, p. 147.

<sup>355</sup> Yahaya, N. (2007). Good friends and dangerous enemies: British Images of the Arab elite in colonial Singapore, 1819-1942 (Masters' diss.). National University of Singapore, p. 50.

<sup>356</sup> Yahaya, 2007, p. 51.

	YEAR OF CONTRIBUTION	NAME	ORIGIN/ ETHNICITY	OCCUPATION	CONTRIBUTIONS	REMARKS
		Omar Bamadhaj (? - ?)			<p>who rented rooms at his hostel.<sup>357</sup></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Donated generously to the Malaya Patriotic Fund in 1940, (\$1,000 out of total sum of \$8,913)<sup>358</sup> - the single largest donation to fund war expenses and war charities; for the British war effort in general.</li> </ul>	
38	1920s (?)	Mirza Moham-med Ali Namazie (1864-1931)	Persian	<p>Set up M.A. Namazie &amp; Co. Started trading in textiles and cotton, was involved in opium trade.<sup>359</sup></p> <p>Other businesses include rubber, shipping, milling, refining, films and property development.</p>	<p><b>DONOR/ COMMUNITY CREATION</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Founded charitable trust/ <i>wakaf</i> 'Namazie Endowment' in Madras, arranged <i>before</i> his passing for the poor, needy and widows, to celebrate festivals such as Hari Raya.<sup>360</sup></li> <li>Namazie constituted himself, his son, son-in-law as the mutawallis.</li> <li>Terms of <i>wakaf</i> were centred around religious, pious and charitable purposes: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To conduct marriages and burials of poor Mussalmans.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	<p><b>ADVISORY &amp; RECOGNITION</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Appointed Municipal Commissioner and a Government Advisor on Muslim Affairs.<sup>361</sup></li> <li>1923: built Capitol Theatre and adjoining Namazie Mansions, a venue for screening famous movies from Europe and America.<sup>362</sup></li> </ul>

<sup>357</sup> *ibid.*

<sup>358</sup> Arabs give \$8,913. (1940, January 31). *The Straits Times*, p. 4.

<sup>359</sup> Choo, H. (Interviewer). (1982, June 30). Oral history interview with Haji Mohamed Javad Namazie (Transcript of cassette recording no. 000189/11/ Reel 3), p. 23.

<sup>360</sup> Choo, 1982, pp. 26-27.

<sup>361</sup> Namazie International Website, "Our History". Retrieved from <http://www.natural-rubber.com/his.php>.

<sup>362</sup> *ibid.*

	YEAR OF CONTRIBUTION	NAME	ORIGIN/ ETHNICITY	OCCUPATION	CONTRIBUTIONS	REMARKS
		<b>Mirza Mohammed Ali Namazie (1864-1931)</b>			o Benefit poor Syeds: "mutawallis shall set apart two-thirds or thereabouts, of the houses No. 28/1 and 28/2, Angappa Naick Street, George Town, Madras, for the residence and use of poor Mussalmans free or on a nominal rent. <sup>363</sup> "	

<sup>363</sup> Srinivasan, J. (1988, March 11). *Report from Madras High Court: M. A. Namazie Endowment vs Commissioner Of Income-Tax.*



## BOX 1

### Philanthropy, Power, and Vice

In researching this era we were confronted with several areas of tension.

Firstly, were those men who were rewarded with recognition in pursuit of prestige? The second question that arose is one that society has always been ambivalent about – how does one reconcile the fact that many local leaders might be philanthropists, but some (although not all) had gained or inherited their money from vice and – in the case of local philanthropists – through the farming of opium?

### Reward or Prestige?

We have not attempted to tie philanthropic action to personal motivation in this paper. What we can do, however, is to enumerate the reasons as to why these particular leaders were recognised with positions by the British so readers can consider the matter for themselves.

Firstly, those whom the British chose to favour could speak English, and the British, who had little or no knowledge of any of the local languages, were glad to have literate and capable men on their side to provide interpretation of language and demystify needs and attitudes in the multiple ethnicities under their rule. Readers will see that the same men were asked again and again to serve on advisory councils, having gained experience and the trust of the local Colonial administration.

Secondly, those who were asked to serve had been given power by their own ethnic communities.<sup>364</sup> As established in “Singapore’s earliest philanthropists, 1819-1867”,<sup>365</sup> the early communities of Singapore gained leaders when men of initiative and wealth stepped up to fund primary needs.

They gained respect in this way and were further empowered in the eyes of their own communities when they took to mediating matters when there was no other recourse to justice. They created, then led the first local associations that were based on commonalities such as language or trade. Leaders of the Hokkien and Teochew communities such as Tan Kim Seng proved their abilities by helping mediate raging riots between Chinese gangs in 1854.

Thirdly, such leaders were often multilingual, adaptable, and unafraid to learn from other cultures. Such men were of a different mettle from those who remained donors, happy to give money to causes led by others.

The adaptable nature of this cohort meant they were able to bridge the divide between many disparate groups, connecting at the highest levels across dialect and caste. They also bridged the chasm between incoming migrants and the incomprehensible British leadership. And they were able to cross ethnic divides to meet other wealthy men using various lingua franca. Such fraternising among the wealthiest was normal in a port city where money and success brought the richest together to discuss issues, socialise, and manage the general doings of the port.

A class difference inevitably emerged within the first few decades between the main body of migrants and the wealthy elite. Within this “upper” class were men who would never in their own homelands have gained such prestige. Most came from rigidly defined class systems. For example the Chinese merchant was the lowest of the four classes in China, but in Singapore the port city mentality where wealth was the arbiter of power, and bolstered by the democratic approach of the British, such men were now elevated to high social status in the colony.

<sup>364</sup> Power struggles within the communities did in fact emerge later, several generations down the line. Lim Nee Soon and Seah Liang Seah were at loggerheads over the leadership of the Teochew community, and Tan Tock Seng’s family could not be removed from headship of the Hokkien community, resulting in the creation of other communities within the same group by other leading Hokkien men.

<sup>365</sup> *Philanthropy in Asia Working Paper 8*. Singapore: NUS

So were such men rewarded with honours and positions in informal government? Yes they were, and it was a winning situation for all.

## The on-going Tension between Philanthropy and Vice

Records show that vast sums of money were made from vice from Singapore's earliest days. Major-General William Farquhar and Dr. John Crawfurd, First and Second Residents of Singapore, deliberately encouraged and licensed opium "farming",<sup>366</sup> gambling, prostitution and vice. It was the 19<sup>th</sup> Century, and opium was a key source of revenue with which to run the free port that Stamford Raffles had envisaged.

Raffles might have been visionary, but he was impractical while the Residents were pragmatic. Any port worth its salt must have entertainment. Moreover, Singapore was a bachelor community for almost all of the 19<sup>th</sup> Century. Opium provided the British with 40 to 60 percent of its locally derived revenue.<sup>367</sup>

Ellen La Motte, American journalist and author, passing through Singapore was outraged. She wrote:

"We found these shops established under government auspices, the dealers obtaining their supplies of opium and then ... licenses from the government to retail it ... and a complete establishment of the opium traffic, run by the government, as a monopoly... A complete systematic arrangement by which the foreign government profited at the expense of the subject peoples under its rule."<sup>368</sup>

But La Motte would come from a new and rising class of anti-opium reformers in the 20<sup>th</sup> Century. Meanwhile in 19<sup>th</sup> Century Singapore, the British government was happy to supply opium to all who would buy it, to alleviate the travails of the coolie and rickshaw puller, and provide recreation to the wealthy. Opium was ubiquitous and available, and most users were those doing hard labour. Opium fumes perfumed the dreadful halls of cheap lodgings, which finally brought relief from pain to coolies and rickshaw pullers at the end of incredibly hard days.<sup>369</sup>

Many profited enormously from revenue from vice. The Chinese ran "The Great Opium Syndicate" and many others ran brothels, trafficked in women and kidnapped labour, or ran more respectable gambling rackets or cockfighting. The ratio of men to women was at its worst – 12 men to one woman – and the abuse of women was horrifying. Local merchants benefited.

"... their profits from the trade [enabled] them to establish new international enterprises that carried the imperial economy forward ... their fortunes ... provided the capital for them to diversify into the banking, insurance and steamship businesses."<sup>370</sup>

These are facts on record. That was one way money was made in Singapore then, and everyone was in Singapore for opportunity. Ironically, but pragmatically, wealth from vice was then used to fund the needs of local society which, until at least the 1870s, was itself in a sorry state of unregulated migration and disorder with undertones of extraordinary violence.

<sup>366</sup> A "farmer" was one who had a licence from the British to sell opium locally.

<sup>367</sup> Frost & Balasingamchow, 2013, p. 156.

<sup>368</sup> Ellen La Motte, writing in 1916, as quoted in Frost & Balasingamchow, 2013, p. 157.

<sup>369</sup> Frost & Balasingamchow, 2013, p. 156.

<sup>370</sup> *ibid.*

The matter of opium addiction and the fact that the British were operating perhaps as the largest legal drug cartel in the world did not bring shame to them, any more than slaving did then. La Motte, in anger about local opium addicts she saw in Singapore, further wrote:

“The British Government is not ashamed to sell [opium] to him to encourage him to drug himself, to ruin himself. Why should he [the addict], be ashamed?<sup>371</sup>”

A generation or two later, there would be a sense of accountability among the young men who now inherited fortunes made in this way. We have recorded how they responded with the money they had inherited or were in fact making, but we cannot address motivation, which is beyond the scope of this paper.

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<sup>371</sup> *ibid.*, p. 157.

# 5. Key Findings & Conclusion

The period from crown colony to the end of World War I was a highly formative one for Singapore society. The island was beset by new influences that reshaped the economy and, in particular, the upper echelon of society and the way it thought and behaved. It was also a period of extraordinary wealth among locals and a boom time for finance. These would shape both giving and provide the ability to give in these years.

At the same time, the rise of British imperialism cast a very long shadow over society, evidenced not only in the growth of an acculturated English-speaking upper class in Singapore, but also in the introduction of new ideals based on Western reason, Christianity, and the British philanthropic ideal itself.

The increasing inclusion of this set of acculturated locals in the advisory councils of the colonial administration, as well as their influence through newspapers that publicised local needs, contributions and the fundraising efforts surrounding them, all went towards suggesting a vibrant time of development and increasing awareness of a local, resident population emerging, where previously migrants had dominated.

Philanthropy – if not among the poor, then very much so among the richest – became a new pursuit in Crown colony Singapore.

While our table of philanthropists above is an initial one, there is enough data here and in secondary sources for us to propose some first findings about the period, and about giving in this cohort of philanthropists.

## 5.1 Philanthropists Born in Singapore Dominated the Scene

The first and most obvious finding is that 13 of the 38 of the philanthropists in our table above were local-born. We suggest that those now born in Singapore must have considered the colony

their home. Their many initiatives to introduce education and improve social infrastructure confirm a dedication to developing a modern and enlightened Singapore.

An example of one who was acculturated and involved in colonial society was Sir Song Ong Siang. As a member of the Singapore Volunteer Corps, he called himself a “King’s Chinese”. This describes how many local-born might have seen themselves and where their allegiance lay. The contributions of this generation also attested to plural identity, with local born residents having a sense of belonging to Singapore, the Empire and the Crown, as well as to their traditional Asian cultures.

These complex and interwoven loyalties were expressed in giving, to ensure the next generation had all the advantages valued in a British colony. Vast sums were given to support literacy, found schools, and fund the start of Raffles College and the King Edward VII Medical College, demonstrating a firm belief in the need for locals to be able to learn well, become professional and to have every chance to rise in the British system.

## 5.2 Family Philanthropy Emerges

Our data also reveals that even though Singapore had only been established for fifty years, there was already a trend emerging of sons and daughters carrying on the philanthropy of their fathers or grandparents. Three findings are of particular note in this area:

1. Firstly, children carrying on the work of their parents cut across the race groups and included Chinese, Arab/Bugis and Jewish families.
2. Secondly, while Islam and Judaism already had an embedded world view of family benevolence, among the Chinese migrants in Singapore, family giving was beginning - a new thing altogether, as traditional Chinese culture left giving to the gentry and considered merchants



Lim Nee Soon, Teo Eng Hock, Tan Chor Lam at Tan Boo Liat's residence, "Golden Bell," Pender Road. Note the neoclassical architecture of the house and hybrid clothing of these gentlemen. c. 1900s

Courtesy of the Singapore National Archives

of low estate. In Singapore however, the British recognised all benefactors, encouraging the rise of family philanthropy among successful men of any trade and race.

3. Thirdly, we observe very modern thinking at the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, with families now entrusting money to daughters. Wong Ah Fook gave his daughter a sizeable inheritance while most fathers were still leaving only their sons any inheritance of substance.

Sir Manasseh Meyer passed the mantle to shepherd the Jews to his daughter, Mozelle, while Mrs. Lee Choon Guan was both educated and possibly funded by enlightened father Tan Keong Saik, preparing her to step into the spotlight of philanthropy with her husband while other Chinese women were still sequestered. Such actions were ahead of the times, but ran parallel to the demand for suffrage in Western society, suggesting its influence coursing through Singapore mindsets.

### **5.3 Philanthropy was often Collaborative and Initiated by One Cohort in Society**

Another key finding from this study is that philanthropists in this era frequently worked together to realise their aspirations.

The greatest focus of such collaborations was education – both the building of schools and the management, funding, and running of them afterwards. There was a remarkable degree of co-funding for schools to teach children in both English and other languages, and great cooperation in gathering funds for two initiatives for higher education – Raffles College and the King Edward VII medical school. The latter was proposed by local-born Tan Jiak Kim in 1904, and the amount specified by the colonial government raised so fast that the medical school was started within a year.

In this group of collaborative funders we find Dr. Lim Boon Keng, Tan Boo Liat, Khoo Seok Wan, Lim Nee Soon, Seah Liang Seah, Tan Kah Kee, Tan Jiak Kim and Sir Song Ong Siang. News reports of local events also feature the presence of Johor royalty, and notable Arabs. Frequent reports in news articles show these same men met often at government and social functions, so we might suggest that the many collaborations between them arose from these opportunities for interaction.

We also surmise from publications and data from that period that this coterie of friends shared debates and intellectual discourse and published articles together on the betterment of local society. Thus this particular group of peers must have had the same aspirations for Singapore and found commonality and unity in working together.

It was a small group, elite and exclusive - a result of that particular time and place – a small community of English-educated peers separated from most others by social and economic position and separated yet again from the colonial community by racial divides. As there are few personal records of life during those times we are left only with the suggestion that there was perhaps strength in numbers in a small band of brothers.

### **5.4 Acculturation and New Intellectual Discourse Now Informed Giving, and New Causes Reflected these Changes**

This era epitomised the “convergence of cultures” in the title of this paper.

The new generation of Asian settlers was fully exposed to “being British” when Britain was at the height of its imperial powers and colonial dominance. There were many doors to acculturation to the alien civilisation that not only ruled Singapore but much of the known world. Residents were now exposed to so many influences that that much of life was in a constant state of syncretisation, borne out in changing dress, speech, and lifestyle that was so typical of those colonized. Even in Singapore today there is a constant changing of register as people move back and forth from the world of home to the world of business and into the global arena.

The complex interactions of these various influences was reflected in how people gave.

While old values were treasured, those that clashed with civil liberty were also now examined; new causes like schools for girls and the reform of Chinese society were not only debated, but published and funded into reality.

Contributions spanned a spectrum of causes – from the continued building of traditional places of worship, their upkeep and improvement, to education in cultures, beliefs and languages of the homelands, to new, reformist causes such as the building of schools for girls at a time when girls were still isolated from society after puberty.

Improving facilities and building modern ones were also heavily funded, with the period of the 1930s, just after our study ends, seeing much money given to starting clinics and more welfare facilities such as childrens' homes and orphanages.



Mr. Lee Choon Guan, dressed in appropriate British dress to be presented at Court in London. c. 1920

Courtesy of the Singapore National Archives

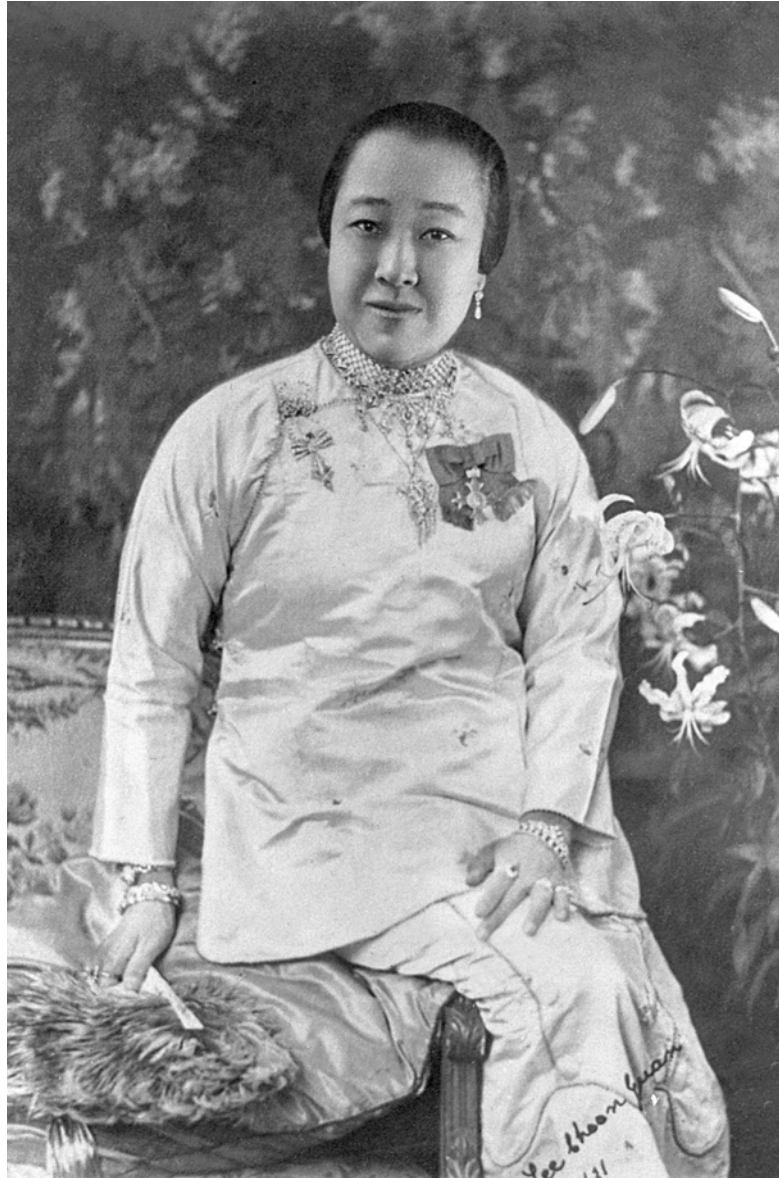
## 5.5 Asian Women Philanthropists made their First Appearance

As we noted in the emergence of family philanthropy, the 20<sup>th</sup> Century also ushered in the participation in philanthropy of Asian women, previously kept socially isolated once in their teens.

Among the Malay-Muslim community, Bugis women were unusual in that in their own culture they had always had a prominent place in society. The first bequests made to local Muslim society by women were from the Bugis community – by Hajjah Fatimah and her daughter in the mid 19<sup>th</sup> Century. In a similar vein, women had always been

empowered in Jewish culture, so Mozelle Nissim took over leading the local Jewish community from her father, looking after both Ashkenazi and Sephardi Jews in Singapore in the 1920s up till World War II.

For the Chinese community, women's participation in philanthropy was considered extremely unusual, if one were not born in the gentry class. But as we have seen in Singapore, money was the new arbiter of class. Thus Wong Ah Fook, the contractor to Johor royalty and a forward-thinking man, gave a generous bequest to his daughter, Wong Bee Ho. She put this to good use by founding a Chinese girls' school in 1905 well before the Qing dynasty fell.



Mrs. Lee Choon Guan c. 1925  
Courtesy of the Singapore National Archives

Wives of the new elite, such as Mrs. Lee Choon Guan and Mrs. Lim Boon Keng, also caused an immense stir in local Asian society when they stepped boldly out and made their first public appearances at colonial events quite suddenly in 1915. Other wives soon followed, and they went on to show local society how women could also give, encouraging others to emerge from their cloistered life through the creation of the Chinese Ladies' Association.

It was through their example that Asian women rich and poor learnt to give through small "charity

bazaars" that wealthy women used to raise money, having learnt the concept from Governors' wives and the colonial memsahib. This concept was even taken up by *amahs* or domestic servants, who used it to raise money for war relief when China was invaded by Japan. Their charity gala was a *wayang* - a traditional opera.

## 5.6 Giving was now Expressed through Multiple Mechanisms

Finally we observe that this era saw the expression of philanthropy in new forms. Direct donations and



the actual funding to build a place were still major ways of giving, but other forms were popular as well. They included:

- Collective giving
- Endowments and bequests
- Trust funds (these were used by the Arab community to ensure perpetual endowments could be made under common law)
- Family funds
- Giving by subscription
- Fundraising through galas, balls, concerts and entertainments
- Fundraising using the "Charity Bazaar" method, and
- Land endowments.

## CONCLUSION

The crown colony era was a highly formative time for philanthropy in Singapore, rich with new influences.

During this period, there was a shift in mindset among residents from that of transience to being vested in Singapore's development. Thus money now went to building social infrastructure to give the next generation a good future, primarily through building schools and funding of new medical care initiatives – the King Edward VII Medical College, Thong Chai Medical Institution and St. Andrew's Medical Missions.

The landscape of giving changed as a next generation of local-born men stepped up with new ideals and ideas for the reform of local society. These men had put down roots in Singapore and their work built upon the foundations of community in which their parents had invested.

Many incremental changes were introduced to society – active participation, decision-making, cooperation and large dreams – that would mould Singapore society into one with syncretised values combining the traditional with the Western, in a way that would influence the world views of many in the generation after, including those who would lead Singapore through to nationhood.

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